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forum for anti-doping in recreational sport

FAIR+ Final Report 2022

Forum for anti-doping in recreational sport project

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Introduction from the convenor of the FAIR Forum, Professor Michael McNamee

The FAIR+ project is the second project to be funded by the Erasmus+ Programme to support multi-stakeholder investigations into the phenomenon of doping in recreational sport activities, following the Study on Doping Prevention (published in 2015) which had focused on the regulatory landscape for doping prevention in recreational sport. The first FAIR project looked at the landscape with particular focus on food and food supplements, and the identification of good practices with respect to anti-doping goals. Building on the successes of the previous work, the objectives of the FAIR+ project were to:

- *Research and analyse the existing prevalence of doping in recreational sport through a sample-based surveys and to investigate the societal and psychological motivations behind the use of doping.*
- *Review existing educational programmes to develop evidence-led recommendations on how to set-up effective educational campaigns targeting recreational sport coaches, instructors, and trainers.*
- *Update the Anti-Doping Code of Conduct in a call for accountability of the recreational sport sector against the use of doping, and a commitment for future action.*
- *Oversee an annual open FORUM for experts, institutions, academics and sport stakeholders to come together to debate, discuss and agree on policy directions in the area of anti-doping in recreational sport.*

The FAIR+ project was then comprised of two technical expert groups (TEG), one from a group of international anti-doping research experts (Aarhus, Saarland, and Sapienza Universities), and the other from range of National Anti-Doping Organisations (NADOs - Cyprus, Netherlands, Norway). EuropeActive was the project coordinator with TAFISA providing support for dissemination of activities and the running of the FORUM.

TEG 1 conducted the largest ever prevalence study of recreational athletes with respect to doping. Their study, in this notoriously challenging domain, used a research method (randomised response technique) that attempts to remove the tendency for athletes to modify their responses to questionnaires on embarrassing or sensitive issues – of which doping is certainly one. They found that around 10% of the sample had used over the counter medication for performance enhancement, while almost half used medications for purposes other than enhancement. Moreover, they report that less than 1% of the sample intentionally used prohibited substances for performance enhancement.

One conclusion that can be drawn from the study is that the content, meaning and relevance of recreational sportspersons with respect to doping may be notably different and require different policy or practice – including educational - interventions. Another focus of TEG 1 was to attempt to better understand recreational athletes' attitudes to doping where they may frame their activities as morally unproblematic. This is the first survey to have evaluated this psycho-social mechanism in recreational athletes across Europe. It concluded that male respondents disengaged morally more than females, and that, with respect to sports, recreational athletes in sports that are evaluated in terms of performance measurements (centimetres, grammes, seconds) had stronger moral perceptions towards the moral element of doping than other recreational activity groups. Notably they do not report regional differences within the European sample.

The NADOs in TEG 2 focused on the mapping of educational guidelines for coaches, instructors, and trainers in recreational sport, reported a somewhat patchwork landscape, arising from three interrelated studies (questionnaires, interviews, and focus groups) with relevant populations. They probed in particular both the nature of educational interventions (from face to face, or digital delivery), but also – crucially – the presence or not of evaluation programmes and the format that they took, where such evaluation had been conducted. They conclude that, as a result of the NADO and non-NADO stakeholder organisations' need to play to their strengths in terms of resource and access, no clearly defined or validated pattern of delivery or evaluation emerged. Although most organisations carried out monitoring activities, they reported limited evaluation processes. This is clearly a gap, even if an unevenly distributed one, in anti-doping efforts in recreational sport. In response TEG 2 have developed guidelines which can be used by the various stakeholders and professional groups who are actively involved in recreational sport to develop, monitor, evaluate and improve their anti-doping education programs.

The annual FORUM throughout the 3 years of the FAIR+ project continued to provide an important event for stakeholders to come together to discuss findings and policy development despite the restrictions of the COVID-19 pandemic. Set against the huge challenges presented, the two TEGS have produced key findings and recommendations that can help take the recreational sport sector forward in their efforts to promote doping-free activities and spaces with a new Commitment for Action.

Prof Mike McNamee

Dept of Movement Sciences
KU Leuven, Belgium

School of Sport and Exercise Sciences
Swansea University, UK

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Foreword by Tony Cunningham

It is a real privilege for me to contribute to the FAIR+ Forum. I have been a keen observer and listener during the previous iterations and really appreciated the input and contributions of all speakers. In particular the demonstrable efforts of the project partners to advance the knowledge base relating to the prevention of doping in recreational sport from the first FAIR project and the European Commission's Study on Doping Prevention published in 2014.

It has been interesting to witness the evolution of research? evidence and how the diverse, yet coordinated Work Packages have been contributed to a clearer r understanding of doping in recreational sport.

As the project reaches its conclusion and the partners seek to translate their work into meaningful practice that will ultimately contribute to the health of recreational athletes, they have asked me to share my experiences from my position at the World Anti-Doping Agency. As a member of the Education Department, I am responsible for the Social Science Research programme and policy as it relates primarily to the International Standard for Education.

Although technically sitting within the same policy environment, in that recreational athletes are defined in the World Anti-Doping Code, the focus of many anti-doping programmes has been predominantly on athletes in the structured competitive sporting environment. The development of education (in particular education policy) within the World Anti-Doping Program is not directly analogous to the development of anti-doping programs that focus on recreational sport, however there are key pillars of this development that can be compared and contrasted between the two, including:

- *An emerging evidence base of quality research that helps to provide direction about what is needed, what is missing and what is feasible.*
- *Having a growing number of advocates within the system who see the value in pushing the clean sport agenda further, pursuing anti-doping as a worthwhile cause and who are passionate about the outcomes and their impact is essential.*
- *A policy framework that facilitates a 'stick approach' (when needed) provides the necessary paradigm shift if backed up with the relevant training, knowledge sharing and resources.*

Education and social science research are still developing and growing, but there is emerging evidence from the Code Compliance process that there has been a step change in the volume of education activity that is happening, there is increased coordination among stakeholders and significantly more investment in education overall. There are still areas that need improving, such as conducting evaluation to determine the effectiveness of education programs.

It does appear that aligning research to inform policy and practice (and in turn pushing the research to catch up) is a step in the right direction.

Tony Cunningham
Senior Manager, Education (Policy and Research), World Anti-Doping Agency

Contents

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The FAIR+ Project

The Forum for Anti-Doping in Recreational Sport or FAIR+, project was co-funded by Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union.

The European Commission recognises the importance of anti-doping in recreational sport, though the lack of cooperation between institutions and stakeholders risks letting doping in recreational become a cause of public health concern. The FAIR+ project, a direct follow-up of the FAIR project, seeks to offer greater insight onto the prevalence of doping across recreational sport in Europe. The FAIR+ project has strived to do so through by reaching the following objectives:

- *To look into the existing prevalence of doping in recreational sport through a sample-based research, and investigate the societal and psychological motivations behind the use of doping at amateur level.*
- *To produce the FAIR+ Educational Guidelines that will provide several recommendations on how to implement effective educational campaigns targeting recreational sport coaches, instructors, and trainers, and which will look at providing indicators to assess impact. This work will be based on qualitative research performed with major doping stakeholders.*
- *To organise the annual Forum for Anti-Doping in Recreational Sport. The Forum has established itself as one of the most relevant European anti-doping events gathering experts, institutions and stakeholders to exchange on current policies and challenges. Since 2017, the Forum has contributed to raise policy-makers' awareness of doping in recreational sport as a societal and public health concern, and it strives to foster further EU-level cooperation, networking and sharing of good practices and ideas.*

Under the FAIR+ project, both Technical Expert Groups (TEG) conducted the following research:

- *Research on recreational athletes' use of performance enhancing substances, from the largest ever survey conducted on the topic*
- *Research on the societal and psychological motivations behind the use of doping in recreational sport*
- *Research and a new approach to anti-doping programmes for trainers and coaches*

Conceptualised and hosted by the FAIR+ project, and its predecessor the FAIR project (both co-funded by the Erasmus+ programme), the Forum has established itself as one of the most relevant European anti-doping events, gathering experts, institutions and stakeholders to exchange on current and developing policies. The Forum, over the years, has increased the awareness of policy makers about doping in recreational sport as societal and public health concerns, to address the limited co-operation at EU level in doping policy, and to establish a network for sharing ideas and good practices among sport and anti-doping stakeholders.

For more information about the FAIR+ project, and to access the fully published research papers of each TEG, please see: https://www.europeactive.eu/fair-project

Acknowledgments

The Forum for Anti-doping in Recreational Sport project could not have been completed without the contributions of many organisations, individuals and experts in the field of anti-doping. Notable thanks must of course go to the project partners who have executed the project plan with the utmost commitment and professionalism, and therefore we would like to extend our gratitude to the following partners and individuals:

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Prof. Fabio Lucidi, Sapienza University of Rome
Prof Michael McNamee, Swansea and KU Leuven Universities
Dr Laurie Patterson, Leeds Becket University
Dr Michael Petrou, Cyprus Anti-Doping Authority
PD Dr Werner Pitsch, Saarland University
Dr Helen Staff, Leeds Beckett University
Prof. Ask Vest Christiansen, Aarhus University
Kiera Wason, EuropeActive

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Recreational athletes' use of performance enhancing substances. Results from the first European Randomized Response Technique survey

Executive summary

Ask Vest Christiansen[1], Monika Frenger[2], Andrea Chirico[3], Werner Pitsch[2]

1. Aarhus University, Denmark
2. Saarland University, Germany
3. Sapienza University, Italy

Background

Measuring prevalence of doping is notoriously difficult. Being publicly disapproved doping is mostly concealed behaviour. Therefore, people who do dope will often not respond honestly when asked if they are – even when guaranteed anonymity. In elite sports, there are basically four ways to estimate doping prevalence: 1) anti-doping tests in and out of competition, 2) official investigations (governmental, police, other), 3) accounts from for instance athletes and journalists, and 4) surveys and questionnaires. Later years has added a potential fifth approach, namely wastewater analysis. Estimating doping prevalence only becomes more difficult when attending to populations of recreational athletes, as the first three options are largely redundant, leaving researchers with the survey/questionnaire option and potentially wastewater analysis. It is thus not surprising that only few studies have investigated recreational athletes' use of performance enhancing drugs.

The present research extends from a previous study that had the objective to "review the existing doping prevention interventions […] which are aimed at sports people, and report on good practices" (Christiansen, Bloodworth, Ham, & Cox, 2020, p. 24). Here, the researchers surveyed all EU's 28-member state's National Anti-Doping Organisations (NADOs) charged with anti-doping in recreational sport on their assessment of successful interventions. A central conclusion was that very little is known about what strategies are effective in preventing doping in recreational sport, as there "is very limited research on the doping problem in competitive recreational sport", and because "we do not yet have a good understanding of prevalence in various recreational sports" (Christiansen et al., 2020, p. 61).

Prompted hereby, the present study aimed to assess the use of doping among recreational athletes in Europe. More specifically, the study aim was to examine the prevalence of doping in recreational sport in eight European countries through indirect questioning by using the Randomized Response Technique (RRT). RRT is useful in self-report surveys asking sensitive questions where social desirability bias can be expected to distort the reports.

For this study, sensitive questions were asked for a) the use of over-the-counter medications for performance enhancement, b) the use of medication for purposes other than performance enhancement, and c) for the use prohibited substances for performance enhancement.

