

# SportConsilium

## Regulations

### I. ORIGINS

The Monitoring Committee was set up following the adoption of the Declaration “sport, spirit of humanity” (hereinafter “the Declaration”), which was adopted on 31 March 2017 at the Congress Hall of the Belgian Parliament by the representatives of the country’s recognised religions, the secular movement and the Olympic and sporting, Paralympic, Belgian Special Olympic and Panathlonian movements.

The Declaration was conceived as a result of the 2016 Panathlon’s Festival of Sporting Film on the theme of “Sport: spirit of humanity”, which referred to the events that marked the Rio Olympic Games and the inclusion of the film “Chariots of Fire”. At the festival’s close, the idea was mooted of bringing together the recognised religions, the secular movement and Belgium’s sporting bodies in order to garner their opinions on the issues surrounding interactions between sport and religious & philosophical practices.

The religions and organised secular movement invited were selected on the basis of the list transmitted by the Minister of Justice, Mr. Geens, with all invitees replying positively.

An initial conference was held on 6 October 2016 in the Chamber of the Parliament of the Wallonia-Brussels Federation, with the aim of hearing the position of the religions and philosophical movements recognised in Belgium and drawing up a sort of inventory. At the end of this conference, the unanimous desire expressed was to go further and to try to produce a draft text, which would then be submitted to all of the recognised or subsidised religions and philosophical movements.

A second federal conference was held at the Senate on 31 March 2017, where all of the participants stated their positions on the draft text, which they were given the opportunity to analyse and amend. At the end of this process, the text was adopted unanimously and thus became the declaration “Sport: spirit of humanity” (hereinafter “the Declaration”).

The Royal Palace was kept systematically informed at all stages of the process and encouraged the continuation of this initiative. The Declaration was then officially handed over to the Prime Minister and then widely distributed in late 2017.

On 22 November 2018, this Declaration was used as the guiding thread in the discussions and reflections of the International Congress of the European Fair Play Movement organised by the Panathlon Wallonie-Bruxelles and Sport and Citizenship at the Committee of the Regions.

The existence of this Declaration generated positive reactions and some questions were submitted to the Panathlon Wallonie-Bruxelles. In the interests of practicality, the decision was made to constitute

a Monitoring Committee to formulate Recommendations on the questions raised. An inaugural meeting was then held on 23 October 2019 at the headquarters of the COIB (Belgian Olympic Committee) in Brussels.

This work was complex and sensitive, with the steps to be completed requiring the introduction and definition of the Committee's terms of operation, which is the aim of these Regulations.

The aim is to bring about the implementation of the Monitoring Committee at both national and international level.

## **II. INTRODUCTION**

A unique and specific body, the Monitoring Committee is multi-denominational, consultative and bound by a duty of confidentiality. It questions the conscience, ethics, morals and responsibility of all.

Its practical functioning can oblige each member to adopt a position in relation to the others, without resorting to abuse and while maintaining respect. The members are required to remain vigilant in order to guarantee the preservation of respect and dignity.

The Monitoring Committee's purpose is to implement the Declaration and to serve as a tool to aid reflection on the interactions between sport and religion / philosophy of life.

It plays a consultative role (issuing recommendations on request) or assists the debate via notes or studies.

It is a forum for an evolving dialogue, a focus group for the enhancement of social relations between individuals, the overarching aim being to provide constructive support for the harmonious practice of sport rich in diversity. It is a place of discussion and reflection where the individuals forming it take the necessary time to issue Recommendations, developed with rigour and methodology, that take into account the values of their respective religion or philosophy while also respecting the individualities of other belief systems.

The Monitoring Committee is currently a de facto association. It is not an organisation making moral judgements, or a court or arbitration body pronouncing penalties or rulings.

It monitors the risks of confusion between the practice of sport and any attempt by a religion or a philosophical movement to instrumentalise sport by making claims.

The Monitoring Committee is guided by religious and philosophical approaches and takes into account the evolution of knowledge and research. It bases itself upon various existing approaches, texts, opinions and discussion fora, or on persons renowned for their competence in the field.

By seeking to offer responses to the questions of the actors on the ground, it informs and supports them and seeks to contribute to the enhancement of unity in the practice of sport.

The Committee's definitive title is "SportConsilium".

### **III. THE ROLES OF SPORTCONSILIUM**

SportConsilium's activities are of a consultative, informative and formative nature and are aimed at implementing the Declaration.

They include, for instance:

- making general recommendations at its own initiative on issues connected with the interaction between sport and religious & philosophical practices.
- proposing and conducting debates on specific issues associated with this subject.
- establishing permanent links between the field of sporting practice and the reflective process by participating in and/or deploying suitable tools and/or organising information or training sessions for athletes or for sports associations in the wider sense.

