Report

D3.1 National Roadmap on Integrity Promotion

„Integrity Atlas – Integrity and Values Atlas in the Neighbourhood Region"
(101184122, ERASMUS-SPORT-2024-CB)

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Co-funded by the European Union

Integrity and Values Atlas in the Neighbourhood Region

List of Tables

Project Information

Project Title	Integrity Atlas – Integrity and Values Atlas in the Neighbourhood Region
Project Acronym	Integrity Atlas
Project Reference Number	101184122
Funding Scheme	ERASMUS-SPORT-2024-CB ERASMUS Lump Sum Grants
Coordination Institution	ASOCIATIA OBSTEASCA COMITETUL NATIONAL OLIMPIC SI SPORTIV DIN REPUBLICA MOLDOVA (NOC MDA)
Project Duration	01 May 2025 – 01 May 2027

Document Control Sheet

Work Package	WP3 - National Strategy / Roadmap and Capacity Building
Document Type	R - Report
Title of deliverable	D3.1 National Roadmap on Integrity Promotion
Lead institution	EOA
Authors	Jule Boeckmann, Dominik Hillebrecht, Soenke Schadwinkel
Document Status	Final
Document Version and Date	V1.3 - 29.10.2026
Dissemination Level	PU - Public

Integrity Atlas Project Partners

Nr	Role	Short Name	Legal Name	Ctry	PIC
1	COO	NOC MDA	ASOCIATIA OBSTEASCA COMITETUL NATIONAL OLIMPIC SI SPORTIV DIN REPUBLICA MOLDOVA	MD	905280340
2	BEN	ENGSO	EUROPEAN NON-GOVERNMENTAL SPORTS ORGANISATION	SE	946274771
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5	BEN	MSU	UNIVERSITATEA DE STAT DIN MOLDOVA	MD	996760361
6	AP (IO)	IOC	INTERNATIONAL OLYMPIC COMMITTEE	CH	887421573

Deliverable Details

	Name	Description
Task 3.1	Creation of National Strategy/Roadmap to promote integrity values across the regions	This task is related to creation of the integrity values National Strategy/Roadmap. It aims at building a guideline and a training program to promote common EU values beyond the borders of the EU and support sport organizations in Region 2 in integrating those values within their work.
Deliverable 3.1	Strategy/Roadmap guidelines to organize, implement and evaluate a program to foster integrity values in sport federations work.	These guidelines will be developed as an outcome of the previous project activities (WP2) by using the collection of data and the good practices. ENGSO together with EOA. It will be made available on the project webpage and ENGSO education website in English and translated in all the languages of the Region 2.

Document History

Version	Date	Status	Authors, Reviewer	Description
V1.0	19.10.2026	Draft	Jule Böckmann, Dominik Hillebrecht, Soenke Schadwinkel	Initial document creation
V1.1	26.10.2026	Draft	Jule Böckmann, Dominik Hillebrecht, Soenke Schadwinkel, Ophélie Delobel, Integrity Atlas Project Partners	Collected feedback of project partners and annotated document
V1.2	28.10.2026	Draft	Jule Böckmann, Dominik Hillebrecht, Soenke Schadwinkel, Ophélie Delobel, Integrity Atlas Project Partners	Second round of feedback
V1.3	29.10.2026	Final	Jule Böckmann, Dominik Hillebrecht, Soenke Schadwinkel, Ophélie Delobel, Integrity Atlas Project Partners	Finalized and formatted document after the last feedback round.

Table of Contents

List of Tables 2

Project Information 6

Roadmap 8

1. Introduction 9

1.1 Integrity in Sports 9

1.2 Research Foundation 9

1.3 A 5-Phase Model of Change 10

1.4 A National Sport Integrity System 11

1.5 How to Use This Roadmap: A Configurational Framework 12

2. Integrity Atlas Roadmap 14

2.1 Executive Summary 14

2.2 Phase 1: Initialisation 15

2.2.1 Analysis of the current state of integrity in sports 15

2.2.2 Determination of project management and responsibilities 17

2.2.3 Risk analysis 17

2.3 Phase 2: Conceptualisation 18

2.3.1 Establishment of a public value-based foundation 18

2.3.2 Development of NSIS concept and strategies 18

2.3.3 Risk analysis 20

2.4 Phase 3: Mobilisation 20

2.4.1 International Efforts 21

2.4.2 Advocating on a national public scale 21

2.4.3 Grassroots education 21

2.4.4 Risk Analysis 22

2.5 Phase 4: Implementation 22
2.5.1 Integration of the NSIS into existing (sport) policy 23
2.5.2 Prioritizing implementation according to current demands. 24
2.5.3 Risk Analysis 24
2.6 Phase 5: Continuation 25
2.6.1 Allocation of resources towards monitoring from the beginning 25
2.6.2 Promoting long-term cultural change regarding integrity in sports 26
2.6.3 Risk Analysis 27
2.7 Conclusion 28
3. Supplementary Materials 29
3.1 References 29
3.2 Figures 31

Project Information

This roadmap has the aim to foster the promotion of integrity as a core value within the sport movement is part of the Integrity and Values Atlas in the Neighbourhood Region which is co-funded by the Erasmus+ Sport programme.

The Integrity Atlas project is led by the National Olympic Committee of the Republic of Moldova and further involves the National Olympic Committee of Ukraine, Moldova State University, the European Non-Governmental Sports Organization (ENGSO), and the European Olympic Academies (EOA). Authors of this document and the roadmap are the EOA.

Partners in the Integrity Atlas project cooperate with the aim of promoting integrity as a fundamental value within the Sport Movement in the neighboring countries Moldova and Ukraine. Structured into five stages, the project was launched through a needs assessment to gather the status and perspectives of both Moldova and Ukraine regarding integrity in sport. Furthermore, best practices were exchanged and collected from participants of the research. The knowledge gathered in the research stage of the Integrity Atlas informed the development of this roadmap: a national strategy that Moldova and Ukraine and furthermore other countries may use to design and implement a system that advances and promotes integrity while being prepared to examine and sanction integrity violations.

During and beyond its implementation phase, the Integrity Atlas is building networks between actors and organizations of the participating countries to strengthen international cooperation and mutual support in the complex process of promoting integrity. Ultimately, this roadmap is designed for the project partner National Olympic Committees as an orientation to first identify their existing components of a coherent strategy supporting integrity in sport. In a second step, they may use the roadmaps recommendations to harmonize and supplement said existing structures.