Terminology

When measuring "doping in recreational sport" there is a fundamental problem with the vague concepts employed. As regards "doping", we opted for a social scientific rather than a legal or theoretical approach to the definition. When we inquired about doping, it was thus the respondents' understanding that was at the fore, not the legal definition of the term used by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA), or a theoretical definition stipulated by the researchers. The survey asked explicitly about the use of substances that the respondent believed to be prohibited in their sport. The survey's social scientific approach thus measures doping in the intentional or moral sense (doping behaviour), rather than doping in the legal or judicial sense. The prevalence results therefore reflect European recreational athletes' own understanding of doping and not actual anti-doping rule violations, ADRV's, as stipulated by WADA.

Literature review

In the literature review we found only three studies that had measured on prevalence in somewhat similar ways. However, these three either concerned a specific country, a specific age group or focused on methodological comparisons. We therefore believe the present study is the first ever to survey the use of doping and performance enhancing drugs in recreational sport in a larger multi-national region.

Methods and Design

Randomized Response Technique

Because the doping issue is sensitive and admitting to use can be embarrassing, the survey used the randomized response technique (RRT) for questions on doping and use of medication. The rationale for this was twofold. First, using RRT ensures comparability of the results with other doping surveys in recreational sport and in elite sport. Second, the RRT has shown to generate more reliable responses than those obtained by direct questioning. The primary reason for this is that the RRT reduces social desirability bias, i.e., the tendency of survey respondents to answer questions in a manner that will be viewed more favourable by others.

Survey questions and dissemination

The original idea was to make a point prevalence measurement of doping in recreational sport in Europe in the autumn of 2020. However, as most sports were shut down during the COVID-19 pandemic, we could not ask respondents about their current behaviour. We ended up running the survey in the spring of 2021 and inquire respondents about their behaviour in 2019. Obviously, this significantly increased the risk of recall bias, but due to time limitations of the study period, we had to accept this.

To have an even spread of northern, central, and southern Europe in the sample, eight European countries were included in the survey: Norway, Denmark, United Kingdom, Germany, Spain, Italy, Greece, and Cyprus.

The survey was primarily disseminated via snowball sampling using social media platforms. We engaged student assistants to disseminate the survey. Each responsible for their own country.

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Results

In total, 17,324 clicks on the link to the survey were registered. There were 8,146 records with data, of which 7,260 were from respondents reporting to be recreational athletes. However, as athletes were asked for more than one sport that were assessed independently, 9,562 records, covering 208 sports, were obtained. After data quality control, the final number of records to be analysed was 9,365. As respondents were asked for their doping behaviour in up to two sports, 6,167 records addressing doping behaviour were obtained.

When calculating our results based on these figures, we applied weighted statistics. This was to correct for the bias in the number of records per country, gender, and age.

As the number of records were insufficient to calculate results for individual sports, the 208 sports were categorized into four categories aligned with the so-called vulnerability thesis for doping: “Artistic sports” (e.g., dance and gymnastics), “Combat sports” (e.g., judo, karate, boxing), “Games” (e.g., football, tennis, volleyball), “CGS-sports” (i.e., sports measured in centimetres, grams, and seconds, e.g., athletics, cycling, swimming,) and the residual category, “Other”.

In the first two RRT question respondents were asked for the use of a) over-the-counter medications to enhance sporting performance and b) use medication for training or for competition for purposes other than performance enhancement.

We found that approximately 10 percent of the population indicated to be using over-the-counter medication for performance enhancement, while 44 percent reported the use of medication for training or competition for purposes other than performance enhancement.

The central doping question of the survey was "did you knowingly use prohibited substances or methods to enhance your sporting performance in 2019?" This question addressed the prevalence of dopers. Note, that a doper in this context is a person that intentionally uses prohibited substances. We found a prevalence of 0.4 percent dopers among respondents. Differentiating between females and males nuances the picture slightly. Whereas there were an insignificant number of female dopers, we found 3.1 percent of male dopers.

Shifting the perspective from individuals to sports, gives a slightly different picture, as we then look for the prevalence of doping in each sport or sports category. Overall, we found a prevalence of 1.6 percent for all sports. While Combat sport had too few records to be calculated, the prevalence for Artistic sports and CGS sports did not differ significantly from the overall prevalence of 1.6%. Only for the category of Games did we find a higher prevalence of approximately 7 percent. However, because of statistical uncertainty this figure must be interpreted with caution.

Conclusions

This study used indirect questioning technique, RRT, to assess the prevalence of sport-induced medicine use and the use of performance enhancing substance among European recreational athletes in 2019. Ten percent of respondents reported use of over-the-counter medications for performance enhancement, whereas almost 45% indicated to use medicine for other reasons than performance enhancement when playing sports. We distinguished between "doping", as the use of prohibited substances in a given sport, and "dopers", as designating individuals intentionally using prohibited substances. While we found an overall prevalence of 0.4% dopers, we saw 3.1% male and zero percent female dopers when distinguishing between the sexes. Looking at sports rather than individuals, showed an overall doping prevalence of 1.6%. Of the four sports categories Games was the only one with a higher prevalence than the overall category. Additionally, the differences in organisational and competitive structure in recreational- and elite sport, expose that the applied sports categories have different content, meaning and relevance in recreational sport when contrasted with elite sport. Consequently, the vulnerability thesis has less explanatory power in recreational sport than it has in elite sport. Therefore, to come to a better understanding of the phenomenon, doping in recreational sport deserves its own research approaches.

Reference

Christiansen, A. V., Bloodworth, A., Ham, E., & Cox, L. (2020). Doping prevention in recreational sport in Europe–a study on emerging practices among European stakeholders, Chapter 3 FAIR Final report. Retrieved from **https://www.europeactive-euaffairs.eu/projects/FAIR**

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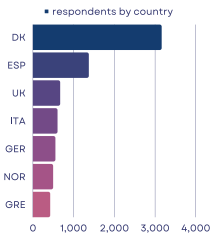
RECREATIONAL ATHLETES' USE OF PERFORMANCE ENHANCING SUBSTANCES

Results from the first European RRT survey

Survey method
Indirect questionning (RRT) is used to reduce social desirability bias.

Overall visitors
17,324
during May-July 2021, 27.8% drop-out

Sample
Northern, Central & Southern Europe

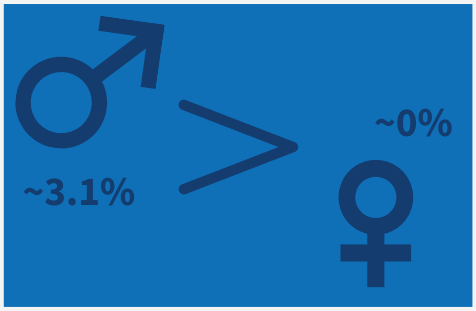


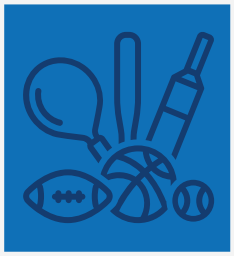
Prevalence of doping
~1.6%
in recreational sport

Prevalence of over-the-counter medication for performance enhancement

Use of medicine
45 out of 100
for other reasons than performance enhancement.

"Dopers are men – not women"





Competition
explains doping better than
category of sports

Doping research in recreational sport needs its own tailored approach

Ask Vest Christiansen, Monika Frenger, Andrea Chirico & Werner Pitsch. Recreational athletes' use of performance enhancing substances: Results from the first European Randomized Response Technique survey, 12 July 2022, PREPRINT (Version 1) available at Research Square [https://doi.org/10.21203/rs.3.rs-1788363/v1]

Investigate the psychological motivations behind the use of doping in recreational sport

Executive summary

Andrea Chirico[1], Fabio Lucidi[1]

1: Sapienza University, Italy

Background

In the last decade, different theoretical models have been developed with the aim to make sense of doping from a psychological perspective. Most studies have studied this in elite athletes. However, there is concern that doping is also impacting "recreational sports." The current study aimed to better understand recreational athletes' doping beliefs evaluating different psychosocial variables. Our approach integrated critical components of moral agency (Aquino & Reed, 2002), social cognitive theory (SCT; Albert Bandura, 2001), and the theory of planned behaviour (TPB; Ajzen, 1991)1985, 1987.

Methods and Design

Measures

Socio-demographic characteristics. Each participant reported the following data: age, gender, country, primary sport practiced, level of competition, and years of experience. Subsequently they replied to a battery of questions exploring the respondent's position related to the below concepts.

Doping moral disengagement. Moral disengagement (MD) is a focal development of SCT; can be characterized as the "self-serving, self-regulatory process that allows people to dope while still believing they are acting morally." Doping moral disengagement was measured using the 6-item scale developed by Lucidi et al. (2008) (an example of a question on this scale is: "Compared to the damaging effects of alcohol and tobacco, using prohibited performance and image enhancing substances is not so bad").

Self-regulatory efficacy. As indicated by the SCT, "perceived self-efficacy" alludes to people's convictions about accomplishing their objectives and overcoming challenges. A sport-specific version of the doping self-regulatory efficacy scale was used to measure the perceived ability to resist doping (an example of a question on this scale is: "I feel I can resist using doping when pressured to do so by others").

Attitudes. According to the Theory of Planned Behavior, attitudes refer to people's assessment of a way of behaving. Consequently, one's attitude toward doping comprises a positive or negative evaluation of its utilization. Attitudes toward performance-enhancing substances was evaluated through a short version of the Performance Enhancement Attitude Scale (an example of a question on this scale is: "Legalizing performance and image-enhancing substances would benefit sports").

Moral identity. Moral identity refers to people's cognition when thinking about their moral character and desire to be a moral person. Moral identity has been evaluated using the 5-item internalization subscale of moral identity scale adapted to sports contexts. Participants were presented with certain traits (e.g., caring, fair, kind, helpful) and asked to respond to statements concerning these traits (for instance, "It would make me feel good to be a person who has these characteristics").

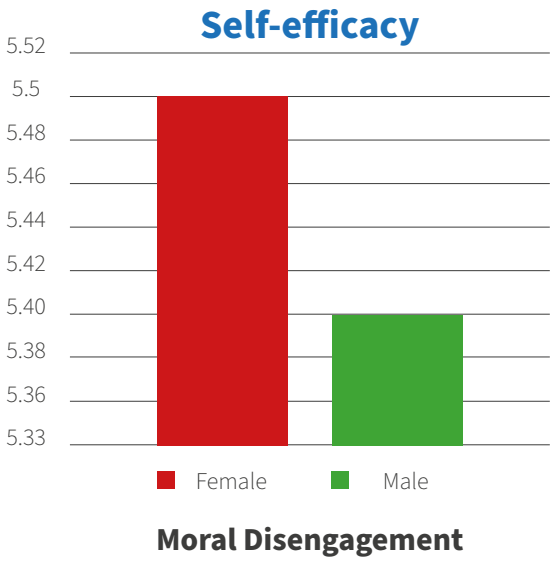
Co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union

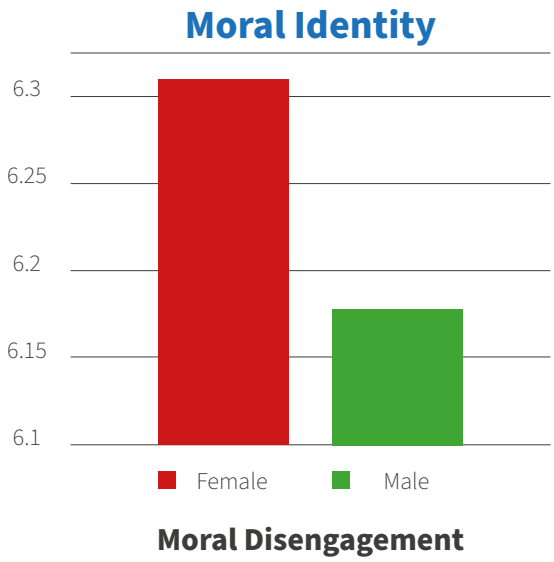
Results

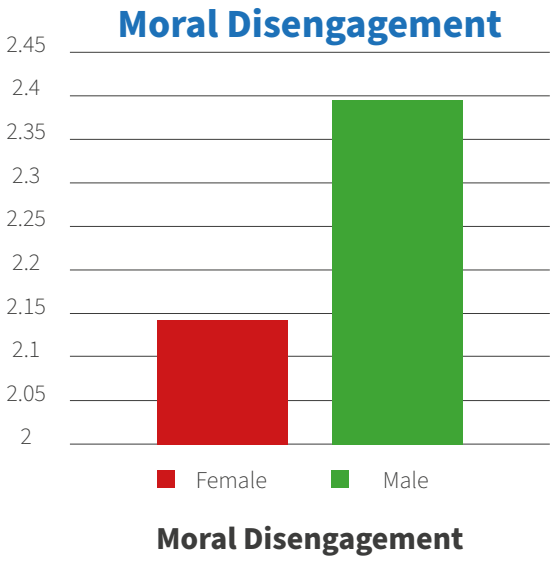
Calculations were made to assess the difference between Gender (male; female), European Region (Northern, Central, Southern), and Sport Category (CGS; Artistic, Games) on the critical variables of the study.

