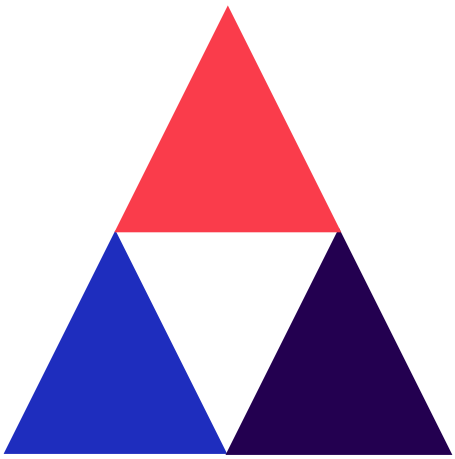
International Labour Organization

MEVHWS/2026/5

ILO Guidelines for the promotion of fundamental principles and rights at work and the prevention and elimination of violence and harassment for professional athletes *

Meeting of Experts on the application of the fundamental principles and rights at work and on violence and harassment in the world of sport
(Geneva, 2–6 March 2026)



Sectoral Policies Department
Geneva, 2026

* In accordance with established procedures, these guidelines will be submitted to the 358th Session (November 2026) of the Governing Body of the ILO for its consideration.

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▶ 1. Introduction

1. ILO sectoral guidelines are reference tools setting out principles that can be reflected in the design and implementation of policies, strategies, programmes, legislation, administrative measures and social dialogue mechanisms in particular economic sectors or sectoral clusters. They can be implemented progressively to take into account different national settings, cultures and social, economic, environmental and political contexts.

2. ILO sectoral guidelines are adopted by meetings of experts nominated by governments, employers and workers. Experts serve in their personal capacity and act and speak in their expert capacity. Sectoral guidelines adopted at meetings of experts are submitted to the ILO Governing Body for approval.

3. Sectoral guidelines draw their principles from international labour standards (Conventions, Protocols and Recommendations) and other sources, including Declarations, codes of practice and other policy guidance adopted and endorsed by the International Labour Conference or the Governing Body. They also draw on other international agreements and policies in the sector concerned, as well as relevant trends and developments in regional and national law and practice. Sectoral guidelines are based on the full principles, rights and obligations set out in international labour standards; nothing set out in sectoral guidelines should be interpreted as lowering such standards.

4. Sectoral guidelines are not legally binding. They are not subject to ratification or ILO supervisory mechanisms. Sectoral guidelines can therefore be aspirational in scope, expand on principles laid down in international labour standards and other international agreements and policy and be adapted to different national systems and circumstances.

▶ 2. Scope

5. This document provides guidance for ILO constituents on the respect, promotion and realization, in relation to professional athletes, of fundamental principles and rights at work, as set out in the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, adopted in 1998 and amended in 2022, and related fundamental international labour standards. [1]

6. The Guidelines also set out principles regarding the prevention and elimination, with regard to professional athletes, of violence and harassment, including gender-based violence and harassment, in line with the Violence and Harassment Convention (No. 190) and Recommendation (No. 206), 2019.

7. All workers, including athletes, should be protected by fundamental principles and rights at work, in line with the 1998 Declaration (as amended in 2022). There is no universal definition of

[1] Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87); Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98); Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29) (and its 2014 Protocol); Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105); Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138); Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182); Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100); Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111); Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155); Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 (No. 187).

professional athletes. These Guidelines apply to professional athletes as well as to athletes engaged in high-level sports, hereafter referred to as "athletes". Particular attention should be given to promoting equality of treatment and opportunities in respect of employment and occupation for athletes, notably women.

8. The Guidelines cover all types of sports, including team and individual sports, as well as high-level sports.

▶ 3. Intended users

9. The intended users of the Guidelines are:

(a) governments, including ministries of labour, sport, culture, education, women and youth, as well as relevant local authorities;

(b) employers' organizations and employers, including sports employers, such as clubs or leagues, or other sports bodies that engage in social dialogue or directly engage athletes;

(c) workers' organizations, including athletes' unions.

10. Other relevant actors that can draw on principles from the Guidelines, as appropriate, include:

(a) sports governing bodies, and constituent bodies, including:

(i) sporting event organizing bodies;

(ii) athletes' commissions;

(b) international and regional organizations;

(c) civil society organizations;

(d) journalists and human rights defenders;

(e) fan organizations;

(f) sports officials;

(g) athlete support personnel such as managers, agents, trainers, coaches, medical staff, lawyers;

(h) other relevant actors in the world of sport.

▶ 4. General principles

11. To realize health, well-being, education, inclusion, development, peace and decent work, and its pursuit enjoyed by athletes worldwide, all persons should enjoy equal opportunities and treatment in accessing participation and employment in sport, free from discrimination of any kind. The respect, promotion and realization of fundamental principles and rights at work and the prevention and elimination of violence and harassment applies to athletes, as does access to universal social protection. Sport, overall, is a key enabler for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and an important contributor to social justice.

