



**PROTECT
INTEGRITY**

GOOD PRACTICE GUIDE ON EDUCATION AGAINST MATCH-FIXING



**EUROPEAN
ATHLETES & PLAYERS
ASSOCIATION**

FOREWORD FROM THE PROTECT INTEGRITY ONLINE PROJECT MANAGER

At European Athletes and Players Association, we started to work on the topic of match-fixing nearly 15 years ago. Over the years, and through a number of EU-funded projects, tens of thousands of professional athletes around Europe have received quality education. Athlete and player associations have been playing their part to protect the integrity of sport. Thanks to the special relationship that the associations have with their members, they bring an added value to any initiative related to integrity.

This publication is intended to give guidance and practical advice to athlete and player associations and other organisations that are considering or already implementing integrity education to athletes or other stakeholders. It has been developed through research, practical experiences of the project partners as well as the knowledge sharing through the course of the project.

We invite you to take inspiration from the PROtect Integrity Online project and we hope that you will find the practices gathered in this booklet useful.

On behalf of the project team

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PIO Project Manager, EAPA General Secretary



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SPILLERFORENINGEN
HÅNDBOLD



EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS DEVELOPED DURING PROTECT INTEGRITY ONLINE PROJECT



CODE OF CONDUCT
POSTER & LEAFLET GRAPHIC



EDUCATIONAL
VIDEOS



PROtect Integrity Online is a 2-year project focusing on promoting integrity and values in sport, dedicated to combating match-fixing and corruption in sport. It aims to do so by researching, developing, creating, implementing and evaluating the most effective ways to deliver integrity education to professional and elite level athletes, in particular by using online tools and methods.



FOR MORE INFORMATION,
see reports published during
the PROtect Integrity Online project

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT FOR ATHLETE AND PLAYER ASSOCIATIONS TO WORK ON MATCH-FIXING EDUCATION?

Athlete associations, bodies whose goal is to protect the athletes and advance their rights and interests, have an important responsibility when it comes to match-fixing education. Match-fixing is an organised crime activity that can not only undermine the integrity of sport, but also endanger people's lives. Athletes, who are the main targets of the match-fixers, are particularly vulnerable and need to be properly educated and protected from the threat. Don't underestimate the risk. It is nowadays clear that no sport, country or competition level is immune to match-fixing.

Often the athletes themselves will undermine the importance of the integrity education, thinking this is something that would never happen. If they have received the education several times, it might be hard to catch their attention. That is why it is important to take a systematic approach and implement innovative practices into education to ensure it reaches the players efficiently and contribute to the protection of sport integrity.



HOW TO DESIGN, IMPLEMENT AND EVALUATE A MATCH-FIXING EDUCATION PROGRAMME?

1. PRELIMINARY SETTINGS AND ASSESSMENT

Why do you want to implement an education strategy?

The integrity education should ideally be approached with a clear strategy. This should start by deciding why you want to work on the prevention of match-fixing and how the education activities should contribute to that.

Assessing the governance and the network of responsibilities and engaging the stakeholders

Before starting an education programme, it would be helpful to analyse the country and sport-specific network of stakeholders and their responsibilities in the field of integrity. If possible, it is beneficial to coordinate the efforts with other stakeholders to see if other organisation can support your education work.

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Never waste a good crisis. After a high-level match-fixing case in 2012, stakeholders in French handball acted in cooperation to establish regular match-fixing education. French handball players association AJPH implements an extensive educational programme with the support of the league and the federation.

Manipulation risk assessment

A holistic and ongoing risk assessment is key in order to design an appropriate programme and adapt it if needed. It is important to know an estimated prevalence and nature of the manipulation but also if there are vulnerability factors and risks such as poor governance or non-payment of salaries or a general cultural of betting. Finally, it is helpful to assess the level of awareness and knowledge about the rules and available resources and tools among the target groups.

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Research allows player associations to identify and bring awareness to different risk factors. Already in 2012, the FIFPRO's Black Book on Eastern Europe established a clear link between non-payment of salaries and match fixing.

What do we want from the education programme?

Based on these assessments, you should decide what is the objective of the education programme. For example, should it increase the knowledge, influence attitude towards or likelihood of manipulation? It is important to consider available resources that can be put towards necessary actions to reach the objective set.



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Consider that the benefits from the education programme can even go beyond match-fixing prevention. Many player associations consider these regular sessions on integrity help demonstrate care and build connection and trust with the players.



Enlarging the scope

It is important to raise awareness about broader issues identified as manipulation risk factors. It can be helpful to establish contact with responsible organisations, such as governmental and sport stakeholders as well as law enforcement. It can be beneficial to cooperate with organisations providing education in other areas or to other stakeholders in order to create synergies.

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The Greek National Platform against manipulation (called “Epathla”) has created a specific working group dedicated to education and awareness-raising, with a goal of reaching as many stakeholders as possible as well as creating synergies and harmonizing the quality of information delivered to them. It is composed of the football, basketball, volleyball, handball and water polo players associations, the General Secretariat for Sports, the NOC and the manipulation-relevant police department.