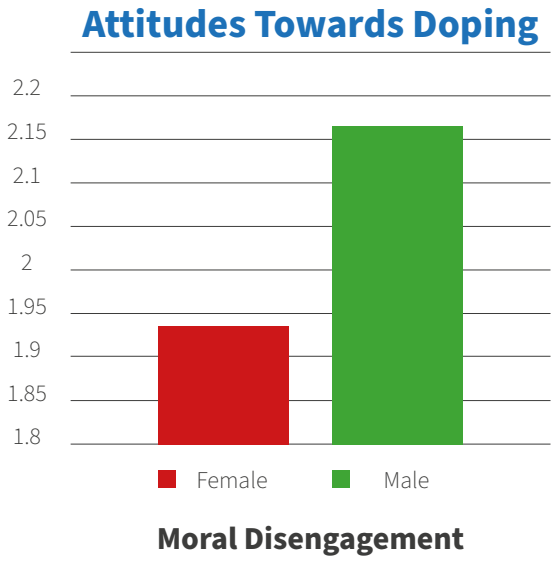
Gender

Results showed significant differences between males and females in all the variables except for self-efficacy. Males reported significantly higher levels of attitudes toward doping, and moral disengagement, while females showed significantly higher Moral Identity.



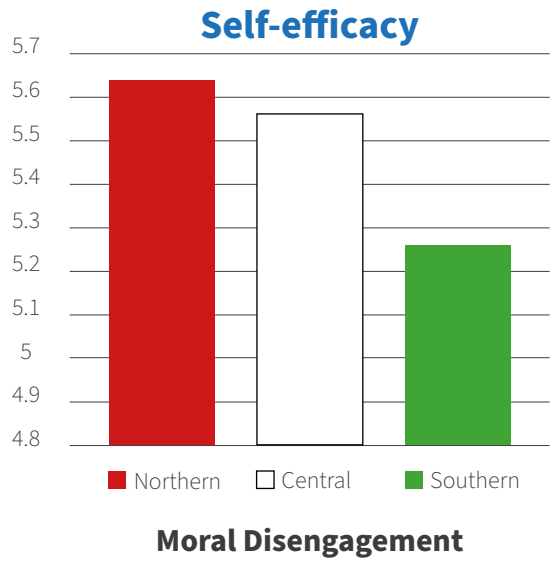


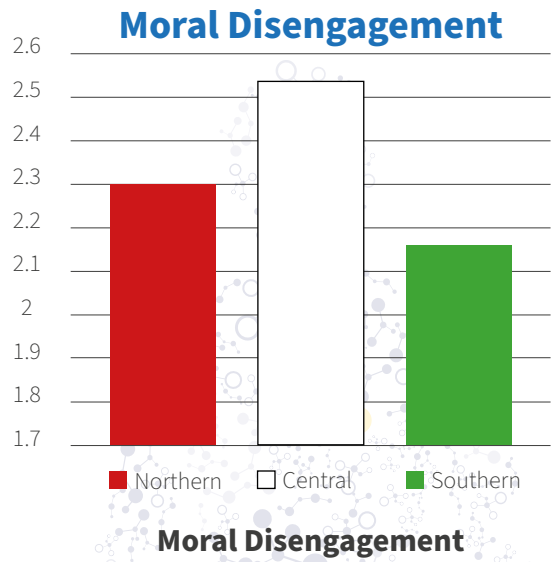


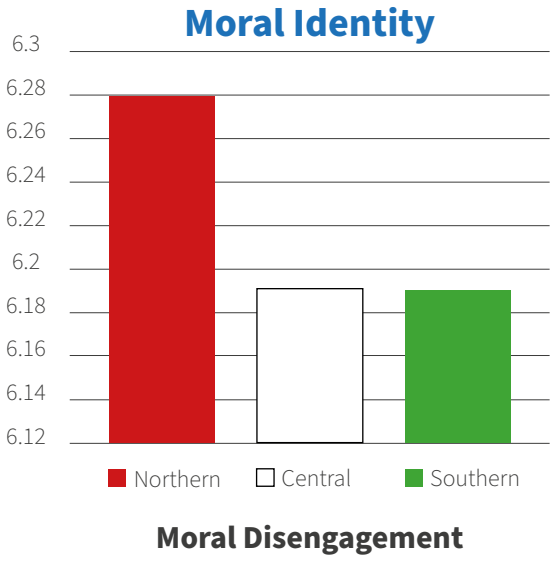


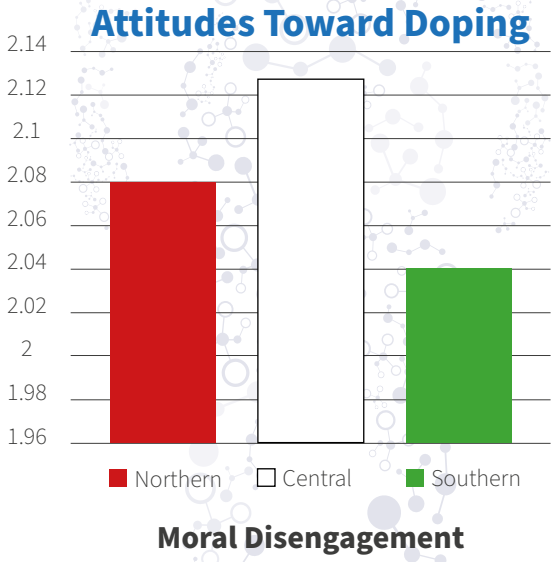
European Region

Results showed significant differences between European Regions on all the variables, except for the attitudes toward doping. The analysis reported a significantly higher level of Moral Identity for the Northern Region compared to the Southern one (p<.001); and a substantially higher level of Self-regulatory efficacy for Northern and Central Regions compared to the Southern one (p<.001). For what concerns Moral Disengagement, the analysis showed the highest level for Central Region (p<.001), followed by Northern and Southern.









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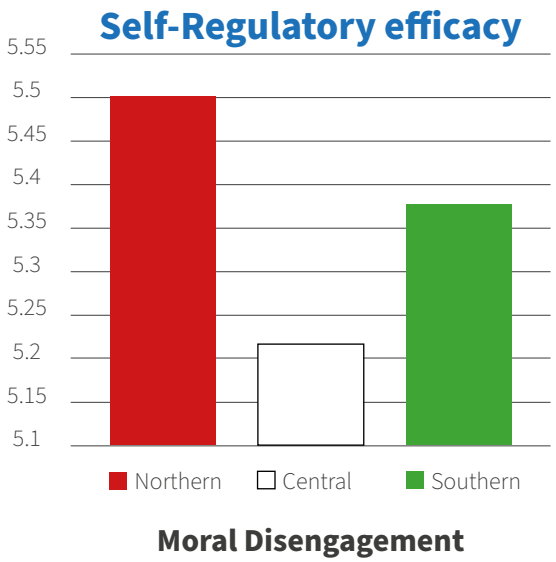
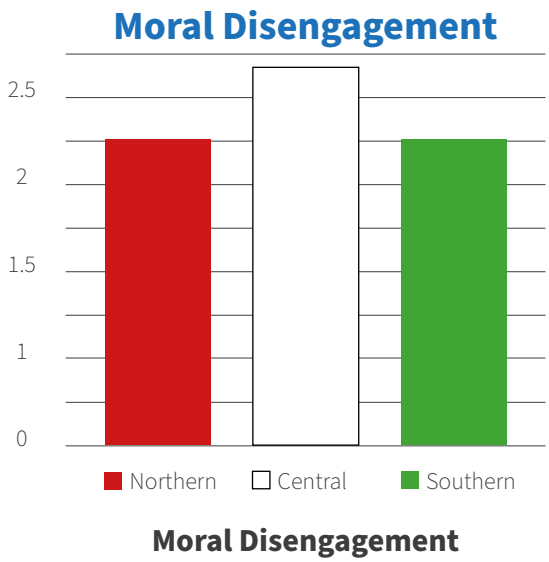
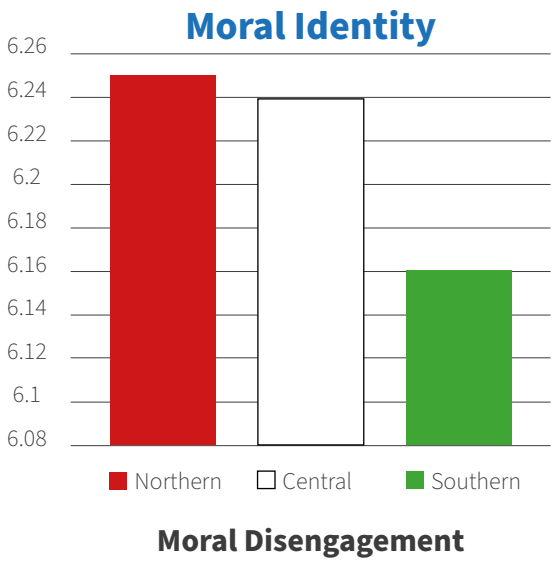
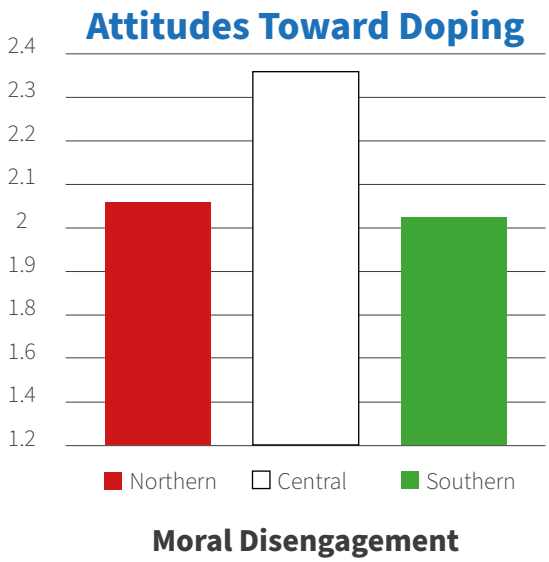
Sport Practiced

Results showed significant differences between the Sport categories on all the critical variables of the study. The analysis reported a significantly higher level of Attitudes toward doping and Moral Disengagement in Artistic sports (which included fitness) than in CGS sports and Games ($p<.001$). Conversely, CGS sports showed higher Moral Identity and Self-Efficacy levels than Artistic sports and Games ($p<.001$).