12. Sport fulfils an important public interest function, including health promotion, social inclusion, education, community cohesion and youth development. Labour policies in sport should be designed in a manner that preserves these public interest functions while promoting decent work.

13. Sport is an important economic activity that has contributed to economic growth and created opportunities for enterprises and business development that may contribute significantly to areas of national development, including health, education, social security, tourism and entertainment, to name a few, as well as employment and income generation.

14. The promotion, protection of, and respect for, the fundamental principles and rights at work of athletes should be recognized by domestic legislation and embedded within the governance and operations of sport, and in the policies, systems and practices of professional sport.

4.1. Governance of sport

15. Sports organizations can independently organize and regulate sporting activities, competitions and their internal affairs, provided this is done in line with applicable laws and safeguarding policies, and is grounded in principles of good governance, transparency, and inclusiveness. This should be done in a manner that supports the promotion and effective implementation of fundamental principles and rights at work and the prevention and elimination of violence and harassment in the sector. Respect for labour rights and sports autonomy are not contradictory, and they should be mutually supporting.

16. The working conditions of athletes, including their access to social protection and social security, vary across regions and within countries and sports disciplines, between team and individual sports, and between different types of employment relationships. Policies to address the working conditions of athletes should be best practice, innovative and adapted to different national contexts.

4.2. Fundamental principles and rights at work

17. The ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, adopted in 1998 and amended in 2022, affirms the obligation of all Members, inherent in membership of the ILO, to respect, to promote and to realize the principles concerning the fundamental rights, namely:

(a) freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining;

(b) the elimination of all forms of forced or compulsory labour;

(c) the effective abolition of child labour;

(d) the elimination of discrimination in respect of employment and occupation;

(e) a safe and healthy working environment.

18. In line with the 1998 Declaration (as amended in 2022), all Members, even if they have not ratified the fundamental Conventions, have an obligation, arising from the very fact of membership in the Organization, to respect, to promote and to realize, in good faith and in accordance with the Constitution, the principles concerning the fundamental rights that are the subject of these Conventions.

4.3. Social dialogue

19. The governance of the labour aspects of professional sport should be based on social dialogue. Social dialogue is based on respect for freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining. Social dialogue has diverse forms and levels depending on the

contexts and traditions of each country. Consultations, exchanges of information, workplace cooperation and other forms of dialogue between social partners and with governments and other stakeholders are also important.

20. Governments should create an enabling environment through meaningful social dialogue for the respect, promotion and realization of fundamental principles and rights at work for athletes, in line with the 1998 Declaration (as amended in 2022).

21. Governments and employers' and workers' organizations should support and promote all forms of effective social dialogue to advance decent work in sport, which may include engagement with national, regional or international sports governing bodies, as appropriate. As sport varies greatly across regions and disciplines, social dialogue should be promoted through innovative approaches.

4.4. Sport integrity

22. The respect for fundamental principles and rights at work in sport, as well as the prevention and elimination of violence and harassment for athletes, and the growth and sustainability of the sport sector, together with sport integrity, require mutual trust and effective collaboration between governments, employers, employers' organizations, workers' organizations and athletes; these factors are mutually reinforcing and essential for advancing decent work in the world of sport.

23. To strengthen the integrity of sport, ILO constituents, in collaboration with relevant actors should:

(a) promote decent work in the world of sport;

(b) engage in effective social dialogue to develop and foster a culture of respect for rights and responsibilities;

(c) provide access to effective remedy.

4.5. Effective remedy

24. The promotion of fundamental principles and rights at work and the prevention and elimination of violence and harassment for athletes should be based on effective labour dispute prevention and resolution mechanisms within and outside the sport sector. Complaint and appeals mechanisms can be handled through judicial and non-judicial institutions, including alternative dispute resolution mechanisms, and should be based on the principles of transparency, efficiency, timeliness, accessibility, fairness, equality, accountability, independence, impartiality, professionalism and enforcement, and should be a trauma-informed and people-centred process, as appropriate. Effective labour inspection systems can play an important role in this process.

25. As part of their duty to protect the labour rights of athletes, governments should take appropriate steps to ensure, through judicial, administrative, legislative or other appropriate means, that when non-respect of labour rights occur within their territory and/or jurisdiction, any affected athlete has access to effective remedy.

26. The ILO Tripartite Declaration of Principles concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy, as amended in 2022 (MNE Declaration) and the United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights provide established guidance on access to remedy and effective grievance mechanisms.

