



# INTERNATIONAL FLOORBALL FEDERATION (IFF)

*Ordinary member of AGFIS/GAISF*

## Appendix 20

### IFF Equality Function

#### Planning meeting

31.3.2011 Helsinki

Present: Lars-Gunnar Tjärnquist, function chairman (LG)  
Kaarina Salomaa, function responsible within the IFF office (KS)  
John Liljelund, IFF Secretary General (JL)

#### 1. How do we define the equality?

Overall, equality can be looked at from different points of view like gender equality, religious equality, political equality and sexual equality. All above mentioned are important for the IFF and differences in these shall not hinder anyone from playing Floorball. To make this clear for everyone and emphasize it, the equality function will prepare an equality statement for Floorball.

When it comes to the practical work, the political equality has the smallest significance in sports. The rest (religious, sexual and gender equality) have aspects that shall be taken into consideration in practical issues. For example there are some religious rules concerning clothes and habits, which are in contradiction to the IFF rules and at some point solutions for these shall be considered. This becomes more actual, when Floorball grows in countries with different religious.

In the present situation of Floorball, the most important field to stress is the gender equality. Concerning the gender equality, there are current issues which shall be improved both inside the IFF and the member associations. Therefore it was decided that during this two year period, the equality function will concentrate on improving the equality between genders in the Floorball world.

#### 2. Why shall we stress equality?

In order to improve gender equality in Floorball, at first there needs to be a common understanding that it is important. IFF governs the Floorball world so the organization of the IFF should be an example of an equal organization for the member associations. Many important decisions where gender equality is affected are made by the IFF and this should be acknowledged. Everyone working within the IFF (including the central board, the committees and the office) shall be committed to work in the favor of equality. Concrete results can't be achieved if there is only a separate Equality Function promoting equality - instead equality shall be integrated to the functional units of the IFF and equality shall be taken into consideration when making decisions in all fields.

There are three main benefits that are achieved, if gender equality is actualized.

**Competence** - An equal sport is able to recruit more qualified coaches, team-leaders, referees and administrators. Competence does not rely on gender. It is important to use both the men and women - otherwise personal and economical resources are wasted.

Address:  
Alakiventie 2  
FI-00920 Helsinki,  
Finland

Phone:  
+358 9 454 214 25  
Fax:  
+358 9 454 214 50

E-mail:  
office@floorball.org  
Web-site  
www.floorball.org

Equality Function Chairman  
Lars-Gunnar Tjärnquist  
lars-gunnar.tjarnquist@innebandy.se  
+46 70 317 4934

Competition Coordinator:  
Kaarina Salomaa  
salomaa@floorball.org  
+358 400 529 035



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**Competition** - A sport that practices gender equality has advantages in its relations with parents, sponsors, local authorities and other financial supporters. In the tough competition between leisure activities Floorball has a possibility to stand out and offer an attractive alternative where everyone has equal opportunities.

**Climate of the sport** - Groups that include both men and women have a better climate. Research shows that in single-sex "arenas" there is a greater risk that unhealthy values will be reinforced and idealized. Heterogeneous groups are better at making use of the diversity of the expertise, skills and expertise that exists in such groups.

## 3. Status now: The equality in different fields within the IFF

### Administration

Within the IFF administration (Central Board, Committees and office) there are totally 48 persons of which 11 are women (23 %). This is mostly due to Athletes commission (50 %), Medical committee (50 %) and the Office (40 %). Out of the total of six committees, three committees don't have any women representation. If not taking into consideration the Athletes Commission (seats between men and women are predefined), only 16 % of the committee members are women.

CB and Office	Members	Women	%
IFF Central Board	10	1	10
IFF Office	5	2	40

Committees	Members	Women	%
Athletes Commission	8	4	50
Medical Committee	6	3	50
Rules & Competition Com.	7	1	14
Appeal Committee	3	0	0
Disciplinary Committee	3	0	0
Referee Committee	6	0	0
<b>TOTAL in committees</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>24</b>
TOTAL without ASC	25	4	16

### Competitions

The IFF started to organize World Championships for men and women at the same time. Also the club competitions have been offered already in the beginning for the both genders. The U19 WFC started first only with men, but only three years later the women's U19 championships were introduced.