Results of the hypothesized model

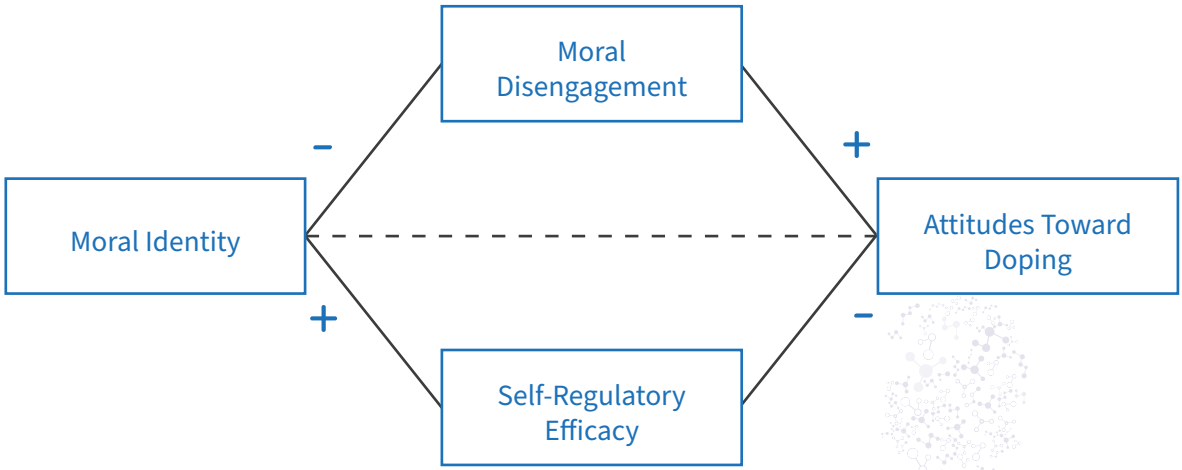


Figure 1 – The tested model of interaction. Note: "-"defines an inverse relationship; "+" defines a positive association. The dotted line is a non-significant effect.

Overall, the tested model (represented in figure 1) showed a positive and significant effect of Moral Identity ($p<.001$) on Self-efficacy and a negative impact on Moral disengagement ($p<.001$). In turn, Moral Disengagement was positively related to attitudes toward doping ($p<.001$), and self-efficacy acted as a negative predictor of attitudes toward doping ($p<.001$). Moral Identity was not directly related to attitudes toward doping, while its effect (negatively related) was indirect through both Moral Disengagement and Self-Efficacy ($p<.001$).

Conclusion

This is the first survey that evaluated psycho-social aspects underpinning doping in recreational athletes across different European Countries.

Results of the first set of analyses showed that male recreational athletes had a more positive attitude toward doping and, at the same time, reported more Moral disengagement with a lower Moral identity. Concerning differences regarding the European Regions, the results did not show any differences in terms of attitudes toward doping. However, they showed a pattern that put Northern Region with the strongest Moral Identity and high Self-efficacy. Also, the sports categories revealed some differences in the critical variables of the study; specifically respondents doing Artistic sports reported the highest level of Attitudes toward doping and Moral disengagement. In contrast, participants who practiced CGS sport had a higher moral component (Moral identity) and a higher perception of resisting doping than others.

Overall, our data showed all significant, but small differences between the considered groups. In terms of relationship and process between the key variables, it appears that the role played by moral stable personality structures such as moral identity, become crucial by means of more malleable beliefs such as moral disengagement and self-regulatory efficacy. Future anti-doping strategies on this target group could consider the described intercorrelations, and the role of these variables in order to focalize their interventions.

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Technical Expert Group 2

Development of Anti-Doping Education Guidelines for Coaches, Instructors, and Trainers in Recreational Sport

Executive summary

Erik Duiven[1], Fredrik Lauritzen[2], Michael Petrou[3]
All authors contributed equally to the work

1: Anti-Doping Authority Netherlands
2: Anti-Doping Authority Norway
3: Cyprus Anti-Doping Authority

Background

Existing anti-doping education is largely focused on elite sport and less investment has been allocated to preventing and combatting doping use in recreational sport settings1. Although doping in recreational sport has been recognised as an emerging public health challenge2, it is unclear how many EU countries have made systematic efforts to tackle it. Coaches and related professionals (e.g., instructors and trainers) play an important role in anti-doping education, because through their work they can promote clean sport values and attitudes, and support the dissemination of knowledge about the ethical, health, and social consequences of doping3-4.

The primary aim of the FAIR+ Technical Expert Group 2 (TEG2) was to provide a framework of principles and guidelines on (a) how to set-up anti-doping educational programmes, and (b) how to monitor and evaluate the effects of such programs. The framework of principles and guidelines can be used to enable the continued development of educational programmes for coaches, trainers and instructors in recreational sport provided by relevant organisations, including:

- *National Anti-Doping Organisations (NADOs).*
- *National and international sport federations.*
- *National and community sport clubs.*
- *The fitness industry (e.g., national gym partnerships or organisations, gym chains, branch organisations, local independent gyms).*
- *Other key sport stakeholders and groups (e.g., coaches' federations).*
- *Education providers, particularly in the fields of sport science, coaching, and related disciplines at a vocational qualification and post-secondary education level.*

1 *Recreational sport is defined here as sport, exercise and physical activity which takes place in a low-level competitive or non-competitive environment and engages participants/individuals at sport events, fitness centres, sport and leisure clubs, and outdoor-based activities.*

2 *McVeigh, J., & Begley, E. (2017). Anabolic steroids in the UK: an increasing issue for public health. Drugs: Education, Prevention and Policy, 24(3), 278-285.*

3 *Patterson, L. B., Duffy, P. J., & Backhouse, S. H. (2014). Are coaches anti-doping? Exploring issues of engagement with education and research. Substance use & misuse, 49(9), 1182-1185.*

4 *Barkoukis, V., Kaffe, S., Atkinson, A., et al. (2021). Fitness professionals' perceptions of acceptability and usability of anti-doping education tools for recreational sports. Drugs: Education, Prevention and Policy, 1-11.*

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To this end, the TEG2 group coordinated three empirical studies using mixed research methods, in order to fulfil the following specific objectives:

- *Map existing practices and resources related to anti-doping education for recreational sport coaches, trainers, and instructors;*
- *Identify key areas for policy intervention; and*
- *Develop relevant guidelines for effective, suitable, and sustainable anti-doping educational programmes and resources for coaches, trainers, and instructors involved in recreational sport.*

The TEG2 studies reported obtained ethics approval from the Cyprus National Bioethics Committee.

Study 1 involved the administration of an online survey to 102 sport and Anti-doping organisations, including 36 European NADOs. The goal of the survey was to map, describe, and analyse anti-doping educational programmes and other related activities targeting recreational sport coaches, trainers, and instructors. The survey comprised three parts: a) type and content of any education programmes provided by the NADO to coaches, trainers, and instructors in recreational sport; b) methods of evaluation of these programme(s); and c) format of reporting the evaluation, if any.

In total, 56 organizations (55%) responded to the survey, including 34 European NADOs (94%). Twenty seven of the 34 European NADOs (79%) reported that they currently provide, or have provided in the last 5 years, anti-doping education programmes for coaches, trainers and instructors in recreational sport.

Among the 27 European NADOs that currently provide or have provided such programmes, face-to-face group sessions (93%, n = 25), print media (63%, n = 17) and e-learning (56%, n = 15) were the most commonly used educational activities. All of them (n = 27, 100%) included topics on risk factors associated with doping in their programmes. Other common topics included prohibited substances and methods (n = 26, 96%), consequences of doping (n = 25, 93%), and risks of unintentional doping from using dietary supplements (n = 24, 89%). Anti-doping topics which may be less relevant in recreational sport were also frequently included, such as Therapeutic Use Exemptions, Anti-doping rules, the doping control process, the principle of strict liability and whistle blowing.

Only 12 out of the 27 NADOs (44%) had conducted some type of evaluation of their programme, of which 10 had also reported the conclusion of this evaluation, either internally or externally. Only one NADO had published the results of their evaluation in a peer-reviewed journal.

The findings from the TEG2 survey with NADOs imply the need to: a) further develop links between academic research and anti-doping education practice to increase the quality of evaluation and make the results publicly available through publication in peer-reviewed scientific journals; b) develop customised anti-doping education programmes that are contextualised around recreational sport and reflect the needs and realities of coaches, trainers, and instructors in these settings; c) adopt robust methodologies to evaluate the effectiveness and usefulness of anti-doping education programmes; and d) identify and share the best practices in anti-doping education for coaches, trainers, and instructors in recreational sport.

Study 2 aimed to further expand the findings from Study 1. To fulfil this goal, individual interviews were

conducted with 14 representatives from 11 NADOs and 3 other sport organisations that participated in Study 1. The interviewees were responsible for their organisations' anti-doping education provision. The interviews focused on the key features of the anti-doping education programmes (e.g., what learning opportunities are provided, and which key topics are covered); aspects of education programme development, implementation, and evaluation; and the future focus and direction of anti-doping education for coaches, trainers, and instructors in recreational sport.

The data was analysed through a process of thematic analysis5, and four main themes were identified: a) what anti-doping education practices were followed; b) why the specific practices were followed; c) enablers and barriers experienced in the development and implementation of coach anti-doping education; and d) how existing anti-doping education practices were monitored and evaluated.

The key findings from Study 2 indicated that the provision of anti-doping education programmes and relevant learning opportunities were diverse and addressed the needs of different populations within recreational sport. Furthermore, the provision of anti-doping education was driven by global and/or national policies and legislation. Having access to sufficient human and financial resources also enabled the development and implementation of anti-doping education programmes for coaches, trainers, and instructors in recreational sport. Nevertheless, the findings also showed that although monitoring of anti-doping education programmes was in place, relevant evaluation processes were rather limited.

Study 3 used focus group interviews with anti-doping education practitioners and expert academics to explore their beliefs and expectations about the content, key features, and characteristics of anti-doping education programmes directed to coaches, trainers, and instructors in recreational sport. Overall, 3 focus groups were conducted and involved 3 academic experts in social science research on doping and anti-doping education (Group 1); 5 representatives from NADOs in Europe (Group 2); and 3 representatives from EU-based organisations that are actively involved in the provision of anti-doping education for recreational sport (Group 3).

Across the 3 focus groups, the interviews included common questions about anti-doping education for recreational sport coaches, trainers, and instructors and addressed the following topics: a) defining anti-doping education and key focus areas b) defining the critical points and specifications for anti-doping education provision; c) addressing the relevance of WADA's International Standard for Education (ISE) and/or other frameworks; d) identifying the enablers, barriers, and potential solutions for anti-doping education; e) identifying key issues in the evaluation and assessment of anti-doping education; and f) recognising the role of the employers in promoting anti-doping education.

The conclusions drawn from the three aforementioned studies were used to: a) inform the development of specific guidelines for the development, monitoring, and evaluation of anti-doping education programmes targeting coaches, trainers, and instructors in recreational sport; b) identify relevant organisations that can use those guidelines to further promote anti-doping education in said groups; c) indicate the professional target groups in recreational sport that would mostly benefit from anti-doping education; and d) identify the most relevant topics that should be covered by anti-doping education programmes targeting recreational sport coaches, trainers, and instructors.