This roadmap mainly encourages the project partner NOCs to create regulations and policies that serve the promotion of integrity as a core value within the sport movement. The rational is that higher levels of organisation like governmental instances or federation leaders provide the foundation on which the integrity values can be embedded throughout lower administrative levels of the sport movement. Such top-down approaches cause change if the change goals are clearly defined, and the organization has sufficient capacity and control to execute them on all downward levels (Buzogány & Pülzl, 2024). At the same time, the implementation of change requires individuals on all levels to decide against continuing existing patterns and feeling capable of being an actor in the change movement. A bottom-up approach in which actors from all levels targeted by policy change shape the design process is contributing to the momentum of a planned change (Buzogány & Pülzl, 2024).

The outputs of the Integrity Atlas project uses a combination of two approaches to promoting integrity as a fundamental value within the sport movement and to foster a culture that is motivated to endorse and operationalise it. As previously described, this roadmap mainly represents a top-down approach. Involving perspectives of stakeholders from all-levels (such as club representatives, coaches, athletes, administrators) in the preparatory stages and considering their input especially regarding feasibility and required resources for change is a supportive bottom-up component of the roadmap.

Another bottom-up effort of the Integrity Atlas project is the *Capacity Building Workshops*, which will accompany this roadmap after publication. The workshops are conceptualized to increase the awareness of participants on the values related to integrity within sport movements and prompt them to integrate them in their daily business. Creating a shared understanding of the workshop topic and equipping participants on all levels of sport organisations with the skills to respond to integrity-related concerns in their environment aims to prepare the upcoming structural change within their federations. In conclusion, this roadmap and the *Capacity Building Workshops* are designed approach the Integrity Atlas objectives from two complementary perspectives.

Roadmap

Note for readers on roadmap navigation and structure:

Readers who wish to proceed directly with the practical recommendations regarding the promotion of integrity as a value within national sport movements may turn to the actual roadmap beginning on page 14.

The introduction beginning on the next page outlines the theoretical foundations of the roadmap. Included are a short definition of integrity, the foundational Integrity Atlas research, and a description of the applied change management model (Krüger, 2009). Lastly, the concept of a National Sports Integrity System (NSIS; Kihl, 2023) is introduced and illustrated with the example of a successful approach to sports integrity in Australia.

The roadmap then translates the theoretical foundation and the recommendations from the comparative analysis conducted with sport federations in Ukraine and Moldova into recommended actions, structured around Krüger's (2009) five phases of change. Each phase connects relevant national contexts and actors and highlights potential barriers, precautionary measures, and possible responses. The roadmap aims to connect and build upon existing initiatives and integrity structures in both countries rather than to replace ongoing efforts.

1. Introduction

1.1 Integrity in Sports

Integrity as a core value of the Olympic Movement entails the creation and support of sport systems that allow ethical, transparent, and inclusive participation for all individuals involved. This document defines integrity as “maintaining the values and credibility of sporting activities” which involve fairness, transparency, responsibility and inclusion among others. By definition of the Council of Europe (Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport (EPAS), 2020), the promotion of integrity is required in three domains.

- The **integrity of the people** includes safeguarding individuals from violence and abuse and other forms of harm.
- **Integrity of competitions** is threatened by competition manipulation through financial incentives or doping.
- **Integrity of organizations** is created through good governance and responsible decision making.

This spread of applications highlights the omnipresence of integrity as well as the multidimensional nature of the concept. Responsibility to act is distributed through all levels of sport organizations and influenced by factors of sociological, economic, and political nature. A national strategy that facilitates integrous behaviour therefore requires

- preventative measures such as behavioural guidelines and adequate education
- reacting mechanisms like trusted reporting routes and handling of concerns
- sanctioning mechanisms that provide repercussions for integrity violations.

Integrity promoting systems should be dynamic to react to developments such as advances in technology or legislation.

1.2 Research Foundation

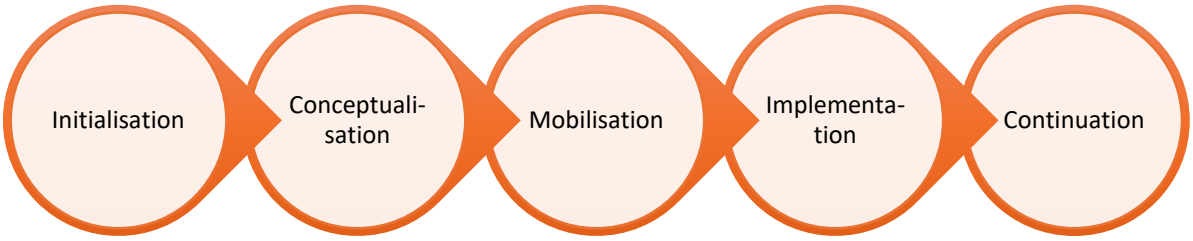
An extensive study by the State University of Moldova (USM) was completed in 2026 as the needs assessment that outlined the current state of Moldova and Ukraine regarding integrity in sport (Oceretnii et al., 2026). The combination of a quantitative survey, qualitative focus group interviews, analysis of current academic training curricula and comparison of all collected data with existing international good practices enabled the research to capture the multitude of dimensions of sports in which integrity is interwoven. On one hand, the survey data displayed

trends and their magnitude within the sample of athletes and coaches. On the other hand, focus groups and individual interviews with a diverse range of additional actors representing referees, managers, government institutions and parents of athletes were able to explore the context and mechanisms underlying threats to integrity.

Main topics in the research data evaluation are match-fixing, violence in sports, protection of minors and the integration of integrity education into university and coaching curricula. The study results were vital to identify the perspectives of relevant actors, existing regulations, and possible access points for this roadmap. Specific intervention recommendations and priorities were established by USM based on a GAP-Analysis of survey data. The data this roadmap refers to was kindly provided by the USM research team while the corresponding manuscript is in preparation (Oceretnii et al., 2026). The USM survey data will hereafter be referred to as Integrity Atlas report.

1.3 A 5-Phase Model of Change

An established theory of change was utilized to structure the processes in the roadmap. Krüger (2009) described five phases of change that are applied to lay out process behind establishment of a national framework promoting integrity within sport:



1. In the **initialisation** phase, the need for change is recognized and relevant actors are determined.
2. The **conceptualisation** stage is the concrete planning that identifies where and how exactly deconstruction and reconstruction will happen with the available resources, time, institutions, and personnel.

Both project partner nations will stand between the stages of initialization and conceptualization when this document is published. Conceptualizing their own frameworks that institutionalize integrity in their sport infrastructure will set up the foundation of all following stages and requires a strong sense of responsibility and cooperation on the national administrative level.

3. The **mobilisation** phase is expanding the circle of actors by communicating the results of conceptualization and reducing barriers to enable widespread participation in the change movement.
4. At the core of the movement stands the **implementation** phase where new processes begin to work in order of their priority.
5. After the main change goals have been met, the **continuation** phase consolidates the new status through monitoring and readjusting.