### **IV. SPORTCONSILIUM REFERRAL PROCEDURES**

- IV.1.

Only the following parties may submit a request to SportConsilium: (1) the sports federations established on Belgian soil and recognised by decree by the Belgian Olympic Committee (COIB/BOIC), the Belgian Paralympic Committee (BPC), the Interfederal Association of Francophone Sport (AISF) or the Flemish Sports Confederation (VSF); (2) athletes affiliated to a recognised sports federation, or their legal representatives in the case of an athlete who is a minor.

However, SportConsilium also has an international role which will be implemented at the opportune time.

- IV.2.

In order to be admissible, recommendation requests must always:

- be made within 30 days of the occurrences concerned;
- be submitted using the Recommendation Request Form available on the website <https://www.sport-esprit-humanite.be/> Name to be adapted
- relate to occurrences which have taken place within official sports clubs or competitions of a sports federation recognised by the COIB/BOIC, the BPC, the AISF or the VSF.
- be submitted by a named individual, duly signed, and containing all of the information requested;

- IV.3. Notification of receipt and processing of requests:

- 1.

An acknowledgement of receipt will be sent to the requesting party. Apart from in exceptional cases, within 2 months of the date of the acknowledgement of receipt, SportConsilium will indicate the response to be applied to the request. During this

period, SportConsilium may conduct a prior examination via the methods of its choice (e.g.: face-to-face meeting or via electronic channels) and/or decide whether or not to process the request, with no obligation to provide reasons. It may, for instance, refuse to process a request if it appears that the issue raised is the subject of a dispute and has already been submitted to a tribunal or to any other authority.

2.

The requesting party is notified of the rejection or acceptance of their request within two months of the date of the acknowledgement of receipt issued by SportConsilium.

In the event of acceptance, it draws up a Recommendation which it transmits to the requesting party without being bound by any particular deadline.

SportConsilium undertakes to comply with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

With the requesting party's agreement, details of the case may be published, without the names of the parties or any other identifying element being included.

## **V. COMPOSITION OF SPORTCONSILIUM**

### V.1. The Members

SportConsilium is made up of representatives appointed by the recognised and/or subsidised religions within Belgium, by the secular movement, by the Belgian Olympic, Paralympic and Special Olympic movements and by the Panathlon Wallonie-Bruxelles, with complete independence from any institutional hierarchies of sport or state.

In all circumstances, each member must be able to show evidence of a written delegation attesting to their power of representation on SportConsilium. Failing this, the member shall not benefit from a right to vote but solely from consultative rights.

Each member may express themselves in their own language, that is to say one of the national languages.

### V.2. The President

She/ He is appointed by the Panathlon Wallonie-Bruxelles and shall coordinate the working sessions and promote the exchange of information and internal and external communication.

### V.3. The Vice-President:

She/ He is appointed by the Panathlon Wallonie-Bruxelles and shall replace the President in the event of absence.

### V.4. The Monitoring Committee's Secretariat:

This role shall be carried out by the Panathlon Wallonie-Bruxelles. It shall encompass all administrative tasks connected with the performance of SportConsilium's remit. It is most notably

tasked with organising the preparatory work and meetings of SportConsilium. It receives the Recommendation Request Form described in point IV.2., may submit observations on the regularity of the request submitted to SportConsilium, issues the acknowledgements of receipt, drafts rejections or Recommendations adopted by SportConsilium and issues the related notifications. It also takes charge of the distribution and archiving of the Recommendations, together with any other documents useful for the work and meetings.

Generally speaking, any person who sits on SportConsilium is bound by a duty of confidentiality. He/She is not permitted to comment on its Recommendations or to divulge the position of one of more of its members.

Any public statement on behalf of SportConsilium must be approved by all of these members. Their approval may be given by simple email.

V.5.

SportConsilium shall convene in plenary session at least twice per year, including on or around 6<sup>th</sup> April, date of the United Nations' International Day of Sport for Development and Peace.

SportConsilium is validly constituted when the majority of its members are present (e.g.: if there are 13 members present, this gives  $13:2 = 6.5$  rounded down to 6. Majority:  $6 + 1 = 7$ ).

SportConsilium rules by consensus. If this is not reached, SportConsilium may decline to issue a Recommendation.

By consensus-based decision, it may invite a personality to one of its meetings. The latter will possess consultative authority without participating in the deliberations.

V.6.

Any situation not covered by these Regulations shall be the subject of a consensus-based decision taken by the members.

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