5 *Braun, V., Clarke, V., & Weate, P. (2016). Using thematic analysis in sport and exercise research. In A. Sparkes & B. Smith (Eds.), Routledge Handbook of Qualitative Research in Sport and Exercise (pp. 213-227). London, UK: Routledge.*

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Study 1: Map existing practices and resources related to anti-doping education for recreational sport coaches, trainers, and instructors

Methods and design

Participants: One hundred and two organisations, divided in three groups, were invited to participate in the study: Sampling Group 1 - National Anti-Doping Organisations (NADOs; n = 44); Sampling Group 2 - World Anti-Doping Code (WADC) signatory international sport organisations (n = 48); and Sampling Group 3 - other sport, fitness, and/or anti-doping organisations (sampling group 3, n = 10).

NADOs were the main target group for the survey, because, for the most part, the development, provision, and evaluation of anti-doping education is in their remit, and is also consistent with the 2021 WADA ISE. While all EU NADOs were invited to participate in the study, a purposeful sample of NADOs in Europe and in other continents was identified and invited to participate in the study. Out of the 44 NADOs contacted, 36 were from Europe, three from Asia, two from Oceania, two from America and one from Africa.

International federations were selected based on doping risk that was assessed using the criteria and conclusions of WADA's Technical Document for Sport Specific Analysis (TDSSA6). The TDSSA is a tool that is intended to assist Anti-Doping Organizations in contributing to more intelligent and effective Testing programmes for sports/disciplines and is mainly based on the Physiological Risk Assessment that consider physiological demand and non-physiological factors in each sport/discipline. Other sport, fitness, and/or anti-doping organisations included in the study were non-WADC signatory international federations of widely practiced sports and which are considered to be high risk related to doping use, and non-NADO fitness or anti-doping organisations known to be active in the field of recreational sport and doping prevention.

Questionnaire: A 13-item online questionnaire, specifically designed by FAIR+ TEG2 for the purposes of this study was circulated among the participants. The questionnaire collected information about anti-doping education programmes for coaches, trainers and instructors in recreational sport of the participating organisations in the last five years and contained three parts; 1) type and content of any education programmes provided to coaches, trainers and instructor in recreational sport, 2) methods of evaluation of the programme(s), and 3) format of reporting the evaluation, if any. The questionnaire is shown in Appendix 1.

Results

In total 58 (57%) organisations responded to the survey. There were, however, large variations in response rates between the sampling groups, ranging from a 94% (34 out of 36) response rate among the European NADOs to 29% (14 out of 48) among WADC signatory international sport organisations. All EU NADOs (n = 28, Belgium was represented by its two largest anti-doping organizations) responded to the survey.

Among the respondents, 41 organisations (71%) reported that they provide or has provided in the last 5 years, anti-doping education programmes for coaches, trainers and instructors in recreational sport. Corresponding numbers were 79% (n = 27 of 34) and 82% (n = 32 of 39) of European NADOs

6 *TDSSA – Technical Document for Sport Specific Analysis. World Anti-Doping Agency. https://www.wada-ama.org/en/resources/world-anti-doping-program/tdssa-technical-document-sport-specific-analysis*

and all NADOs, respectively, while six of 14 international federations and three of five other sport organisations also replied they did provide or has provided in the last five years, such programmes.

Due to a low response rate from sampling group 2 and 3, (i.e. other organisations than NADOs), data from these organisations were excluded from the further analysis.

Which education activities are provided?

When more closely examining the education programmes of the European NADOs in the survey (n = 27), face-to-face group sessions (93%, n = 25), print media (63%, n = 17) and e-learning (56%, n = 15) were the most common educational activities provided (figure 1). Remote learning, such as live online webinars were less common (33%, n = 9) and mobile based apps (15%, n = 4).

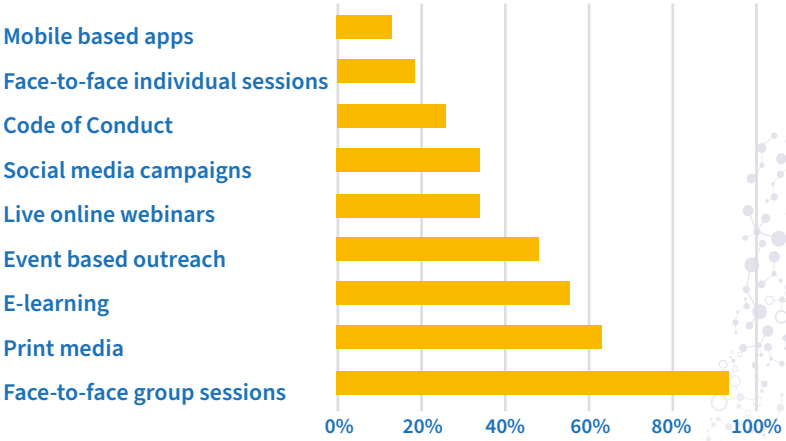

Figure 1. Education activities provided by European NADOs in the survey. *Of 36 European NADOs invited to the survey, 34 responded to the survey and 27 organisations reported providing at least one education activity for coaches, instructors and trainers in recreational sport. Data is given as share of NADOs providing a specific education activity.*

What topic(s) are included in the programme(s)?

All NADOs which provided at least one education activity for coaches, trainers and instructors in recreational sport included the topic Risk factors associated with doping in their programmes. Other common topics were Prohibited substances and methods (96%, n = 26), Consequences of doping (93%, n = 25) and Risks of unintentional doping from using dietary supplements and/or pharmaceutical drugs (89%, n = 24) (figure 2). Many of the most prevalent topics is about providing information (about negative aspects of doping use) and about rules and regulations according to the WADC. Less emphasis was put on the positive sides of not using prohibited substances and how to create a protective and healthy sport environment.

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Topics included in programs among European NADOs (n = 27 of 34)

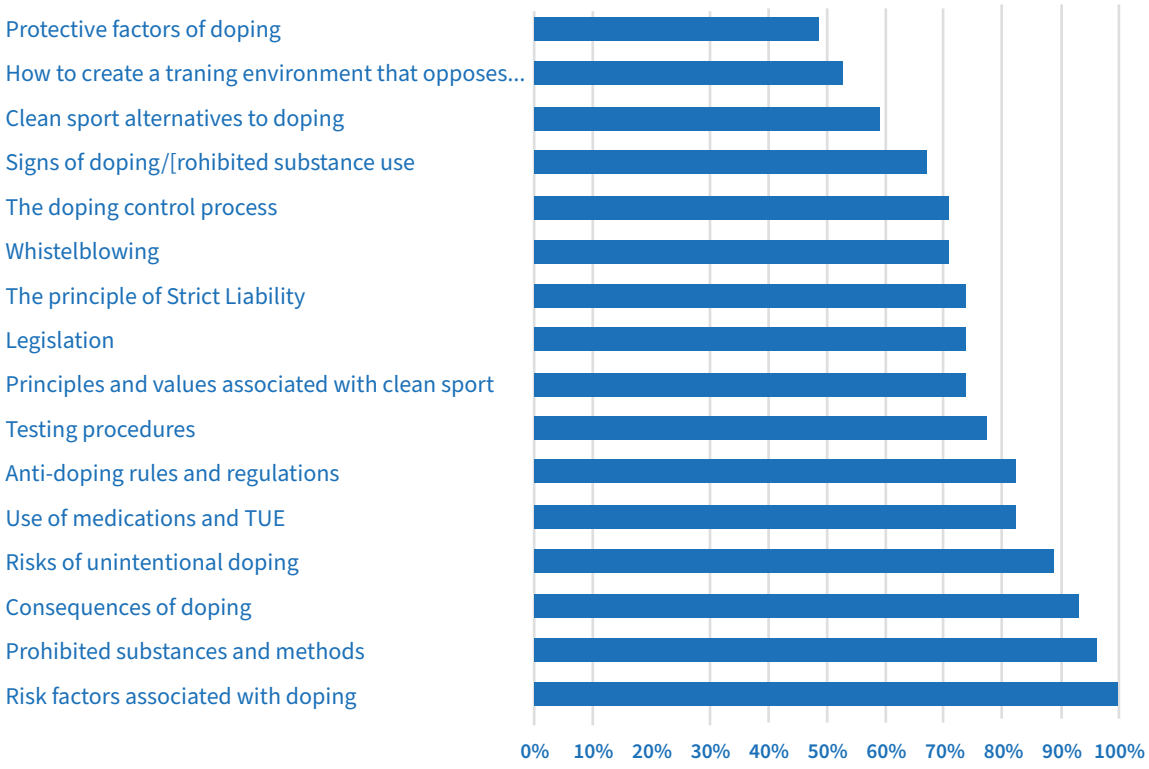

Figure 2. Topics included in education programmes among European NADOs. Data is given as share of European NADOs providing a specific education topic for coaches, instructors and trainers in recreational sport.

Monitoring and evaluation of education programmes

Twelve of the European NADOs (44%) reported they had conducted evaluation of their programme(s), of which survey among participants were the most common method used for evaluation (table 1).

Ten out of 12 had reported the conclusion of the evaluation, either through an internal report (n = 7), publicly available report (n = 5), report shared with stakeholders (n = 4) and/or report published in a peer-reviewed scientific journal (n = 1).

Table 1: Methods used for evaluation of education programmes for coaches, trainers and instructors in recreational sport. *Of the 27 NADOs replying to the survey, 12 organisations reported that they had conducted evaluation of their programme(s).*

Method	%	n
Survey among participants	41	11
Individual qualitative, oral or written feedback from participants	26	7
Recorded quantitative data on participants (e.g. number of participants, age, sport discipline)	22	6
Individual interviews	15	4
Internal evaluation	15	4
Focus group interviews	7	2
Other	7	2

Conclusions

On the whole, 79% of European NADOs that participated in the study reported they provide education programmes for coaches, instructors and trainers in recreational sport or have provided such programmes in the last five years. However, the results indicate a need for a higher degree of customized programmes, as recreational sport and recreational athletes are different from their counterparts within elite sport, and because many of the education topics reportedly included by the NADOs in this study may be less relevant in the recreational sport context. Furthermore, lessons learned from the recent Covid-19 pandemic suggest that anti-doping organisations should be less dependent on the need for physical meetings to provide education, for example by providing solutions for remote learning.

The survey shows that European NADOs as a group provide a plethora of education programmes and that almost half of the NADOs have evaluated their programme(s). However, many programmes and activities are only available in the local language and the results of the evaluations are rarely made publicly available. Taken together, this means that good practices are not easily accessible to other stakeholders in the field. This makes sharing of anti-doping education programmes and their effectiveness between organisations difficult. Therefore, anti-doping organisations interested in providing education programme for coaches, trainers and instructors in recreational sport must in many cases start from scratch when developing a programme, likely to "invent the wheel" over and over, instead of building on the experiences, successes and failures already made by their anti-doping colleagues in other countries.

Study 2: Identify key areas for policy intervention

This study aimed to further expand the findings from Study 1. To fulfil this goal, individual interviews were conducted with representatives from NADOs and other sport organisations.

The FAIR+ project Technical Expert Group 2 (TEG2) approached members from the Carnegie School of Sport at Leeds Beckett University to undertake the interviews with organisation representatives. Based on their experience and expertise, the team specifically included: Dr Laurie Patterson (Project Co-ordinator), Dr Helen Staff (Co-Investigator) and Professor Susan Backhouse (Co-investigator).

Methods and design

Based on the data from study 1, members of FAIR+ TEG2 identified a purposeful sample of organisations it would be useful to gain greater detail from; specifically, these were organisations who stated that they had provision in place for coaches, trainers, or instructors in recreational sport in their survey response. The interviewees were responsible for their organisations' anti-doping education provision.