While the five stages are typically passed in the presented order, it is natural for them to sometimes blend. For instance, mobilization efforts already facilitate the formation of acting bodies during initialization and will become a long-term principle of continuation within the Integrity Atlas roadmap.

1.4 A National Sport Integrity System

The underlying idea for the presented roadmap is based on Kihl (2023), who is credited with originating the concept of **National Sport Integrity Systems** (NSIS). The NSIS approach was chosen by the authors as a model for the national framework promoting integrity within sport provided in the roadmap. Kihl employs a so-called configurational approach to derive the exact design of the system, meaning that there is no one-size-fits-all approach. The roadmap is using Kihls approach by serving as a guideline for both Moldova and Ukraine and pointing out relevant components of the NSIS which then should be interpreted individually for both countries.

To enhance understanding of Kihl´s approach, an **integrity actors table** (see Figure 2) displaying relevant stakeholders within sport federations is included in the supplementary materials to this document. This table will portray the complexity of an NSIS, further clarify the difference between internal and external actors and give examples on their roles and exemplary tasks.

Kihl´s outlines can be compressed into **three main requirements** for functional NSISs. **First,** having internal, administrative leadership and external oversight, ideally in a sound balance, is important. Regarding the latter, Kihl specifically points out that this monitoring can foremost come from political or legislative actors but also e.g. the media. **Second,** the NSIS needs enough resources as well as competencies and good cooperation of all actors to effectively step up. **Third,** to accommodate for just that, Kihl emphasizes the need for an ideally single, compact and intentional integrity system to avoid ineffective and uncoordinated structures that typically come up when several different stakeholders are involved (2023, p. 28). This roadmap aims at delivering a guide for the build-up of such a single, compact and intentional system.

To illustrate how the three requirements come to light in a roadmap process, we will quickly turn the focus to Australia, where such a process has been successfully undertaken from 2018 onwards, with an integrity agency already being set up in 2020.

Australia's experience demonstrates how **committed external oversight** can facilitate the (internal) development of a comprehensive national sports integrity system. Following the 2018 Wood Review, the Australian government established the **legislative basis** for Sport Integrity Australia (SIA) (Sport Integrity Australia Act 2020, 2021), which evolved from the existing anti-doping agency into a central institution covering a broad range of integrity issues. The **government** not only acted as an **agenda-setter** by defining a national approach to sports integrity but also ensured its implementation through **legislative authority, ongoing financial funding and the allocation of competencies**. In 2025–2026, for instance, SIA received AUD 63 million in government funding. Moreover, the Australian government's strong involvement has contributed to the successful legitimization of SIA among relevant stakeholders, despite the established principle of autonomy in sport. Other sport actors used their capacities to solidify SIA´s standing further and take advantage of the knowledge and materials that are shared through SIA´s website.

In the following, a ready-to-use roadmap approach is outlined for the Olympic movement and federations in Ukraine and Moldova. It highlights distinctions between the two countries that result from organizational differences or results of the research report, where applicable.

1.5 How to Use This Roadmap: A Configurational Framework

In broad terms, **change management** can be understood as the structured process of guiding individuals or organizations from their current situation toward a desired future state. According to change management literature, there are several **factors that mediate the success** of a top-down approach like this roadmap (Buzogány & Pülzl, 2024).

- The number of involved actors
- their resources in capital, expertise and personnel
- policy design and hierarchy in governance
- and control within the system can facilitate or hinder effective change.

Both participating countries should interpret the previous factors to prepare for the work with this roadmap. Additionally, the underlying research (Oceretnii et al., 2026) highlighted differences between the visibility, perception, and action-orientation towards integrity in sport and consequently have reason to deduce different actions from this roadmap.

For instance: While there was a strong pattern of value-based rejection of match-fixing among all study participants in the Integrity Atlas report, responses from Ukraine signalled a higher awareness of instances of match-fixing in their sporting environment compared to Moldova. While Moldova may target awareness on a broad level, Ukraine may further investigate causes of higher perceived exposure and support response mechanisms.

The roadmap was developed in consideration of the previous **cultural and local contextualisation** and is to be understood as a guiding framework that describes the phases in the establishment of a national framework promoting integrity within sport. Any country aiming to establish such a framework holds the responsibility to identify their standing in the roadmap and to **interpret the described actions according to their own capacities and resources**.