The IFF treats men's and women's competitions equally when it comes to the resources set for an event. The aim is to maintain the level of service achieved in men's competition also for the next women's competition.

The member associations participate unequally to the men's and women's competitions with their national teams. The difference is the most significant between U19 competitions. The highest amounts of participants in different WFC competitions are: Men 31, Women 24, Men U19 20 and Women U19 13 countries. In the IFF club competitions the difference between the amount of participating men's and women's teams has always



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been smaller and since year 2007, the number of participating men's and women's teams has been almost equal (20 men's teams and 18 women's teams on year 2010).

The only IFF event where men's and women's teams are playing at the same time in the same place has been the EuroFloorball Cup and in the future also the Champions Cup. In these events the men's and women's teams have been treated unequally in the past. When it comes to the arena and the match times, women's teams have traditionally played in the smaller and the less equipped arenas. It has also been common that the women's matches have been played in the morning times while the men's teams have played on the prime-time. Also the location of the tournament in the organizing country has many times been defined by the men's team. The nation organizing the event has decided to organize the event in the home town of the men's team.

## Referees

The referees are treated equally in the IFF events regardless if the event is women's or men's event. The referees get the same compensation and same level of accommodation.

The number of international female referees is very low; currently there are only two international female referee pairs. The IFF Referee Committee has recognized the problem and will start actions to improve the situation in the future. The plans include finding a person to create a plan for female referee education and to supervise the development. The plan is also to organize a meeting for female referees during the Women's WFC 2011.

Last year the IFF RC also started a program, where the referees can specialize on men's or women's matches. This is aimed to bring more motivated and better prepared referees for the women's events.

The long-scale aim for the referees in the IFF events is that the women's events could be refereed exclusively by women referees. This is common in other sports and it is also the wish of the IOC. The possibility to achieve this goal depends mainly on the member associations. They are the ones who educate female referees so they should be able to put recourses and find means to produce more female referees.

## Information

The IFF web pages concentrate equally on both genders when it comes to news about the national leagues. News and other media products produced by the IFF in the IFF events are on the same level regardless of gender. This is mostly due to the fact that the IFF invests the same amount of resources in both men's and women's competitions. In the IFF materials and publications men and women are also treated as equal as possible. Sometimes men are favored in the photos or videos because of the better quality or more visible spectators. The main target is however to promote both genders equally.

## 4. Status now: The equality in the IFF member associations

The boards and committees of the IFF member associations are mainly dominated by men. There are only few women in the deciding positions. Out of 52 member associations, there are women as Presidents in 2 countries (Italy, Israel), as Vice President in 1 country (Finland) and as Secretary Generals in 6 countries (Austria, India, Ireland, Iceland, Netherlands, Ukraine).

There are competitions organized for women and girls in some member associations. Out of 52 member associations, about 30 countries organize women's national champions and about 15 organize competitions

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**Equality Function Chairman**  
Lars-Gunnar Tjärnquist  
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for girls. Especially in new Floorball countries the trend is to start the competitions first for men and boys and only after the sport has grown big enough to have more resources, the competitions are started also for women and girls. The resources in many clubs are divided unequally between men's and women's teams.

## 5. Key questions for the Equality Function:

- How it is possible to bring in more women to the IFF and to the member associations?
  - IFF: More women in the committees and the central board after the next elections on 2012
  - MA's: More women in the deciding positions in more countries
- What kind of means does the IFF have to influence on the equality in the member associations?
  - More countries to organize national competitions for women and girls
  - More countries to participate in the IFF events for women and WU19
  - More female referees on the national level
  - Equal treatment for women in news, photos and materials in member associations

## 6. Next steps

- Prepare an equality statement for Floorball (LG)
- Collect the facts and figures about equality in the IFF and in the member associations (KS)
- Organize a discussion in the IFF Central Board based on the facts about the current situation (LG)