2. DESIGNING AND IMPLEMENTING AN EDUCATION STRATEGY

Make it explicit

It is important to cover all elements of the education, including target groups, overall programme objectives, education topics and content, education activities and corresponding (measurable and time-specific) learning objectives, implementation modalities (setting, resources, audience access, calendar etc), monitoring and evaluation procedure.

The preparation of such strategy should follow the findings of the preliminary assessment and, as far as possible include the relevant stakeholders, as well as the players who will take part in the sessions.

Consider different modes of education implementation

EDUCATION CAN BE IMPLEMENTED IN DIFFERENT WAYS, SUCH AS:

- ✓ COMMUNICATION, BRANDING AND SOCIAL MEDIA CAMPAIGNS
- ✓ E-LEARNING AND WEBINARS
- ✓ FACE TO FACE EDUCATION, INCLUDING EDUCATION BASED AROUND A SPORTING EVENT AND IN-PERSON WORKSHOP

Practice of player associations indicates that face to face sessions, supported by online materials and social media campaign, are an efficient way to reach players.

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#EUSportIntegrityDay is a social media campaign held every year on the 15th of April as an opportunity for different stakeholders to show their commitment to protecting integrity of sport. Over the years, various stakeholders have taken part in the initiative, ensuring that its message can reach a broad audience.

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Player associations typically implement the integrity education with in-person sessions often taking place in the locker rooms, directly after practice. The representatives of the association make sure to visit each team every season, ensuring that all players are covered. This links the education to the professional schedule of the players and fosters an informal, familiar environment that the players are comfortable in.

During the PROtect Integrity Online project, 8 player associations have educated 7533 athletes through 591 team visits.





Content and delivery

FOR ANY EDUCATION FORMAT, IT IS PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT TO:

- ✓ USE CLEAR, CONCISE AND POWERFUL MESSAGES
- ✓ USE ILLUSTRATIVE MATERIAL (PHOTOS, VIDEOS, ETC.)
- ✓ USE AN INFORMAL TONE
- ✓ APPEAL TO AUDIENCE EMOTIONS

ADDITIONALLY, FOR IN PERSON SESSIONS IT IS CONSIDERED USEFUL TO:

- ✓ BUILD A NARRATIVE AND USING ENTERTAINING AND ILLUSTRATIVE CASE STUDIES OR PEDAGOGICAL MATERIAL.
- ✓ USE INTERACTIVE TOOLS, SUCH AS APPS WITH QUIZZES.

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PROtect Integrity campaign has developed an athlete-friendly Code of Conduct with five key messages in a form of poster and leaflet. It provides essential information in a concise and clear way.

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SNB has organised their Rookie Event for the players with a first professional contract, which includes an extended informative session on integrity and betting rules. It is supported by materials such as Kahoot quiz, newspaper articles on real cases, posters and leaflets and resulted in a very high level of attention and engagement from the players.

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EPIC Global Solutions organises awareness raising and education sessions related to betting harm prevention. They include former professional players sharing their struggles with problem gambling and how it affected their professional and personal lives. Real stories from former players, people that athlete can relate to, can be a powerful way to captivate their attention and deliver a message.

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Nobody understands a player like a player. AJFS and AJFSF implement integrity sessions with a help of a network of AJFSF Delegates, who are active players. They receive an extensive training focusing on knowledge and communication skills prior to visiting teams with education sessions.





3. MONITORING, EVALUATION AND RESEARCH

Monitoring

Monitoring consists of gathering statistical information on investment (materials, human and financial resources), educational sessions (number of sessions, number of participants or number of social media publications) or the audience (number and demographics of the participants, reach of online learning materials or social media campaign).

Learning process evaluation

Evaluation of learning process intends to investigate if the education achieves its immediate learning objectives – was the programme successful in raising the level of knowledge among the participants, and if they know the applicable rules, restrictions and responsibilities. This is often done by questionnaires but focus groups and interviews can also be helpful in achieving the goal.

Programme evaluation

Depending on the objective set for the programme, its evaluation would cover different elements. For example, if the goal was to change the attitude or behaviours, the research will need to go deeper than just establishing if players know the applicable rules. It is worthwhile considering involving a research expert or institution to propose a suitable scientific evaluation, using both qualitative and quantitative methods and documentary research and will also provide input for a follow up education plan.

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In the **PROtect Integrity Online project**, monitoring and evaluation activities that all partners needed to complete were defined before the implementation of education. This included recording information about the sessions as well as gathering feedback from the players.



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RPI and AJFS distributes questionnaires directly after the education sessions, in an online format, guaranteeing a quick and anonymous feedback from the players as well as the high response rate.



CONCLUSION

Education is the first line of defence in the fight against match-fixing. Even if educating athletes about sport integrity can sometimes feel like a challenging and or even ungrateful task, it is essential to include it in the regular work of the athlete and player associations. Following the step-by-step guide and good practices from experienced athlete and player associations, you can create a programme that can help you achieve your goals in the field in integrity and broader objectives of the association.

FEEDBACK FROM THE PLAYERS

“

Very grateful for the information and support we provide to the players from the association.

“

The questions from our club visit also show that this is something that we, the players, think is important to tackle. At the same time, I think it's not something that many other stakeholders are doing much about, so it's great to be better informed about the rules.

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