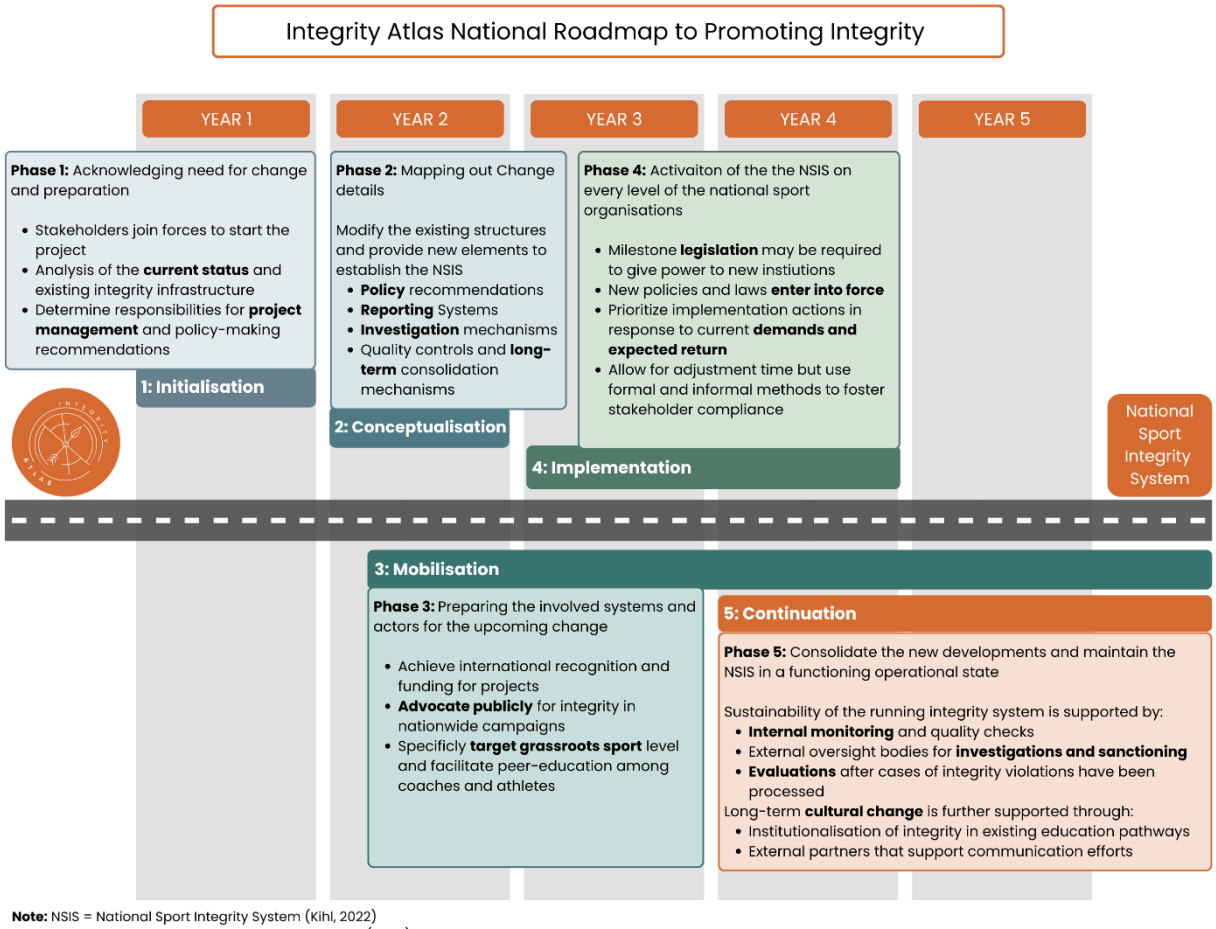
2. Integrity Atlas Roadmap

The Integrity Atlas roadmap was modelled after Kihls (2023) National Sport Integrity System (NSIS). Therefore, the national framework promoting integrity within sport is hereafter referred to as NSIS. It is continuously advised that this roadmap gives an overall approach, and the partner countries should find their own specific approach toward the matter.

2.1 Executive Summary

This executive summary is a comprehensive overview of the authors' roadmap and recommendations for the partner countries to promote and strengthen integrity in their national sport federations. Each phase will be thoroughly described in the following chapters.

Figure 1. ***Comprehensive Summary of the Integrity Atlas Roadmap***



Note: NSIS = National Sport Integrity System (Kihl, 2022)
The five phases of change are adapted from Krügers (2006) model.
This work is based on the Integrity Atlas Report by the State University of Moldova (2026)

2.2 Phase 1: Initialisation

Recommended duration: 1 year

Establishing leadership for change is an essential first step of the Initialization phase. Setting up an NSIS is a complex process, for which a clear organizational foundation is required to ensure that all stakeholders are aware of the required change pull together in the same direction.

We recommend the creation of a **consulting body**. It can act as part of a work group under the NOC or the national government and should include representative actors from all fields of sport (see Figure 2):

- Representatives of leading (sport) organizations (NOC, NFs, etc.)
- Representatives of executive and legislative of a country (Ministers, MPs, etc.)
- Universities
- Athlete representatives from amateur to professional levels
- Law experts
- International consultants
- And others depending on the specific local circumstances and challenges

The goal of this consulting body should be to get all stakeholders onto the same page, define the next steps necessary, and later agree on the composition of the **Executive Control Unit (ECU)** that further leads to the development of the NSIS. It is advised that only high-ranked officials should be considered for membership in the Consultation Commission to ensure that they can spread decisions and convince others back in their own organizations. It commonly also helps with securing sufficient financial support as well.

It is to be noted once again that no universal composition formula exists. Such consultation bodies should rather reflect the unique nature of every national sport system and provide a **good opportunity to already emphasize specific national challenges**, as identified in the research report.

Tasks of the consultation body should undertake and/or commission during the initialisation phase include:

2.2.1 Analysis of the current state of integrity in sports

- ➔ For Ukraine/Moldova, the research report by the Moldovan State University already provides an important connecting point for further research
- Determine integrity education status in the national sport environment

  - **Assess the knowledge** already present and define a desired standard. Who lacks knowledge, how and where can this be tackled?

- Evaluate existing national integrity structures
  - **What exists** already and **can be modified**? How can **international cooperation** create assistance? Are existing processes independent and reflecting integrity standards?
- Discuss the participation in (international) milestone integrity efforts and results
  - **Which organisations are available** for inspiration and support?
  - What does the visible impact look like? Is it sufficient?

Participation in the Integrity Atlas project and the included research (Oceretnii et al., 2026) represents the beginning of phase 1 for both countries. Further research efforts should be based upon the existing Integrity Atlas report and should include the following aspects:

The authors recommend narrowing down the scope and **conduct sport-specific integrity risk assessments** to round up the evaluation of existing national integrity structures. The Integrity Atlas report further recommended to pay special attention to the topic of safeguarding minors. At the same time, it is important to maintain efforts in domains that have been in public discussion of sport integrity for a longer time. Although doping was mentioned as an established and well-recognized topic in sports-integrity, 29% of Moldavian and 42% of Ukrainian survey respondents have indicated to rarely or never have received information and training on doping-rules during their training (Oceretnii et al., 2026, p. 125). Another result from the survey highlights the **importance of considering multiple perspectives** in the initialization process. Significantly more coaches than athletes expressed that in their opinion sanctioning of violence happened adequately. An important component of phase 1 is to find and explain such disagreements to enable the development of reactive measures in phase 2.

A further component of the initialization phase is the **evaluation of existing national and international integrity structures.** Harmonizing national structures will save time and resources while facilitating the later adaptation phase. It is useful to reflect on the involvement in international integrity efforts like the Macolin Convention which was initiated by the CoE (2014). Ukraine and Moldova ratified the convention before its entry into force in 2019 and committed to making match-fixing prevention and sanctioning a multi-agency obligation. One reason to reflect on existing structures is because they will need to be integrated into the new NSIS. Another reason is that successes and obstacles from the past are valuable to inform the future. A rich combination of resources by international organizations and structures including the International Olympic Committee (IOC), CoE, and the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) rounds off the foundation of research in the Initialization phase.

2.2.2 Determination of project management and responsibilities

- **Who are the actors** in position to shape the future NSIS? What does the existing political landscape allow?
- **Essential final step:** formation of the strategic executive control unit (ECU)

The **ECU** should be seen as the **guiding force** that prepares the entry into the second phase as well as guiding the project through all following ones. We recommend that the **ECU operates under comparable guidelines to Erasmus+ project partners**. For instance, the ECU should reflect the diverse nature of the previous consultation commission and thus consist of representatives of all relevant stakeholders. Furthermore, a superior program advisor should be installed, who oversees the stakeholders, sets deadlines, continually checks the progression of the roadmap, and unlocks the financial budget.