▶ 5. The right to freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining

27. The fundamental rights to freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining are enshrined in the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise Convention, 1948 (No. 87), and the Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98).

28. All athletes, regardless of their classification of status in employment, and sports employers should have the right to establish and, subject only to the rules of the organization concerned, to join organizations of their own choosing without previous authorization, at the national, regional and global levels, as appropriate.

29. Governments should respect, promote and realize the fundamental principles and rights at work, including freedom of association and collective bargaining, for athletes, in line with the 1998 Declaration (as amended in 2022). They should create an enabling environment for this purpose through meaningful social dialogue.

30. Free, independent, strong and representative employers' and workers' organizations, together with trust, commitment and respect by the governments for the autonomy of the social partners are key conditions for effective social dialogue in sport and respect for fundamental principles and rights at work.

31. Athletes should enjoy the rights of freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining.

32. All athletes should be protected against acts of anti-union discrimination.

33. Sports employers, athletes and their organizations should enjoy adequate protection against any acts of interference by each other or each other's agents or members in their establishment, functioning or administration.

34. Social dialogue platforms at national, regional or international level can be beneficial for sustained dialogue and advance effective implementation of labour rights. Global social dialogue agreements can play an important role in addressing overarching labour concerns in specific sports.

35. To promote, respect and realize the right to freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining for athletes and employers, governments, in consultation with employers' and workers' organizations, should:

(a) ratify and effectively implement fundamental principles and rights at work instruments relating to freedom of association and collective bargaining. This would entail establishing national laws or adapting existing laws, policies and practices to the needs of athletes and employers;

(b) establish adequate machinery, including through the responsible authority and labour inspectorate, to guarantee the effective application and enforcement of laws relating to freedom of association, the right to organize and the effective recognition to the right to collective bargaining;

(c) formulate and implement measures supporting the establishment, growth and functioning of employers' and workers' organizations in the sport sector;

(d) adopt legislative provisions or policies to ensure that athletes competing in educational, police or military settings, for the purpose of sport, can also enjoy freedom of association, in relation to sport work;

(e) take appropriate measures to encourage and promote the full development and utilization of machinery for voluntary negotiation between employers or employers' organizations and workers' organizations.

36. Employers and their organizations should:

(a) respect and benefit from the right of freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining;

(b) build their organizations and engagement in sport labour matters at national, regional and global levels, including promoting and educating members about the importance of social dialogue.

37. Workers' organizations should:

(a) organize athletes and promote effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining;

(b) promote athletes' education and training, including on the benefits of collective bargaining and their rights and obligations;

(c) strengthen outreach efforts to migrant athletes, in particular women and youth, in order to promote their organization and raise awareness about their rights and obligations within national law. This could be supported by transnational collaboration between trade unions and civil society organizations in countries of origin and destination.

▶ 6. Elimination of all forms of forced or compulsory labour

38. The Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29), and its 2014 Protocol, as well as the Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105), provide the international legal framework for protecting athletes from forced labour.

39. Every athlete should have the free choice of employment as an athlete and to move freely in pursuit of that work and employment.

40. Governments and social partners should develop policies and provisions through social dialogue to prevent any practice that may result in undue constraints on free labour, including disproportionate penalties.

41. Athletes can also face risks of forced labour, including human trafficking, in relation to migration, migration of persons under 18 years of age, and in relation to change of national allegiance.

42. To address athletes' risks of forced labour in the sport sector, key good practices include implementing regulatory safeguards and fostering collaborative efforts among key actors to tackle forced labour in the sector. Although the rules governing the transfer and mobility of athletes or their ability to compete in different leagues are generally established by sports governing bodies, these rules should comply with national and international laws and be the outcome of social dialogue and global policy coherence.

43. Rules for transfers of country allegiance should include review mechanisms to assess applications, proof that transferring athletes receive full citizens' rights in their new country and set out a minimum age requirement for transfers of allegiance.

44. International club or team transfers should be regulated for athletes under 18 years of age. Minors that are transferred should be afforded full child safeguarding.

45. Isolated or excessive training as retaliation or disciplinary measures for athletes, in particular in relation to an athlete exercising their fundamental principles and right at work, should be prohibited.

46. In giving effect to their responsibility to address the challenge of forced labour of athletes, governments, in consultation with employers' and workers' organizations, should:

(a) develop an integrated and gender-sensitive approach combining employment-related and other social measures for prevention of forced labour and trafficking in sport together with law enforcement and prosecution agencies;

(b) strengthen laws and policies regarding transfer commissions and related transparency;

(c) reinforce the independence and effective capacity of judiciaries and law enforcement officials, including labour inspectors, to identify, investigate and follow up on cases of forced labour including through training and the development of specific mechanisms in relation to sports academies and institutions dealing with minors, and in relation to athletes competing in international competitions;

(d) improve governance for fair recruitment to ensure the protection of athletes against fraudulent practices and abuses during recruitment within their territory and/or jurisdiction by third parties.