The final sample recruited for the interviews comprised 14 individuals from National Anti-Doping Organisations (n = 11) and other fitness and sport organisations (n = 3), On average, the interviews lasted approximately 55.83 minutes (range = 47.21 - 78.51, SD = 7.82). With the permission of the participants, all interviews were audio recorded to facilitate verbatim transcription.

To facilitate the interviews, an interview guide was developed by the research team in collaboration with the FAIR+ TEG2 team. The interviews focused on the key features of the anti-doping education programmes (e.g., what learning opportunities are provided, and which key topics are covered); aspects of education programme development, implementation, and evaluation; and the future focus and direction of anti-doping education for coaches, trainers, and instructors in recreational sport. Across all interviews, questions were tailored to the interviewee based on the information they provided in the survey.

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Interview data was abductively analysed using thematic analysis. This method is made up of a six-staged iterative process of data analysis: (1) immersion, (2) generating codes, (3) searching for and identifying categories, (4) reviewing categories, (5) defining and naming categories, and (6) writing the report. Moreover, this approach involved inductively ("bottom up") constructing meaning from the interview transcripts, and deductively ("top down") mapping the findings against the sections identified within the interview guide.

Ethical approval for the FAIR+ project was granted by the Cyprus National Bioethics Committee, and approval for this sub-component was also granted by a Local Research Ethics Coordinator at Leeds Beckett University (UK).

Results

The researchers identified four higher-order themes, which are: a) what anti-doping education practices were followed; b) why the specific practices were followed; c) enablers and barriers experienced in the development and implementation of coach anti-doping education; and d) how existing anti-doping education practices were monitored and evaluated.

Theme 1: What anti-doping education practices were followed

This theme provides an insight into the activities that organisations use within their coach anti-doping provision. It showed high degrees of variety in practice. Firstly, the interviewees proposed a range of delivery methods, with the main ones being face-to-face delivery, hard copy materials and online resources/Applications. Methods were often mixed by organisations, as opposed to reliance on only one approach.

Similar diversity was present when interviewees discussed the ways in which their activities aimed to promote recreational coaches' anti-doping behaviours. Common examples were scenarios, question and answer, videos, social media posts and posters. Lastly, the 'intensity' of programmes was also varied; though, frequency and length/duration of learning opportunities were discussed by only a few individuals.

Interviewees also spent time discussing the topics included in their provision. Less variety was present, as most topics identified by interviewees related to the topics identified in the World Anti-Doping Agency's (WADA) International Standard for Education (ISE) – namely Risks of supplement use, consequences of doping, and substances/the Prohibited List). This is interesting given that some organisations (i.e., other sport or fitness organisations) included in the sample are not signatories to the WADA Code.

Theme 2: Why the specific practices were followed

To inform guidelines for organisations on how to set up effective educational programmes targeting coaches, trainers, and instructors in recreational sport, the organisation representatives were asked to identify why they provide anti-doping education to these target groups. The interviewees reported that their provision was influenced by external and or internal priorities. In addition, this theme captures information pertaining to the organisations' desired outcomes following the provision of coach anti-doping education. The data is presented across two sub-themes: (a) mandates and priorities drive the provision of anti-doping education for coaches, trainers, and instructors in recreational sport, and (b) provision aims to raise awareness, including signposting and dispelling myths.

(a) mandates and priorities drive the provision of anti-doping education for coaches, trainers, and instructors in recreational sport.

The organisation representatives reported that factors external to the organisation shaped their provision of anti-doping education for recreational sport coaches, trainers and/or instructors. Specifically, the main reasons for provision were a mandate from global (e.g., WADA) and/or national organisations and increased interest in public health.

With regards to mandates, a number of participants identified that the introduction of legislation in relation to drug use and trafficking prompted organisations to provide education for recreational coaches.

In countries where legislation was not the main driver of education activity, interviewees from several NADOs reported that it was often the priorities of those working at the top of the organisation who influenced the provision of education in recreational sport

(b) Provision aims to raise awareness, including signposting and dispelling myths.

Coach anti-doping education was seen as a means of raising the coaches' awareness, in order to support the information they provide to those they are working with.

Furthermore, all interviewees discussed the increasing prevalence of false and or inaccurate information shared within the environment. This was often in reference to the use of dietary supplements as a means to enhance performance. Interviewees perceived that a supplement culture exists within recreational sport. To overcome inaccurate beliefs and address the spread of false information, their provision aimed to provide a credible voice and source of information for people to turn to.

Theme 3: Enablers and barriers experienced in the development and implementation of coach anti-doping education

This theme provided insight into the factors that organisation representatives perceived supported and/or challenged their provision of anti-doping education for coaches, trainers, and instructors in recreational sport.

Interviewees identified that educating athletes and athlete support personnel in recreational sport was a priority within their organisations and/or countries. As such, representatives reported that their activities were supported with appropriate resources (e.g., funding). Furthermore, over time they have built up the capability to develop and implement anti-doping education for this population.

Despite these encouraging findings (where the systems these individuals and organisations operate in promote education for recreational sport), the interviewees' efforts appeared to be constrained by the environments surrounding the system, such as the existence of multiple policies (which can cause confusion/conflict), lack of regular connection to the populations of interest, cultural differences across populations, the large scale of the population to reach, and the lack of research that exists specific to recreational populations.

Descriptions of the main findings are organised into two sub-themes: the enablers (a) and the barriers (b) practitioners experience during the development and implementation of anti-doping education for coaches, trainers, and instructors in recreational sport.

(a) Enablers for development and implementation

Overall, individuals delivering anti-doping education for coaches, trainers, and instructors in recreational sport have the capability to develop resources and adapt their delivery to the needs and wants of the target audience. These behaviours are supported by the supply of appropriate human and fiscal resources and, perhaps, more importantly, collaboration and support from

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external organisations. In addition, interviewees reported being motivated to develop education and believe that certain strategies (e.g., tailoring, collaboration) can support the implementation of such provision. Notably, the priorities of the organisation influenced an individual's motivations to develop and implement education but having both the capability and opportunity to do so was necessary in order for action to be taken.

(b) Barriers for development and implementation

Although each organisation provided some form of anti-doping provision for recreational sport coaches, trainers and/or instructors, the interviewees reported experiencing a number of barriers that inhibited the development and implementation of programmes.

Specifically, they reported that the introduction of multiple policies hindered their ability to interpret what was important when developing resources, and implementation was restricted if they failed to develop habits, including regular connection with those in the community. While our previous section on enablers highlighted that most organisations have resources available, some interviewees suggested these resources were sometimes constrained, and a lack of research with recreational coach populations also impeded the development of their provision. Exacerbating this was the lack of guidance provided within legislation, the ever-present focus on elite sport within the anti-doping system, and the cultural differences across populations.

Furthermore, specific to the gym/fitness centre community, business decisions – such as selling nutritional supplements on site because it is expected by members – affects the degree to which anti-doping provision is implemented. Lastly, the vast number of recreational coaches negatively impacted the interviewees beliefs about what they were capable of; this may connect back to the earlier discussed goal to deliver face-to-face provision.

Theme 4: How existing anti-doping education practices were monitored and evaluated.

Beyond the development and implementation of coach anti-doping provision, interviewees reported activities related to monitoring and evaluation. Specifically, interviewees provided insight into (a) the methods they used and the limitations of these methods, and (b) how they would like to develop this element of their provision in the future.

Overall, individuals recognised monitoring and evaluation as important. Activities were undertaken at varied frequencies, but with consistent methods. In particular, post-education surveys/questionnaires were used to have participants rate the experience or provide open-ended comments to report how useful/relevant/interesting the learning opportunity was. Some organisations also employed a 'knowledge check', asking multiple choice questions, having coaches check if substances are banned, or gauging their opinions on a matter to ascertain if they had taken on board the content of the session (e.g., they agreed that a situation was risky/against the rules, etc).

Interviewees discussed challenges specific to monitoring and evaluation, which involved reflecting on if their methods truly established effectiveness and if they could better investigate long-term effects, as well as questioning the fact that they often received only positive feedback. Some interviewees proposed actions that they proposed would improve monitoring and evaluation activities in the future, including increased partnerships (especially with researchers), greater regulation (including making feedback mandatory) and enhanced technology (to make long-term tracking more accessible).

Conclusions

The insights provided by the interviewees have enabled a development of understanding of how the chosen organisations approach their provision of anti-doping education for recreational sport coaches, trainers, and instructors.

Firstly, conducting the interviews prompted a realisation of how broad a term 'recreational' is (i.e., it covers several contexts). Many interviewees focussed on gym/fitness centres, including training staff and accrediting organisations. School environments (from young ages to college/university) were also discussed, including teachers and professionals (e.g., coaches/instructors in training, as well as doctors/nurses and sport scientists). Specific to 'sport', a few individuals were able to discuss the provision they have in place, or were in the process of developing, for coaches working at 'non-elite' levels.

Across the three sub-populations of the recreational context, there are different ways of providing education. While this might come across as a 'patchy landscape', having a range of learning opportunities often fits well with individual needs and wants and allows organisations to play to their strengths in terms of resource and access. So, multiple methods and variety in activities, can be a good thing. Despite some variation in the way things are done, there was consistent use of face-to-face and online methods.

There was also consistency in the topics covered, with a firm grounding in the World Anti-Doping Code (International Standard for Education). Therefore, unsurprisingly, stakeholders across organisations who reported providing education to any one of the recreational populations (coaches/trainers/instructors) identified that their actions are driven by global policy (e.g., World Anti-Doping Code) and/or national policy/legislation. Sometimes, efforts to educate recreational coaches, instructors or trainers were also related to public health interests.

The development and implementation of provision for recreational coaches, trainers and/or instructors was made possible by appropriate access to human and fiscal resources and support from external organisations. In particular, all interviewees were committed to moving forward collectively to support recreational populations. They were knowledgeable and skilled at educating – including recognizing the need for, and knowing how to, tailor provision to these groups – and they wanted to ensure that their work had positive impacts in these contexts. Despite this, some interviewees shared that their provision was often constrained by the environment in which they are situated (e.g., a lack of research, 'commercial nature' of sport and fitness).

In terms of evaluation, the majority of the organisation representatives carried out monitoring activities to assess participants' knowledge, make changes to current provision, and or access continuing/additional revenue. Yet, they reported limited evaluation processes and we believe that this is the main area that will need further thought or research going forward.

Study 3: Develop relevant guidelines for effective, suitable, and sustainable anti-doping educational programmes and resources for coaches, trainers, and instructors involved in recreational sport.

Study 3 used focus group interviews with anti-doping education practitioners and expert academics, and accordingly inform the development of specific guidelines for anti-doping education for coaches, trainers, and instructors in recreational sport. Overall, 3 focus groups were conducted and involved 3 academic experts in social science research on doping and anti-doping education (Group 1); 5 representatives from NADOs in Europe (Group 2); and 3 representatives from EU-based organisations that are actively involved in the provision of anti-doping education for recreational sport (Group 3).

The FAIR+ TEG2 approached Professor Lambros Lazuras from Sheffield Hallam University, UK, to assist with the focus group interviews and the development of the guidelines for anti-doping education for coaches, trainers, and instructors in recreational sport.

An interview guide was developed by Prof Lazuras in collaboration with the FAIR+ TEG2 team. Across the 3 focus groups, the interviews included common questions about anti-doping education for recreational sport coaches, trainers, and instructors and reflected the following topics: a) defining anti-doping education and key focus areas b) defining the critical points and specifications for anti-doping education provision; c) addressing the relevance of WADA's International Standard for Education (ISE) and/or other frameworks; d) identifying the enablers, barriers, and potential solutions for anti-doping education; e) identifying key issues in the evaluation and assessment of anti-doping education; and f) recognising the role of the employers in promoting anti-doping education. The qualitative data obtained from the focus groups interviews were analysed by means of content analysis.