It is sensible to attain this supervision role to the representatives of governments, legislative bodies, and other respected but independent actors, as they typically have control over the most important levers such as legal or financial matters.

As the Integrity Atlas project places the two countries right at the end of phase 1, we encourage them both to **set the formation of an ECU as an additional goal** beyond the deliverables to be achieved as part of the Integrity Atlas project – this may well initiate the long-term process fostering integrity in the two countries beyond the completion of this project.

2.2.3 Risk analysis

Difficulties in convincing potential members of the consulting body to join and progressing into the next phase of action are risks of the initialization phase. According to Kihl (2023) , it is especially important to emphasize the role of regulators in government and law in overseeing the processes in national sport organisations (NSOs). **Involving the regulators** serves the NSIS process with resources, impact, and credibility. The reports finding that there is a strong normative support for integrity values, but a visible intention-action gap within both countries serves as an argument for the worth of a NSIS. Further arguments to be utilized are successful NSIS examples like the Australian approach (Kihl, 2023) and a more scope on the social and educational impact of sport participation that makes it a place where the protection of integrity is of utmost importance (UNESCO, 2015).

An **effective system for decision making** is required to prevent a new intention-action gap among the ECU. The responsibilities of all partners should be declared and monitored by the ECU and a potential project manager. Efforts should be made to establish a realistic timeframe and secure sufficient funding for the following phases.

2.3 Phase 2: Conceptualisation

Recommended duration: 1 Year. Ensure that the recommendations from phase 1 are implemented quickly to protect the efforts of phase 1 from diminishing.

In the Conceptualisation phase the objective is to channel the knowledge, expertise, and agreements gathered in the initialization-phase into a **clear concept** involving the frameworks, changes in laws, and official positions to name a few. More so than the previous phase, clear, committed and enforcing leadership within the collaborative effort is required – as resembled by the ECU.

The following structures need to be prepared in the conceptualisation phase through the guidance of the ECU.

2.3.1 Establishment of a public value-based foundation

The ECU can ensure that the NSIS is sound by grounding it on shared and consistent definitions of relevant terms and concepts. Additionally, publishing these values serves as an important position statement and enables everyone who is to act under the later NSIS to access the value foundation that stands behind it. Ukraine has a dedicated page on integrity on their NOCs website which could be modified to include all topics of integrity beyond match-fixing (NOC of Ukraine, n.d.). Moldova has established a national platform for integrity in sports (Ministry of Education and Research of the Republic of Moldova, 2025) in response to the Macolin convention (Council of Europe, 2014), which is operating but not with its own public output. Said platform could also be extended to include all facets of integrity and receive a public declaration and presence on the NOCs or its own webpage.

2.3.2 Development of NSIS concept and strategies

- Policy recommendations and enforcements
  - What **regulations and laws** can be passed and how quickly?
- Set up a reporting system for integrity concerns/violations
  - Ensure their **independence** and make use of possible international cooperations
- Set up investigation mechanism
  - **Define structures**. Clarify how criminal law and authorities can contribute as external actors
  - **Determine sanctions** and who has authority to decide on them
- Seek international/expert cooperation where possible and invite opinions from all organization levels where possible

- Discuss the long-term perspectives
  - **Consolidation** of the measures taken/to be taken **into a dedicated national integrity organisation** like Sport Integrity Australia
  - **Set objectives**: What must be achieved in 3/5/10 years to consider the integrity efforts successful?

At the heart of the NSIS development process is the design the actual structures that will translate the values into practical reality. Policy and law recommendations to be passed in phase 4 create the rules that protect integrity in sport by describing encouraged and prohibited behaviours of involved integrity actors (see Figure 2). We recommend that policy design and planned implication should be evaluated and prepared under **governmental guidance**. Existing reporting channels should be revised and ensured to be confidential with independent oversight. Here the Integrity Atlas report suggested using anonymous and possibly digital options to make reporting more accessible. Additionally, the Integrity Atlas report stated that resources should be allocated to the counselling and support for victims of integrity violations. The investigation mechanisms that follow a reported concern are an essential but delicate part of the conceptualisation. They must consider local laws, take concerns seriously and investigate to collect the information required to make decisions while protecting the privacy of victims and otherwise involved individuals.

The Integrity Atlas reports recommendations of best practices that match phase 2 emphasize the formalization of safeguarding practices, training programs and requirements for working with children (Oceretnii et al., 2026). **Identifying human risk factors** and **implementing modern technology** (e.g. to assist referee decisions) or **behavioural guidelines** (open-door-policy for mutual control) were mentioned among the recommended best practices. Moldova was suggested by the Integrity Atlas report to set a focus introducing integrity training requirements into licensing pathways and strengthening independent investigation mechanisms for integrity violations. For Ukraine, the overall detected higher tolerance for aggression and physical retaliation should be considered in the conceptualisation phase.

Strategies that facilitate the later implementation of the NSIS involve **joining existing structures** in the overarching NSIS and long-sighted **estimate of required personnel**. For example, Ukraine and Moldova both have existing anti-doping strategies that have gradually taken on responsibility for other branches of integrity in sport. We recommend extending these existing bodies with the required new components to follow Kihl's model of one central NSIS (2023). Many staff members of internal and external integrity actors (see Figure 2) are likely to adapt their profile and tasks in the later adaptation process. It is therefore helpful to define and standardize the tasks, responsibilities and required training of a position involved in sport integrity clearly beforehand.

2.3.3 Risk analysis

In the conceptualisation phase we see the risks of missing important perspectives, unclear hierarchies and slow progress of the interdisciplinary and complex NSIS planning.

The NSIS needs to consider many perspectives to be applicable for a whole national sport organisation. Leaving the planning process to high-ranking officials supports credibility and connections to important stakeholders but bears the **risk of overstepping individuals** with limited advocacy capacities. The ECU should therefore reconnect with the consultation body and relevant external actors on a regular basis. The project management comes into play again to **prevent reduced conceptualisation activity** that stems from unclear responsibility. The interdisciplinary nature of the NSIS requires parallel preparation work to be conducted on several levels of administration and through multiple fields of actors. Project management must oversee deadlines clearly and distribute tasks so that none are overlooked or completed repeatedly.

2.4 Phase 3: Mobilisation

Recommended timeframe: Infinite. Phase 3 can begin shortly after phase 2 and ahead of phase 4. It is a continuous process, as education and the reporting on integrity efforts are dynamic processes.

There is an acute phase of mobilization prior to the implementation of the NSIS which **raises awareness** and lowers the barriers for actors outside of the leadership circle to join the change movement. Continuous mobilization efforts after the implementation of change will **keep everyone involved in the long term.** Mobilization efforts may range from a persuasive personal discussion to large-scale media campaigns.