47. Employers and their organizations should:

(a) educate and inform employers in the sector on the prevention of forced labour;

(b) promote fair recruitment practices, including through assessments of recruitment procedures as outlined in the ILO's *General principles and operational guidelines for fair recruitment* and raise awareness on these principles;

(c) raise awareness on any information pertaining to false agents that is readily available.

48. Workers' organizations should:

(a) raise awareness of their members on the elimination of forced labour in the sector;

(b) provide training and awareness on sport recruitment practices, including fraudulent and abusive practices and false recruiting agents, in particular in sending countries of sport migrants.

▶ 7. Abolition of child labour

49. The Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138), and the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182), are the primary ILO instruments for preventing child labour and safeguarding child athletes. For the purpose of this section, child professional athletes are referred to as "children". The Preamble to Convention No. 182 refers to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. It is important to ensure that children's participation in sports does not compromise their health, safety, education or development.

50. Sport is a positive element in child health and social development. Children's participation in professional sport should be safe with proper precautions and ensure their full access to education. Factors such as early specialization, rigorous training, competitive pressure and power

imbalances in relation to coaches, trainers and other adults in positions of trust can expose young athletes to occupational safety and health (OSH) hazards and risks, violence and harassment, including gender-based violence, injury, as well as situations of child labour.

51. Types of sports may, by their nature or the circumstances in which they are carried out, harm the health, safety or morals of children and may, in extreme cases, constitute worst forms of child labour.

52. Children's rights in sport require special protection, including from violence and harassment, and from injuries and illness resulting from sport, including protection of mental well-being. Such protection is especially important for minors who are away from their home or who are migrants. In particular, children in sports should be protected from exploitation and unsafe practices, and also against all forms of violence and harassment. The best interests and meaningful participation of the child should be the guiding principles for the involvement of children in sport and those entrusted with their care and development.

53. While a number of international, regional and national guidelines regarding children in professional sport exist, they do not always follow identical approaches or standardized terminology. Constituents should work with relevant institutions to ensure that all such guidance on the protection of children is coherent and effective.

54. Thorough recruitment, selection, vetting and training of coaches, personal trainers, intermediaries, club staff and other employees, workers and agents who work with children are essential to safeguard children in sport, including through:

(a) contractual provisions that adhere to relevant national, regional, and international standards and principles;

(b) effective licensing systems which include minimum requirements in relation to specific skills, training, background checks on any criminal or administrative proceedings, and psychological evaluation.

55. Professional sports academies should respect and promote the fundamental importance of appropriate education for students and other sports stakeholders which develops their sporting excellence but also, where applicable and having regard to the interests of the students, prepares them for active labour market participation after a sport career.

56. Sports employers and sports organizations, as well as other relevant sports stakeholders, in cooperation with sports academies and centres of excellence, should respect and promote the fundamental importance of children being provided with tailored educational programmes that inform them and their guardians of their rights, the opportunities and challenges associated with a sporting career, the importance of education and social protection, integrity in sport, protection against violence and harassment, including online harassment, image rights, OSH, and responsible use of technologies and social media.

57. All sports organizations dealing with children should, in consultation with governments, social partners and relevant stakeholders, develop safeguarding policies and procedures specific to children. Such policies should set out in a clear and understandable manner the organization's understanding and definitions of all forms of harm to children and the organization's commitment to safeguarding children in all aspects of its work and be endorsed by the highest level of the organization. These policies should also establish effective, independent and confidential reporting, investigative and remedy mechanisms, including public sensitization processes.

58. Governments, in consultation with employers' and workers' organizations, should:

(a) ratify and effectively implement the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138), and effectively implement the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182), which has been universally ratified;

(b) develop, through tripartite consultation, national policies, strategies and plans of action to eradicate child labour in sport and provide safeguarding for children, with measurable outcomes and monitoring and evaluation frameworks, and strengthened interministerial coordination and institutional capacities, including with regard to education and law enforcement;

(c) set out minimum age and safety requirements for athletes, in particular those that involve hard physical contact, long hours of play, play exposed to natural elements, or extensive travel;

(d) determine, through social dialogue, which types of sport are likely to harm the health, safety or morals of a child, and set the minimum age for participation accordingly;

(e) ensure the appropriate regulation of sports governing bodies, institutions and academies with regard to protection of children;

(f) regulate cross-border recruitment of minors, where applicable;

(g) promote awareness of the rights of children, including the dangers of false recruitment agents and risks related to international migration for sport;

(h) strengthen labour inspection and other social inspection services to include sports organizations and academies, in particular with a view to detecting situations of child labour.