The input from the focus groups was used to: a) inform the development of specific guidelines for the development, monitoring, and evaluation of anti-doping education programmes targeting coaches, trainers, and instructors in recreational sport; b) identify relevant organisations that can use those guidelines to further promote anti-doping education in said groups; c) indicate the professional target groups in recreational sport that would mostly benefit from anti-doping education; and d) identify the most relevant topics that should be covered by anti-doping education programmes targeting recreational sport coaches, trainers, and instructors.

Guidelines for Anti-Doping Education for Coaches, Instructors, and Trainers who are actively engaged in Recreational Sport

Doping in Recreational Sport

The definition of "recreational" sport can be elusive and vary considerably between countries and organisations, and the recreational sport population is also highly heterogeneous. This must be taken into consideration when setting up education for coaches, trainers and instructors within recreational sport. To reduce ambiguity, the present report is based on the following definition of recreational sport:

> *"Recreational sport is defined here as sport, exercise and physical activity which takes place in a low-level competitive or non-competitive environment and engages participants/individuals at sport events, fitness centers, sport and leisure clubs, and outdoor-based activities" (FAIR Final Report, 2019)*

The guidelines presented here highlight the importance of providing anti-doping education to coaches, instructors, and (personal) trainers in recreational sport. These professionals/practitioners are in frequent contact with large numbers of people doing sport on a regular basis, employed (or volunteer) across different levels of sport (e.g., working with both recreational and elite competitive athletes) and therefore, they may directly or indirectly play an important role in preventing the use of doping substances within recreational sport settings and the society, in general.

They present guidelines were developed to primarily address the learning and education needs of the sport technical entourage (e.g., coaches, trainers, and instructors), but they may also be useful and relevant to coaches, trainers, and instructors in national and elite level sport as well as the sport medical entourage (e.g., medical doctors, physiotherapists, sport nutritionists etc.).

The guidelines can be used by various stakeholders and professional groups who are actively involved in recreational sport, and who have an interest or remit to prevent doping in recreational sport settings by promoting clean sport values and behaviours. Indicatively, the guidelines can be of particular relevance to the following organisations:

- *National Anti-Doping Organisations (NADOs).*
- *National and international sport federations.*
- *National and community sport clubs.*
- *The fitness industry (e.g., national gym partnerships or organisations, gym chains, branch organisations, local independent gyms).*
- *Other key sport stakeholders and groups (e.g., coaches' federations).*
- *Education providers, particularly in the fields of sport science, coaching, and related disciplines at a vocational qualification and post-secondary education level.*

Clean sport education, therefore, should ideally target the following groups:

- *Students in vocational and post-secondary education or in higher education who study for a coaching qualification or a degree in sport science.*
- *Coaches, instructors, and trainers employed or volunteering in national federations.*

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- *Coaches, instructors, and trainers employed or volunteering in local sport clubs.*
- *Coaches, instructors, and trainers, including personal trainers, who are employed or self-employed in the fitness industry.*
- *Others who are actively engaged in recreational sport coaching/training/instruction and are in contact with children, adolescents, and adults involved in recreational sport.*

Clean sport education for recreational sport coaches should ideally focus on developing relevant knowledge, skills, and behaviours. To this end, the following areas can be indicatively addressed by relevant education initiatives:

- *Principles and values associated with clean sport, contextualised in recreational sport settings (e.g., doing sport for fun, joy, and health promotion).*
- *Consequences of doping, for example, on physical and mental health.*
- *Substances and methods on WADA's Prohibited List.*
- *Risk of supplement use.*
- *Coping with high-risk situations (e.g., encounters with athletes who already use doping substances, or athletes at-risk for using).*
- *The role, responsibility, and influence of coaches on athletes' decisions to engage in doping.*
- *The role, responsibility, and influence of coaches in safeguarding and protecting the health of their athletes/exercisers.*
- *Promotion of a clean sport environment locally.*
- *Risk and protective factors for doping use in recreational sport settings.*
- *"Soft skills", such as active listening and communication skills, in order to facilitate discussion with athletes or exercisers with doping-related concerns.*

Determining Education Provision Specifications

Relevant questions

- *Who should offer anti-doping education to coaches in recreational sport? What type of synergies can support this? Who should be responsible for coordinating, monitoring, evaluating, and certifying coaches' training?*
- *What type of education programs would be more feasible to deliver? What mode(s) of delivery should be used?*

SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

- *National Anti-doping Organizations (NADOs) could offer clean sport education to recreational sport coaches, instructors, and trainers.*

- *NADOs should consider the development of strategic collaboration and synergies with the key stakeholders (e.g., sport federations, fitness industry, health and education authorities) to plan, develop, communicate, promote, and implement clean sport education for coaches, instructors, and trainers in recreational sport.*

Clean sport education for coaches, instructors, and trainers in recreational sport may incorporate the following features:

- *Be diversified in order to address the educational and training needs of groups at different stages in their career, such as pre-service and in-service coaches, trainers, and instructors.*
- *Provide fundamental knowledge of relevant anti-doping areas (e.g., nutritional supplements and doping; substances and methods of the prohibited list; consequences of doping on health; coping effectively with doping-risk situations) in early career stages (i.e., pre-service).*
- *Provide more in-depth and contextualised, sport-specific anti-doping knowledge through continuing professional development in later career stages (i.e., in-service).*
- *Be contextualised and tailor-made to fit sport-specific needs. A "one-size-fits-all" approach should be avoided because recreational sport includes a diverse and heterogeneous group of sport disciplines and practitioners, thus clean sport education needs may not be universal.*
- *After consulting with the relevant target groups (e.g., coaches, instructors, and/or trainers in certain sports or areas of recreational sport) consider utilising a blended learning approach, incorporating both web-based and face-to-face training and education components.*
- *Where web-based education is provided, ensure that it is easily accessible and that a user-friendly interface is utilised.*
- *Where web-based education is provided, consider using diverse content, ranging from self-instructed/self-directed material that do not require interaction with a specialist (e.g., podcasts, short educational clips), as well as more interactive approaches and tools (e.g., webinars; communities of practice).*
- *Be diversified and include a range of educational resources, such as bite-size learning features, scenario-based learning, case studies, reports, and non-technical reports and articles.*
- *Be versatile and adaptable, so that anti-doping education can be embedded as a "common theme" across different topics, such as sport integrity, safeguarding practices, and protecting the health and well-being of the athlete/exerciser.*

Relevance to WADA's ISE and Other Frameworks

Relevant Questions

- *How useful is WADA's ISE as a framework for developing anti-doping education for coaches in recreational sport? If WADA's ISE is deemed useful, in which ways is it useful? If it is not useful, why? What other frameworks can be useful for this purpose?*

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SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

- *NADOs may consider the use of different frameworks to develop their clean sport education programs for coaches, instructors, and trainers in recreational sport. This may include a curriculum-based approach that defines specific educational and training needs and relevant learning objectives and outcomes.*
- *Bottom-up, collaborative learning with the active contribution of the target groups (e.g., coaches, trainers, and instructors) as well as key sport stakeholders (e.g., fitness industry, national sport federations) may also be considered as an effective approach to develop contextualised, relevant, and timely educational content.*
- *WADA's International Standard for Education can be used as a generic framework to identify suitable educational and pedagogical approaches, and to develop contextualised and sport-specific educational guidelines, educational content, as well as relevant evaluation and assessment frameworks.*

Barriers and Enablers of Clean Sport Education for Coaches, Instructors, and Trainers in Recreational Sport

Relevant Questions

- *How can anti-doping education programs for coaches in recreational sport be more effectively promoted? What would motivate coaches to attend/complete such programs?*
- *What barriers or other factors could prevent coaches from completing anti-doping education? How could these be realistically resolved?*
- *What should be the role of employers (e.g., fitness industry, sport clubs) in anti- doping education for coaches in recreational sport? How can employers actively support anti-doping education for coaches in recreational sport?*

SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

- *Develop synergies with key sport stakeholders (e.g., fitness industry, national sport federations), who may facilitate access to the target group.*
- *Consult with national sport federations about incorporating clean sport education to their national curriculum or training for coaches, instructors, and/or trainers (e.g., embed clean sport education in the national continuing professional development program for coaches).*
- *Utilise existing professional networks (e.g., coach federations or associations) to widely promote and disseminate clean sport education, and attract more coaches, instructors, and trainers in recreational sport.*
- *Consider the use of anti-doping "ambassadors" to promote anti-doping education among different*

professional groups. This may involve utilising positive experiences and testimonies from coaches, trainers or instructors who successfully completed anti-doping education, in order to highlight the expected benefits for one's professional career and skill/knowledge acquisition (e.g., a series of short web-based or social media-based clips with "life stories").

- *Where possible, make clean sport education for recreational sport coaches, trainers, and instructors a mandatory requirement for employment. This may be reflected in the job description of potential employers (e.g., fitness industry), be a required aspect of in-job training for coaches, trainers, and instructors, or be included in the Occupational and/or Professional Standards, depending on the respective regulatory framework of each country, district, or region.*
- *Collaborate with institutional authorities (e.g., ministry of education; sport authorities) to promote clean sport education as part of standard education and training for coaches, trainers, and instructors in recreational sport settings.*
- *Incorporate, where possible, anti-doping education within a broader professional credit-based system, so that completion of anti-doping education programs is rewarded with credits.*
- *Consider the subsidisation of anti-doping education costs by the employer (e.g., national federation, clubs, fitness industry), in order to offer education as part of "paid work" for relevant professional groups (e.g., coaches, fitness trainers or instructors).*

Evaluation of Clean Sport Education

Relevant Questions

- *How should anti-doping education outcomes for coaches in recreational sport be evaluated? What metrics/indicators should be used to assess that learning objectives were met? How often should coaches be educated in anti-doping?*

SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

- *NADOs could be responsible for coordinating clean sport education provision, but the monitoring and evaluation of coaches' education can be implemented through strategic collaboration and synergies with local sport stakeholders and expert academics/research centres/higher education institutions with relevant expertise.*
- *Consider a wider approach to evaluation, ranging from the assessment of fulfilling the learning objectives and relevance of the education provision, to addressing broader themes relevant to clean sport education (e.g., changing attitudes to anti-doping, improving self-efficacy and competence to effectively cope with doping situations).*
- *Utilise a mixed methods approach that will incorporate both quantitative and qualitative assessments of clean sport education outcomes. Quantitative evaluation may reflect an assessment of trainees' subjective level of self-efficacy/confidence to effectively cope with doping-risk situations. Qualitative assessments may reflect more in-depth understanding of how clean sport education changed/improved (or not) knowledge, competence, and skills of trainees with regards to clean sport/anti-doping matters.*

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- *Consider the implementation of both short-term and long-term evaluation methods to capture long-term or delayed effects of clean sport education provision on attitudes, self-efficacy/ confidence, skills, and competence of coaches, trainers, and instructors.*
- *Consider evaluating coaches, trainers, and instructors to ensure that they uphold key principles of anti-doping education in their daily professional practice. This is an important foundation for identifying good and best practices in this area.*

European Commitment for Action to Anti-Doping for Recreational Sport

Introduction

The use of prohibited, banned or illegal performance and/or image enhancing substances which are collectively known as 'doping' remains an important threat to all sport. In the context of this Commitment for Action the use of doping substances by athletes is recognised in posing possible serious health hazards that require preventive action. The need for the European recreational sport sector to establish a socially responsible position to promote doping-free environments is clear.