When setting up an NSIS, tensions and **potential points of resistance become visible**. One key challenge concerns the principle of “Autonomy of Sport”, referring to the right of sport organisations to govern themselves and make decisions independently of direct state interference The introduction of an NSIS may therefore be perceived as a threat to this autonomy, particularly if measures are imposed from the top down via legislation. While such an approach can successfully establish formal integrity structures (see phase 2), their effectiveness depends on whether they are understood, accepted and actively used at all levels of sport organisations. Mobilisation on the national level must therefore go hand in hand with the design of the NSIS. By engaging relevant stakeholders early on and clearly communicating its purpose and benefits, **mobilisation can help build trust** and demonstrate that an NSIS is not intended to undermine the autonomy of sport, but **to protect its credibility and safeguard** its long-term independence.

The steps of Mobilization are present from the international to the grassroots level include:

2.4.1 International Efforts

- Use of European Networks and Platforms

Mobilization through the country's representatives in international networks serves the purpose of **promoting an exchange among experts** and unlocking resources that facilitate the NSIS. Events or conferences that are related to the topic of integrity allow for an **exchange of best practices** and beyond that may inspire other countries to make an effort towards more integrity support in sport. Cooperations like Erasmus+ projects can provide access to financial and non-material support in building a NSIS.

2.4.2 Advocating on a national public scale

- Parliamentary and public **debates**
- Public **information efforts and activities** (e.g. in the context of popular sporting events)
- Launch **nationwide campaigns**
- Include integrity into **existing education** sources

Advocating for the NSIS on the national scale is required to convince stakeholders to join a cooperation or prepare adapt upcoming changes. If the NSIS is enacted through governmental decisions it must gain the required votes by the executive political organs. Sponsors from the private sector or popular public figures are strategic partners to advertise NSIS related changes to the public but must also be convinced to do so in the first place. Other **dissemination strategies** that can reach many people include (social) media campaigns, promotion at events across a multitude of sports (not only the ones broadcasted in the media), and naming “integrity ambassadors” that promote the change on a peer level. Considering the strong value foundation for integrity presented in the Integrity Atlas report, public mobilisation efforts should aim to go beyond awareness and specifically teaching their target audience what they can do in their own role (e.g. teacher, student, parent) to support integrity in sports. Integration of integrity in sports into existing **educational frameworks** of schools, universities and coach education systems will be discussed in the later continuation phase as it represents a long-term effort.

2.4.3 Grassroots education

- Multiply integrity knowledge across local sports clubs and actors (e.g. through use of workshops)

Some personnel of local level sport organizations will likely be formally required to receive specialized integrity education by the NSIS but many more can benefit from mobilisation on the club level. Interactive workshops like the **Integrity Atlas Workshop Playbook** from the Integrity Atlas project should be used as they are or be an inspiration for grassroots integrity education.

The underlying idea is to apply role-specific information to enable capacity building in short and cost-effective training. We recommend using the Integrity Atlas report to choose workshop topics as it gives detailed information on integrity literacy divided by nationality or age group. For instance, the report stated a lower visibility of the topic of match-fixing in Moldova which could make the corresponding workshop package more useful in that region (Oceretnii et al., 2026).

2.4.4 Risk Analysis

A barrier to the Mobilisation phase can be the "friction among actor interests" Kihl (2023) described and a related or independent lack of engagement across all distribution levels.

A precaution for the first risk to invest time and resources to target mobilization campaigns to the respective target audience – attempting a one-size-fits-all approach unlikely to yield a big return. While great majorities valued integrity highly in the Integrity Atlas report, changes that result from the NSIS development may be met with resistance if individuals are requested to adapt to well-established routines and rules. Especially on local organisational levels where many volunteers run clubs and events, it **may be perceived as a burden** to comply with new regulations. The designers of mobilization efforts should therefore **avoid creating a culture of blame** that will cause integrity actors to withdraw from their roles. Instead, a combination of **transparent communication** of current risks and emphasis on the desired goal state in the NSIS should be used to motivate cooperation. We recommend again to make use of the consulting body and involve voices from all levels of sport to develop a mobilisation strategy for the NSIS that provides guidance while recognizing autonomy in sport.

2.5 Phase 4: Implementation

Recommended duration: 2 years following the completion of phase 2.

Following completion of determining the hard-power necessities (e.g. structures, secured funding, legitimization and acceptance) in the previous phases, the implementation phase **translates the NSIS architecture into a functional system**. As the desired structure of the NSIS has been clarified, at this stage stakeholders may turn toward assisting clubs and federations in harmonizing existing policies and structures and onboarding personnel. A **coordination strategy** like agreeing on an initial 5-year objectives plan can give the architecture a clear direction where everyone involved knows what to do and how to contribute. After all, such an interdisciplinary endeavour will step into force stepwise, resembling a marathon rather than a sprint.

During the implementation phase, individual countries and sport systems have another opportunity influence the topics that are dealt with by prioritizing the implementation tasks.

Therefore, stakeholders may emphasize the specific needs, risks and challenges their system is subject to and act accordingly.

The implementation phase aims to:

2.5.1 Integration of the NSIS into existing (sport) policy

- Consideration of sport political structure of the country
  - **Adopting nation-wide legislation** must comply with the political system. Kihl (2022) emphasizes implications for NSISs being developed in either a federal or unitary political systems.

- Fully adopt policies and laws
  - **Foundational policy** (e.g. Sport Integrity Australia Act (2020))
  - Use and modify structures already present in sports organisations, events and administrations
  - Use informal and formal methods to **establish stakeholder compliance**

The national sport integrity system is formally entering into force in the Implementation phase. Since this proposal is built on a mostly top-down approach of ECU and governmental guidance, we highlight the special relevance to **ensure that NSIS regulations reach every level of the sport organization.** Disseminating change from the internal official actors (see Figure 2) to the club level (see Figure 3) differs depending on the local sport governance model. In a federated model, the national level provides guidance but lets the state offices act rather independently which requires a **state-level formation of internal official integrity officers or a state ECU** (Kihl, 2023). The national board has more direct control over club governance in a unitary model, where regional departments act as a connection to local levels without acting independently.

While countries often display mixed forms on the continuum from federated to unitary, both Moldova and Ukraine are strongly shaped by unitary structures which allows for rules to be applied uniformly and makes regions accountable to the national body but bears the risk of overlooking local needs and reduces local autonomy (O'Boyle & Shilbury, 2016). At the same time, there are **country-specific differences** that must be considered during phase 4. NSOs in Moldova are distinct non-governmental organizations that act under the national unitary framework but retain some independence in managing internal affairs (Lege Nr. 110 Din 22-05-2025 Cu Privire La Educația Fizică Și Sport [Law No. 110 of 22 May 2025 on Physical Education and Sport], 2025). Ukrainian sport federations operate under more direct supervision of the Ministry of Youth and Sport (Rauch & Kropyvnytska, 2026).