59. Employers and their organizations should:

(a) raise awareness of their members of child labour and safeguarding in sport;

(b) support efforts to detect and eradicate child labour in sport and cooperate with relevant authorities and services on the prevention and elimination of child labour, including through the provision of capacity-building.

60. Workers' organizations should:

(a) raise awareness of their members and support efforts to eradicate child labour in sport;

(b) ensure that children and their parents/guardians are informed on their rights and of the mechanisms available to them to assert these rights, including the development of the capacity to organize child athletes and provide for their meaningful participation in workers' organizations.

▶ 8. Promoting equal remuneration and non-discrimination in employment and occupation

61. Athletes' right to non-discrimination in employment and occupation is protected by the fundamental Conventions, namely the Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100), and the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111).

62. Other relevant ILO standards include the Violence and Harassment Convention (No. 190) and Recommendation (No. 206), 2019, which are further developed in section 10 below.

63. Every athlete should be entitled to equality of opportunity and treatment in employment and occupation (including access to vocational training, access to employment, and terms and conditions of employment) and be free from discrimination, including discriminatory harassment and violence. An athlete's right to pursue sport should not be limited on the basis of race, colour, religion, sex, political opinion, national extraction or social origin, or any other ground determined in accordance with Convention No. 111 or applicable international labour standards.

64. These challenges can be further shaped by intersectionality – the overlapping and compounding experiences of discrimination or exclusion.

65. Governments should promote equal terms and conditions of work for female athletes, including through establishing strategies and policies that promote gender equality and related monitoring, evaluation and accountability, and promoting an enabling environment for sustainable enterprises, to advance the business case for, and investment in, women's sport.

66. Sports governing bodies and employers should ensure the application to all athletes of the principle of equal remuneration for men and women athletes for work of equal value.

67. In determining whether women's and men's professional athletic work is of equal value, objective job evaluation methods should be used that are free from gender bias and that take into account objective factors such as skills, effort, responsibility and working conditions. Consideration should be given to a totality of factors, including sport performance, market value, growth potential, and contribution to social development, including the promotion of gender equality and inclusion.

68. Constituents should take steps to advance the implementation of equal remuneration and non-discrimination in employment and occupation by:

(a) researching existing disparities in remuneration and terms and conditions of work between men and women in the sport sector;

(b) recognizing the right of women athletes to organize and promoting the effective recognition of their right to collectively bargain, and building their capacity to do so;

(c) collaborating to create a strategic vision for women's sport, including the economic development of women's sport;

(d) promoting the equal representation of women in leadership and decision-making roles in sports organizations;

(e) addressing gender stereotypes and cultural barriers to the acceptance of women's professional sport and gender equality, especially through education, awareness-raising and effective social dialogue.

69. Governments, in consultation with employers' and workers' organizations should advance efforts, public or private, to close the gap in investment in women's sport and promote equal economic opportunities for women and girls. Such efforts can include:

(a) promoting an enabling environment for sustainable enterprises to support increased investments in the development of women's sport;

(b) increased promotion of women's sport;

(c) increased transparency in the allocation of financial resources between men's and women's sport;

(d) increased support to equalize training and playing conditions for women and men;

(e) raising awareness, visibility and promoting investment in women's professional sport to advance targets for equal pay in prize money;

(f) increasing and promoting opportunities for women athletes to benefit from public and private grants and other sponsorships;

(g) promoting post-competition career opportunities through access to lifelong learning and skills development and support to career transition for all athletes;

(h) undertaking efforts to support equal opportunities for girls through adequate access to education adapted to the needs of athletes, as a means of growing women's professional sport.

70. Constituents should adopt approaches which allow athletes, regardless of their gender and sex, to participate in sport safely and without prejudice. Criteria in this regard should be developed through social dialogue and consultation with all relevant stakeholders, where applicable and when appropriate, having due regard to health and safety, dignity, bodily autonomy, and the right to privacy.

71. Non-discrimination in employment and occupation for athletes requires consideration of gender specificities.

72. Adequate maternity protection and parental leave, in line with the Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183), should also be promoted.

73. Measures to promote non-discrimination with regard to access to social protection systems, including maternity protection and family leave, where applicable for athletes can include:

(a) promoting protection and extension of contracts in relation to pregnancy, adoption, or taking of maternity, adoption or family leave;

(b) the right to return to sport after maternity leave;

(c) the provision of additional leave before or after the maternity leave period;

(d) a minimum of 14 weeks of paid maternity leave, with at least 6 weeks after the child is born;

(e) the provision of alternative work should an athlete decide to stop training or competing due to maternity;

(f) health support after the athlete returns to work;

(g) regular breaks and dedicated space in training and competition venues to allow for breast feeding.