For the purposes of this Commitment the following definition has been used:

Recreational sport is defined as sport, exercise and physical activity which takes place in low-level competitive or non-competitive environments and engages participants/individuals at sport events, fitness centres, sport and leisure clubs, and outdoor-based activities.

This European Commitment for Action in Anti-doping is based on the principle that recreational sport is an opportunity for people to come together to play, compete, have fun, and be socially connected. For millions of people of all ages across Europe playing sport is a significant and meaningful activity that brings joy and helps to enhance healthy levels of physical activity. While recreational sport is of value in itself, it can also improve the physical and mental health of participants. As such, using doping is considered inconsistent with the very idea of recreational sport.

This Commitment is not prescriptive – it is intended as a voluntary commitment for the recreational sport sector to abide by the recommendations and principles stated here. This Commitment (building on the previous FAIR Code of Conduct) for anti-doping in recreational sport, aims to promote a standardised approach across Europe in the fight against doping and the sharing of knowledge that doping practices in recreational sporting environments:

- *Can be harmful to the integrity and perception of recreational sport;*
- *Can be linked to criminal activities such as drug trafficking*
- *Can affect young and other vulnerable people; and*
- *Can threaten the health of individuals who use doping substances.*

By focusing on these four main themes the Commitment to action is intended for sport federations, clubs, associations, sporting and fitness facilities, individual coaches, trainers, volunteers, and instructors and for policymakers across Europe to further develop:

1. *Education to combat and reject doping;*
2. *Food and supplements for sportspeople; and*
3. *Cooperation in anti-doping actions.*

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1. Education to combat and reject doping

The use of doping substances for performance enhancement in recreational sport is a unique and newly emerging field of research. Recreational sport is multi-faceted in terms of its populations, its activities, its organisational structure, as well as the objectives and motivations of recreational athletes.

Responding to doping in recreational sport cannot be based exclusively on the detection-and-sanctioning approach that is used in the fight against doping in elite sport. Instead, recreational sport needs appropriately tailored approaches that account for the specific as well as the generic motivations and objectives behind the use of doping substances in recreational sport. It also requires a nuanced understanding of sport-socio-economic conditions (gender, age, experience with sport, level of performance, cultural background, etc.), which are more influential in recreational rather than in elite sport.

Future education for sport coaches, trainers, volunteers, and instructors, together with managers and the athletes themselves should be in balance with enforcements, controls, sanctions or even criminalisation if there is to be a realistic reduction of doping and doping-related practices. Everyone across the ecosphere of recreational sport needs to understand that effective participation in sport does not require the use of banned or prohibited performance-enhancing substances. Education programmes and/or information campaigns on the health consequences of doping will help to establish a better long-term awareness to bring about a change of behaviour.

Managers and administrators of facilities used by recreational athletes should promote a clear anti-doping condition in the contracts or terms and conditions for the use of their facilities which explicitly prohibits the use of any banned, performance or image enhancing substances.

Stakeholders in recreational sport should commit to work with European Agencies and other bodies in anti-doping networks to provide clear information to educate athletes on the harmful effects of taking doping substances including those in supplements and food intended for sportspeople.

Research indicates that while the prevalence for doping use is relatively low, and use varies between sports/activities, many recreational athletes use over-the-counter medications for their performance enhancement. From a public health perspective, it is therefore important that anti-doping education not only focuses on substances found on the list of prohibited drugs, but to also emphasise and educate athletes in the potential risks involved in the non-medical use of legal drugs in sport.

The similarities and differences to anti-doping education in elite sport can be identified and constructively used when developing education for future doping-free recreational sport.

Educational programmes must, therefore, account for this unique diversity if they are to be successful. It will be necessary to support further research programmes that aim to understand the heterogeneity in the rationales behind drug use for performance enhancement in recreational sport. Stakeholders should collaborate with relevant institutions to implement evaluation methods to capture the short-term and long-term effects of education programmes and other prevention efforts.

2. Food and supplements intended for sportspeople

The recreational sport sector needs to continue to collaborate with all stakeholders in relation to developing a European framework for the testing and labelling of food and food supplements intended for use by sportspeople. The shared objective of the recreational sport and supplement industry should be to protect the safety of sportspeople and ensure, as far as possible, that these products are free from doping substances and that recommended use is governed by appropriate evidence. Ongoing knowledge-sharing between commercial stakeholders, food standards bodies and anti-doping agencies is key.

3. Cooperation in anti-doping actions

At the national level, sporting federations, associations, and stakeholders are encouraged to cooperate with their national anti-doping organisations, Government departments, their agencies, and NGOs to coordinate actions in the prevention of doping in recreational sport.

At the European level, stakeholders with an interest in reducing the prevalence of doping in recreational sport should coordinate actions with the European Institutions to develop appropriate methodologies and evidence-based actions.

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EuropeActive
Avenue des Arts 43
1040, Brussels
Belgium

www.europeactive.eu

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Appendix 1

Short-Survey for National Anti-Doping Organisations, International Federations and other sport and fitness organisations

Instructions: Thank you for agreeing to participate in this survey. The survey has been developed to gather stakeholders' policies and practices in relation to anti-doping education programmes and activities for coaches, trainers and instructors in recreational sport, including fitness.

For the purpose of this survey we are using an established definition which has been agreed with the European Commission:

> *Recreational sport means sport, exercise and physical activity which takes place in a low-level competitive or non-competitive environment and engages participants/ individuals at sport events, fitness centres, sport and leisure clubs, and outdoor-based activities.*

The survey results will be summarised in a "Report on Stakeholders Views", where the different stakeholder approaches and perspectives will be synthesized. With your permission, the results of the research will be presented at conferences, published in peer-reviewed journals and/or technical reports to the European Commission. We will only be mapping publicly available information. Any information offered during data collection that is not in the public domain will be anonymized for your protection.

Organisation Information

This section contains information about you and your organisation. When completing this survey, please respond on behalf of your organisation.

Name of organisation:	
Type of organisation (please delete the type that does not apply):	*National anti-doping organization* *International Federation* *Other sport or fitness organisation*
Which country do you represent? [Only if answered "National Anti-Doping Organisation" above]	
Organisation website address:	
Name of individual(s) completing the survey:	
Role of the individual completing the survey on behalf of the organisation:	

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Questions

1. *Does your organization provide/or has it provided in the last 5 years, anti-doping education programmes or other relevant education activities for coaches, trainers and/or instructors in recreational sport?*

   This also includes activities where coaches, trainers or instructors in recreational sport are not the target audience.

   a. *Yes*
   b. *No* *[If No, go to Question 11]*
   c. *Are coaches, trainers or instructors in recreational sport the target audience of one or more of these educational programmes/activities*
   d. *Yes* *[If Yes, go to Question 4]*
   e. *No*
   f. *I don't know* *[If I do not know, go to Question 4]*

2. *Who is the target audience? (choose all that apply)*

   a. *Coaches at elite level*
   b. *Athletes at elite level*
   c. *Athletes at recreational level*
   d. *Other (please state)*

3. *Please select the activities your organization provides for coaches, trainers or instructors in recreational sport. (choose all that apply)*

   a. *Face-to-face group sessions (e.g. seminars, workshops)*
   b. *Face-to-face individual sessions (e.g. counselling)*
   c. *Code of conduct7*
   d. *Social media campaigns*
   e. *E-learning*
   f. *Print media (e.g. pamphlets)*
   g. *Event based outreach programmes*
   h. *Live online lectures/webinars*
   i. *Mobile based apps*
   j. *Other, please specify……*

4. *What topics are included in the educational programmes/activities you provide for coaches, trainers or instructors in recreational sport?*

   a. *Principles and values associated with clean sport*
   b. *Risk factors associated with doping*
   c. *Protective factors of doping*
   d. *Signs of doping/prohibited substance use*
   e. *The principle of Strict Liability8*
   f. *Consequences of doping (health, social and economic)*

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7 *A code of conduct is a set of rules outlining the norms, rules, and responsibilities or proper practices of an individual party or an organization.*

8 *Strict liability is a key principle of anti-doping. It means that each athlete is strictly liable for the substances found in his or her bodily specimen, and that an anti-doping rule violation occurs whenever a prohibited substance (or its metabolites or markers) is found in bodily specimen, whether or not the athlete intentionally or unintentionally used a prohibited substance or was negligent or otherwise at fault.*

g. *Prohibited substances and Methods*
h. *Use of medications and Therapeutic Use Exemptions*
i. *Testing procedures, including urine and blood sampling and the Athlete Biological Passport*
j. *Speaking up to share concerns about doping, i.e. whistleblowing*
k. *The risk of unintended doping when using dietary supplements or prescription drugs*
l. *Anti-doping rules and regulations for athletes and athlete support personnel*
m. *Legislation*
n. *The doping control process*
o. *Clean sport alternatives to doping (e.g. improvement of training, nutrition)*
p. *How to create a training environment that opposes doping*
q. *Other, please specify….*

5. *Which components do you incorporate into the educational programmes/activities you provide for coaches, trainers or instructors in recreational sport (choose all that apply)?*

a. *Values-based Education9*
b. *Awareness Raising10*
c. *Information Provision11*
d. *Anti-Doping Education12*
e. *Other, please specify…*

6. *Has your organisation conducted any types of evaluation of your programme(s) for coaches, trainers or instructors in recreational sport?*

a. *Yes*
b. *No [If No, go to question 11]*
c. *I don't know [If I do not know, go to question 11]*

7. *What methods have you used for the evaluation? (choose all that apply)*

a. *Survey among the participants*
b. *Individual interviews*
c. *Focus group interviews*
d. *Individual qualitative, oral or written feedback from participants*
e. *Recorded quantitative data on participants (statistics) (e.g. number of participants, age, sport discipline)*
f. *Internal evaluation*
g. *Other, please specify….*

9 *Delivering activities that emphasizes the development of an individual's personal values and principles. It builds the learner's capacity to make decisions to behave ethically.*

10 *Highlighting topics and issues related to clean sport.*

11 *Making available accurate, up to date content related to clean sport.*

12 *Delivering training on anti-doping topics to build competence in clean sport behaviours and make informed decisions.*

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8. *Have you reported the conclusions of your evaluation?*

   a. *Yes*
   b. *No* *[If No, go to question 11]*
   c. *I don´t know* *[If I do not know, go to question 11]*

9. *If you have reported the conclusions of your evaluation, indicate the format of your reporting (please tick all that apply):*

   a. *Internal report*
   b. *Report shared with stakeholders (e.g. government, other sport federations and/or anti-doping organisations)*
   c. *Publicly available report*
   d. *Report published in a peer-reviewed scientific journal*
   e. *Other (please specify)*

10. *To the best of your knowledge, do other organizations provide anti-doping educational programs targeting recreational coaches, trainers or instructors in your country [If so, what type of organisation: Anti-doping organisation]/your sport [If so, what type of organisation: Sport federation or Other sport or fitness organisation]?*

    a. *Yes (please specify)*
    b. *No*
    c. *I don´t know*

11. *If no anti-doping educational programs targeting coaches, trainers and/or instructors in recreational sport are provided by your organization or your country [If type of organisation: Anti-doping organisation]/your sport [If type of organisation: Sport federation or Other sport or fitness organisation], could you please indicate what, in your view, the reasons are for this? (choose all that apply)*

    a. *No available resources*
    b. *Coaches, trainers and/or instructors in recreational sport are not our priority*
    c. *No jurisdiction in recreational sport*
    d. *No interest from the side of coaches, trainers and/or instructors in recreational sport to participate in such activities*
    e. *Other (please specify)*

12. *If you have anything to add, please do so here*

Thank you for your responses

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EuropeActive
Avenue des Arts 43
1040, Brussels
Belgium

www.europeactive.eu

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