If a country decides to establish a national organization that **bundles existing resources, a comprehensive legislation** comparable to the Sport Integrity Australia Act (Sport Integrity

Australia Act 2020, 2021) signalizes the first major step in NSIS implementation. Such an act serves as both the formal public commitment to supporting integrity in sport but more importantly gives the newly developed structures and positions the legal basis and responsibility to act.

After the policies enter into force, existing integrity actors are given new responsibilities, and it might be necessary to **hire additional personnel** to implement the NSIS. We suggest that the ECU might use **codes of conduct** or similar agreements, depending on the targeted role, to achieve formal recognition of integrity regulations across the sport organisations. The executive level of NSOs should provide templates for such forms that help to facilitate the compliance process on the grassroots level. Where necessary, certain qualification levels or a **minimum of integrity quality standards** can be required as a prerequisite to participate in sport events to create an additional incentive to adopt new policies. An important measure in phase 4 is to ensure that all new information (guidelines, reporting pathways, contact points) is easily accessible to the public and expressed in a manner that can be understood by laypeople and especially minors.

2.5.2 Prioritizing implementation according to current demands

- Be aware of current trends and act accordingly
  - Put special emphasis on Safeguarding and Mental Health
  - International development of Sport (e.g. travel abroad but also multilateral approaches and measures taken in sport)
  - Digital Age and Social Media Risks and Advantages

Considering that the implementation will not take place overnight, it is sensible to **prioritize included actions based on current local demands.** Perceived urgency next to estimated time for application and expected return values are factors that can affect the priority list of planned changes. The Integrity Atlas report highlighted that one priority lies in the formal integration of safeguarding regulations into coaching education, which is an effective measure to quickly multiply the impact of behavioural guidelines and serve a vulnerable population. A country-specific notion from the Integrity Atlas report is that Moldavian participants reported to experience a lower share of institutional support which should be considered during implementation. A pattern in the Ukrainian population was that although reporting routes were known to athletes, they reported higher discomfort in using them compared to the coaches. The latter finding demonstrates again **that it is not sufficient to formally implement change** but **required to ensure that resources meet the population's demands.**

2.5.3 Risk Analysis

As the implementation phase is an enormous organisational effort and restructuring, an **expected bottleneck to it is a lack of financial resources**. Kihl (2023) recommends restructuring existing funding models to address this issue. Furthermore, we suggest a shared use of financial and

personnel resources as an attempt to prevent implementation delays due to financing issues. On the contrary, creating financial motivation is also a useful strategy for the ECU to facilitate implementation. **Connecting sport development funds to conditions that represent a certain status in adopting the NSIS** framework creates motivation and positive incentives to adapt the changes requested in the NSIS.

2.6 Phase 5: Continuation

Recommended duration: Infinite. Begins during and remains after completion of phase 4.

The final stage of change **consolidates the changes** made towards the NSIS and works to maintain it in a functioning operational state. However, **(independent) audits** should begin their work from the moment they can act on a legal basis during phase 4. Additionally, the consolidation and review mark a **continuous process**. Stakeholders should constantly **reflect, review and adapt** to the changing environments – policies will be implemented creating new opportunities, first results can be assessed that may hint at weaknesses in other areas and backlash might occur that should be combatted through education and knowledge-building. Generally, what is most important to **guarantee** throughout the audit and assessment processes are **neutrality and independence**.

Principle consolidation and review processes of the Continuation phase can be adopted through following measures:

2.6.1 Allocation of resources towards monitoring from the beginning

- Internal monitoring in the NSIS
  - Within the integrity architecture, a small **part** of resources and personnel should be **dedicated to an adaptation commission**, that monitors how changing landscapes (sporting, political, social and economic) may affect the functionality of the integrity measures
- External monitoring
  - An **independent, external oversight body** should be set up, ideally by the government, as the necessary audit and investigation rights need to be guaranteed ideally by law
  - **Independent studies** for quality controls and **evaluation** (e.g. Integrity Atlas report)
- Reflection after investigation of integrity violations

After the NSIS is established, its long-term objectives are upholding and, if necessary, adopting preventative measures to integrity risks and reacting appropriately where breaches have occurred. It is essential to uphold the connections to the newly joined and existing integrity actors to allow the NSIS to have a lasting impact on a country. The ECU should **appoint some internal**

actors to critically reflect on the state of the integrity structures considering changes in its working environment and to maintain the stakeholder dialogue (Kihl, 2023). **Regular public communication**, for example in an annual report, should summarize the activity of that working group and the overall NSIS to establish a basis for comparisons between different points in time.

The reactive measures of the NSIS are in their full working state after the Implementation phase has ended. In that state, there are **accessible reporting mechanisms**, **sufficient protection of reporters and whistleblowers**, and **independent investigations** from oversight bodies outside of the reporting environment. It depends on the exact governance model of a country whether a central national oversight leads investigations, tribunals, and sanctions or whether they assist local units of the sport system in doing so. We recommend that full operationality of such a monitoring process should be reached as early as possible in the roadmap process. As said before, it is sensible to have an (external) monitoring already during the beginning phases to control a smooth development of the roadmap process.

An **anonymized record of investigations** should be included in the annual reports. Patterns that emerge in such records are a valuable source of information for the leading actors in the ongoing mobilisation phase who can adapt if concerns accumulate in a certain subfield of integrity. Independent of specific incidences, it is furthermore recommended to **conduct nationwide surveys** like the Integrity Atlas report. A regular investigation of attitudes towards integrity in sports and perception of the NSIS further facilitates discourse and points out vulnerabilities.

2.6.2 Promoting long-term cultural change regarding integrity in sports

- Ensuring continuous education to institutionalize education and awareness-promotion
  - Directly in school, higher or coach education
  - Broad and free public resources
- Finding external partners that support communication efforts

Several mechanisms outside of the NSIS can be utilized to prepare continuous support for integrity in sport. An effort to educate involved actors was present in all previous phases of change and becomes evident once again in its last phase. The Integrity Atlas report highlighted that although themes of integrity were present in university curricula of both countries, the respective content was fragmented throughout the course catalogues and lacked diversity beyond the topics of doping and fair play (Oceretnii et al., 2026). The researchers further suggested developing specific and comprehensive courses on sport integrity. Such **courses can provide information on the (ethical) foundation of the NSIS and its practical mechanisms** to future coaches, physical education teachers, and other sports personnel. Experts of the field or programs from international universities can be consulted in the remodeling progress.