(h) the provision of access to paternity leave, where appropriate in national legislation.

74. Athletes can be exposed to racism, sexism and other forms of discrimination, including online, and related violence and harassment during sporting activities and related travel and social events.

75. Anti-discrimination measures should be based on principles of international labour standards. They should be centred on supporting the needs of the affected persons, and deal with related violence and harassment as set out in section 10 of these Guidelines. Measures should also be accountable, safe and accessible, rooted in meaningful stakeholder engagement and provide access to effective remedy. They should also fulfil five key functions: prevention, support, reporting, investigation, and remedy.

76. All constituents should, in collaboration with other stakeholders and when appropriate, advance prevention strategies, which can include:

(a) promoting a zero-tolerance culture to racism, sexism and other forms of discrimination and unequal treatment, including statements indicating a club, team or sporting event will not tolerate racism, sexism and other forms of discrimination;

(b) adding conditions to tickets for spectators not to engage in racism, sexism and other forms of discrimination;

(c) taking action to prevent the display of discriminatory slogans and banners inside a venue;

(d) taking disciplinary action against anyone, including athletes, clubs or associations, who engage in racism, sexism and other forms of discrimination;

(e) encouraging a common strategy between relevant stakeholders;

(f) developing a common stance against racism, sexism and other forms of discrimination;

(g) establishing appropriate, robust judicial and non-judicial measures such as ongoing assessments in relation to racism, sexism and other forms of discrimination and related violence and harassment in sport.

77. Constituents should, where applicable, promote support measures for athletes who encounter racism, sexism and other forms of discrimination. These can include:

(a) providing counsellors or contacts with mental health professionals to provide support, in a language familiar to the athlete;

(b) training staff to support athletes in dealing with racism, sexism and other forms of discrimination and unequal treatment;

(c) providing training for athletes on procedures and protocols for dealing with racism, sexism and other forms of discrimination and unequal treatment;

(d) engaging the media to combat discrimination, violence and harassment on media platforms;

(e) increasing the awareness of the long-term dangers and harm of racism, sexism and other forms of discrimination among athletes, federations, clubs and other relevant actors in the sport sector.

78. Constituents should, through social dialogue, and in collaboration with other relevant stakeholders, where applicable, promote efforts to empower athletes, referees and officials to take a stand against discrimination during games, including racism, racial discrimination and xenophobia, and ensure that such incidents are effectively addressed. Such efforts should also aim to protect athletes, managers and match officials, and other sport officials from discriminatory behaviour. Measures can include removal of offenders from the venue, attendance bans, game suspension or game stoppage.

79. Athletes with disabilities and adapted sports for athletes with disabilities can benefit from greater investment, promotion and social dialogue. Measures that could be taken to promote and further develop sports for persons with disabilities include:

(a) encouraging persons with disabilities, through organizations of persons with disabilities, employers' organizations or workers' organizations, to contribute directly to the development of sport and accessibility policies;

(b) promoting professional sports for persons with disabilities, including through the broadcasting of related sporting events;

(c) recognizing that athletes with disabilities require adapted protection with regard to discrimination, as well as the prevention and elimination of violence and harassment.

80. Governments, in consultation with employers' and workers' organizations, should:

(a) promote a zero-tolerance environment for racism, sexism and other forms of discrimination, and violence and harassment, including gender-based violence and harassment, in line with the Violence and Harassment Convention (No. 190) and Recommendation (No. 206), 2019;

(b) promote adequate and equitable access to support, grants and resources for athletes or persons training to become athletes without discrimination of any form;

(c) support the establishment and sound functioning of affordable childcare and long-term care, family-support services and facilities for athletes, in order to allow both women and men athletes with family responsibilities to remain in sport;

(d) provide access to gender-responsive and inclusive universal, comprehensive, adequate and sustainable systems of social protection.

81. Employers and their organizations should:

(a) support the development and effective implementation of policies to address racism, sexism and other forms of discrimination and violence and harassment at work, and promote diversity and inclusion, including by ensuring that such policies cover all those working in the sport sector;

(b) promote the principle that all workers, irrespective of their origin, enjoy equal opportunities and treatment in employment and occupation;

(c) promote diversity, through the participation of women and other under-represented groups in leadership positions within their sphere of influence, including by removing barriers to entry to and advancement in employment and careers and by combating gender stereotypes;

(d) promote the establishment of mechanisms for the prevention, monitoring and reporting of any incident of racism, sexism and other forms of discrimination, violence and harassment;

(e) take steps for the safe, fair and effective reporting and dispute resolution mechanisms and procedures in cases of discrimination, violence and harassment and providing access to appropriate and effective remedies.