Beyond the field of education, **resources that are accessible to everyone** in the country's society should be established. Within the Integrity Atlas report sample, a majority wished for additional educational material which could be provided through free websites, centres for integrity education that are attached to existing public education structures or advertised by strategic external partners of the private sector, for example. Whichever path is chosen, it should aim to uphold the national discussion on integrity promotion in sport to create the cultural change that moves the topic from expert discussions into the sport environments of everyday people.

2.6.3 Risk Analysis

The risk of the continuation phase is to consider it as a finite state. The authors have repeatedly pointed out that this roadmap prompts countries to establish an individualized and more importantly **dynamic NSIS.** The measures describing annual reports and feedback mechanisms within the NSIS should therefore **be conducted well beyond the phases of change**. On top of mere reporting, annual events that recognize the achievements of the NSIS in general or certain actors that have made exceptional contributions can serve as a motivation to continue the complex efforts within integrity support. To adapt to the needs of both partner countries, this document has continuously highlighted differences between Moldova and Ukraine in their process towards a NSIS. Nonetheless, the Integrity Atlas report highlighted that the differences lie more in intensity than in nature which puts both countries in a similar position on this roadmap and there is value in upholding international cooperation beyond the integrity atlas project and the development processes of both NSISs.

2.7 Conclusion

An **executive summary** of the Integrity Atlas roadmap can be found in Figure 1. It displays the five phases of change towards a NSIS and their respective main tasks. Common factors that were present throughout all phases are the **constant involvement of all affected stakeholders, individual constraints through national resources, repeated quality assessments, and value of international networking**. Together, these factors highlight that establishing and sustaining an NSIS requires not only phase-specific actions but also ongoing collaboration, evaluation, and adaptation.

In the context of collaboration, the cooperation between the NOCs of Moldova and Ukraine provides a valuable foundation for further progress in strengthening integrity in both countries. By building on the existing initiatives, knowledge and experiences, the two partners can translate the recommendations of this roadmap into practical action. Moreover, **further international cooperation can enable integrity actors to support one another in addressing challenges and adapting their approaches as their national integrity systems develop**. Such cooperation will therefore be important not only for implementing the roadmap but also for ensuring the continued development and resilience of both countries´ NSIS frameworks.

3. Supplementary Materials

3.1 References

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3.2 Figures

Figure 2: ***Integrity Actors and their roles on the national level***

	INTERNAL ACTORS		EXTERNAL ACTORS	
	Actors	Function	Actors	Function
OFFICIAL	**Integrity Management**	Create and Institutionalize Culture of Integrity	**Mainly Agencies and Institutions**	Monitoring and Promotion, Independent Regulation
	STRATEGY: Executive Leadership & Governing Board (Within NOC, national sport organization or ministry)	•Project Management • Define and prioritize tasks • Facilitate stakeholder dialogue • Foundational integrity assessment • Establish a monitoring + investigation system • Develop and maintain relationships with all other accountability actors • Induce implementation of NSIS	Universities Law Experts Law Enforcement Border Agencies Government Legislature International Federations Gambling Services Safe-Sport Agencies Match-Fixing Agencies Partners in Promotion or Publication Athlete Representative Organisations [...]	The exact functions are idividual to the NSIS and determined in the Conceptualization Phase. Example functions include: • Advisory Functions • Responding to concerns • Investigations • Transparency measures • Independent assessments • Sanctioning External official actors will embed new NSIS regulations into their existing structures and enable mutual control and accountability
	SYSTEMS: Integrity Officer(s)	Prevention: • Informs, assists and advises leadership • Performs risk assessments • Coordinates national Integrity actor network Management: • Policy design Monitoring: • Oversees execution of NSIS • Provides annual integrity reports		
	SYSTEMS: HR-Department	Prevention: • Advises line management • Ensures employee onboarding is according to NSIS Monitoring: • Assists employees with NSIS compliance		
	SYSTEMS: Financial Department/ Audit	Prevention: • Organizes administration • Controls budget spendig		
	OPERATIONS: Line Managers	Prevention: • Promote ethical decision making in training, coaching, competition, management, governance Management: • Integrate NSIS mechanisms with their respective subunits: performance systems / events / security / medical / community engagement / partnerships / marketing and communication		
UNOFFICIAL	**Anyone else within the NSO**	Create and Institutionalize Culture of Integrity	**Anyone not included in the other quarters**	Monitoring and Promotion, Independent Regulation
	Athletes Coaches Medical Administrators On-site spectators [...]	• Know their rights and responsibilities in the NSIS • Follow codes of conduct • Report concerns appropriately • Represent the NSIS on a national level	Sport Fans and Community Genral Public Civic Engagement	• Support organisations • Consume Sports • Build networks that demand/facilitate/prevent change • Lobbying and shaping the public opinion
			Private Sector	• Fund events and organisations (may react to NSIS with increased or reduced funding)
			Public Media [...]	• Free Press • Reports on NSIS development and function

Adapted from Kihl (2023, p. 14) and Hoekstra and Kapstein (2012, p.20)

Figure 3: ***Integrity Actors and their roles on the club level***

	Actors	Function
STRATEGY	Governing Board	• Promotes ethical leadership values • Supports and rewards integrity in decision making according to NSIS • Designs and disseminates organizational strategic plan for integrity
SYSTEMS	President Management Integrity Officer	• Coordinate adoption and promotion of national integrity strategy • Identify local risk factors • Coordinate and monitor compliance
OPERATIONS	Staff Sport Officials Volunteers	• Implementation in their respective subunit of the club • Translate integrity policies into day-to-day practices • Represent importance of ethical behaviour to club-external stakeholders in daily business • Integrity role models to athletes, parents or other non-official club members

Adapted from Kihl (2023, p. 14) and Hoekstra and Kapstein (2012, p.20)

Table 1. ***Acronyms, Abbreviations and Definitions***

Acronym or Abbreviation	Description
PU	Public (dissemination level)
COO	Coordinator
BEN	Beneficiary
EOA	European Olympic Academies
USM	Universitatea di Stat din Moldova (Moldova State University)
ENGSO	European Non-Governmental Sports Organisation

Acronym or Abbreviation	Description
NOC	National Olympic Committee
MDA	Republic of Moldova
UKR	Ukraine
WP	Work Package
Integrity Atlas Report	Manuscript on the foundational research study within the Integrity Atlas project by Moldova State University
CoE	Council of Europe
ECU	Executive Control Unit
NSIS	National Sport Integrity System
NSO	National Sport Organisation
NOC	National Olympic Committee
WADA	World Anti-Doping Agency