82. Workers' organizations should:

(a) engage in awareness-raising on rights and obligations, with a view to changing attitudes and behaviour;

(b) ensure gender equality and diversity within their organizational structures and leadership, and integrate gender equality and non-discrimination issues in their agendas;

(c) play an active role, through social dialogue, in the design, development and implementation of any prevention measures in relation to racism, sexism and other forms of discrimination and related violence and harassment.

▶ 9. A safe and healthy working environment

83. Athletes' fundamental right to occupational safety and health (OSH) is set out by the Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No. 155), and the Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 (No. 187).

84. Athletes have the right to a safe and healthy working environment. Every athlete should be provided with a safe and secure workplace and sporting environment that promotes the athlete's safety as well as their physical and mental health and well-being.

85. Athletes and workers' organizations are important partners in the implementation and promotion of measures necessary to ensure safety and health in the working environment.

86. Athletes have the right to remove themselves from situations in relation to sport that they believe present an imminent and serious danger to their life or health and shall be protected from undue consequences in accordance with national conditions and practice.

87. Measures to ensure a safe working environment should include the provision of personal protective equipment (PPE) and protective athletic gear that is adequate, properly fitted and tailored to the needs of the athlete. OSH measures shall not involve any expenditure for workers.

88. The provision of occupational healthcare and support services for athletes in the working environment should be gender-sensitive and include access to practitioners who are trained in risks and sport injuries, specific to women and men. Athletes should be provided with adequate information and have authority and control over any treatment and support provided to them, where applicable.

89. Medical information and biometric data obtained through health or training services in sport relating to an athlete should be afforded the same protection as any medical information, unless the athlete has provided their free and informed consent.

90. Constituents, through social dialogue and engagement, where applicable with other relevant stakeholders, should consider advancing joint efforts to promote OSH in sport. Specific areas of joint action could include:

(a) establishing measures for the appropriate prevention and treatment of injuries during competitions, including concussion management;

(b) implementing measures for appropriate risk analysis and research, including cooperation with academic and clinical institutions specializing in sports medicine, physical education, and mental health and ensuring that such research and risk assessment are responsive to gender related differences;

(c) reviewing and evaluating sporting discipline rules and practices, equipment and facilities in relation to specific types of injuries;

(d) ensuring that sport training programmes include appropriate training to avoid injury and accidents;

(e) providing adequate rehabilitation services to facilitate the recovery (and reintegration) of injured or ill athletes and ensure their return to sport and competition only after they are fit to do so, as determined by a competent medical practitioner;

(f) addressing psychosocial risks as integral elements of OSH in sport;

(g) developing emergency preparedness and response protocols for serious incidents, including sudden cardiac arrest, extreme weather events and crowd-related risks;

(h) developing protocols, ensuring the protection of athletes through appropriate health measures, risk assessments and contingency planning;

(i) evolving effective methods for dealing with identified occupational safety and health risks in the world of sport;

(j) assessing other potential impacts linked to the collection and use of data, athlete monitoring, workload and scheduling, security, and the impacts of head injury and climate change, among others.

91. Athletes have the right to access universal social protection, which is of particular relevance in sport, where careers and related income and benefits can be cut short suddenly due to injury or illness. In line with international labour standards on social protection, governments should ensure social protection systems are adapted to the specific circumstances of athletes. Governments should enforce, and where necessary review, existing laws and practices, and take steps to ensure access to comprehensive and sustainable social protection coverage for athletes. Such protection should include, as appropriate, benefits for healthcare, sickness, old age, unemployment, employment injury and occupational disease, family and child support, maternity, disability, and survivors in case of death. Social protection should aim to guarantee, at a minimum, the range and levels of benefits set out in the Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1952 (No. 102), or in other ILO social security Conventions and Recommendations setting out more advanced standards.

92. Athletes can face mental health risks related to competition pressure, public scrutiny, risks of abrupt career ends, and violence and harassment. Constituents and other relevant stakeholders can address these possible risks by:

(a) raising awareness among athletes of their OSH rights, including those related to mental health;

(b) providing access to mental health services;

(c) integrating mental health awareness and practices into sports training.

(d) developing innovative personal development and lifelong learning programmes through engagement with athletes to protect and advance their physical and mental health and well-being.

93. Rest and recovery periods are central to managing OSH risks. Rest and recovery time, as well as work time (including travel, public relations and other obligations) should be considered as important in managing OSH risks and be established through social dialogue.

94. Doping in sport poses serious health and safety risks to athletes. Governments and employers' and workers' organizations should, through social dialogue, adopt measures to implement appropriate doping controls, promote anti-doping education and training, provide access to support services in cases of abuse of substances, and cooperate with relevant international bodies. Any sanctions or penalties aimed at an athlete should be the outcome of social dialogue and follow the principles of due process, including making legal counsel available to accused persons.

95. Climate change and the resulting extreme temperatures and weather conditions can pose specific hazards to athletes.

96. Governments should establish, through social dialogue, national OSH policies, programmes and systems in relation to sport, and promote a national preventative safety and health culture, in accordance with the relevant ILO instruments. Such measures can include:

(a) establishing authorities or bodies responsible for implementing national OSH systems in relation to sport and establishing mechanisms of intersectoral coordination among authorities and bodies relevant to the sport sector;

(b) establishing and maintaining education and training systems adapted to the needs of the sport sector, with special emphasis on enhancing OSH-related knowledge and skills;

(c) establishing reporting systems for the recording and notification of occupational injuries and diseases and collecting and analysing data, disaggregated by location, type of sport, sex and age in order to identify and take preventative OSH measures, and progressively developing procedures for recording and notification of occupational accidents and diseases.

97. Employers' and workers' organizations should cooperate to advance the effective implementation of OSH regulations.

▶ 10. Prevention and elimination of violence and harassment for athletes

98. The Violence and Harassment Convention (No. 190) and Recommendation (No. 206), 2019, provide the basis for preventing and eliminating violence and harassment in the world of work, including gender-based violence and harassment, in the sport sector.

99. Athletes can be at risk of experiencing various forms of violence and harassment. This risk can originate from different sources in the sporting environment and can occur during games, training, travel and social events, medical care, in digital spaces and acts that aim at, or may result in, economic harm.

100. More proactive measures are needed to prevent and combat violence and harassment in sport, including gender-based violence and harassment and harassment based on racism, sexism and other forms of discrimination. These measures include education, training for sport sector personnel, media campaigns, clear policies on athletes' rights and protection, and joint actions between athletes and sports organizations to signal mutual repudiation of such behaviour.

101. Specific measures can include:

(a) developing and implementing trauma-informed safeguarding policies and procedures, including reporting mechanisms, appropriate remediation and support in consultation with affected persons;

(b) enlisting the visible support of athletes and other prominent figures as part of prevention strategies;

(c) promoting zero tolerance of violence and harassment against athletes in sport;

(d) improving education and awareness among athletes and athlete support personnel;

(e) improving cooperation and collaboration with sports organizations and other partners to improve the effectiveness of safeguarding policies and procedures.

102. Governments, in consultation with employers' and workers' organizations, should:

(a) ratify and implement Convention No. 190. In countries where ratification has already taken place, social dialogue through tripartite consultations should be prioritized as the mechanism to transpose the Convention into national law. Laws on violence and harassment should promote collective bargaining at national, sectoral, enterprise and workplace levels, while prioritizing national and sectoral agreements;

(b) develop and adopt, through effective social dialogue, specific legislation and policies to prevent and address violence and harassment in sport;

(c) collect and share information and data on incidents of violence and harassment for monitoring and prevention purposes.

103. Employers and their organizations should:

(a) adopt and implement, in consultation with workers and their representatives, a workplace policy on violence and harassment;

(b) include the prevention of violence and harassment in the management of OSH, including by identifying hazards and assessing risks and taking measures to prevent and control them;

(c) provide knowledge-sharing opportunities to exchange experiences and good practices on initiatives, strategies and negotiations, including through social dialogue, to promote sport free of violence and harassment;

(d) develop guidance and information materials to promote the integration of joint risk assessments and preventive action on violence and harassment, including third-party violence and harassment, psychosocial risks and gender power inequalities, in OSH policies.

104. Worker's organizations should:

(a) provide membership and workplace training and awareness-raising on all forms of violence and harassment, particularly programmes to address intersecting and multiple forms of discrimination and situations of vulnerability faced by some athletes;

(b) provide guidance, tools and training to help ensure that the prevention of violence and harassment is an outcome of social dialogue and is effectively integrated into OSH policies, including through gender-responsive risk assessment programmes, and take into account risks related to online harassment, third-party violence and harassment and risks of domestic violence.

▶ 11. Follow-up to the Guidelines

105. To give effect to these Guidelines, ILO constituents can, with the support of the Office, as needed:

(a) through tripartite consultation, develop national and sport-discipline specific policies and plans to implement the Guidelines;

(b) promote the Guidelines with relevant sectoral constituents and actors, including through capacity-building and other activities;

(c) develop statistical capacity and national indicators to monitor progress on implementation;

(d) conduct research and document good practices in relation to the Guidelines;

(e) promote, in particular with organizations representing employers and athletes from developing and least developed countries, transparent, equitable and sustainable support mechanisms that contribute to the development of athletes from developing and least developed countries.