



# Master's degree thesis

**IDR950 Sport Management**

**Measuring governance: A case of Greek National Sport Federations**

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## **Preface**

After obtaining my bachelor's degree in Physical Education and Sport Science in Greece, I realized that I would prefer a role in sport that will support the whole structure from the backscene. Entering sport management in HiMolde was a chance to learn and experience the dynamics of positions outside sport, for sport.

During my studies in Sport Management I was given a fantastic opportunity to get familiar with sport governance after my professor's proposal to get involved in NSGO's research on Cyprus' case. After finishing this project successfully, I was given the opportunity once more to analyze my home country this time, Greece.

This is how the idea of this current thesis topic came to my mind, on an area of research in which I was totally unaware a few years ago. And when it comes to my home country, the motivation for learning and helping even a little becomes very strong. With the supervision of my professor Christos Anagnostopoulos, I've learnt more than I could imagine during this process.

There are no words that can describe Christos' patience and his understanding of personal and external factors that stood in the way of making this thesis come to existence. I can only express my most honest gratitude for giving me the opportunity to learn about sport governance through studying and gaining experience on it.

I would love to thank my parents for supporting my dreams, especially the choice of moving abroad for a brighter future. My brother for always reminding me the values in life and being an example to follow. Lastly, I would like to thank my life-partner, Irini, who selflessly endured all the hard moments and helped me with her strength and understanding.

Efstratios Iordanakis

Molde, 2020

## Summary

Sport governance is a relatively new area of research. It naturally came from corporate governance and became necessary for sport, after dealing with issues as corruption, doping, match fixing. Although it is a broad definition, researchers try to narrow it down, with a common goal of improving the policies that lead to misgovernance issues.

NSGO during the last decade have conducted research on this area, creating a benchmarking tool based on principles of good governance. International and national federations have been analyzed until today, with the number of them increasing constantly. Good governance principles have been categorized in four distinct dimensions: Transparency, Democratic processes, Internal accountability and control, and Societal responsibility. These dimensions will be explained and analyzed further.

Data collection was done by desk research, collecting information from documentation provided in the official websites of the Greek National Sport Federations. The lack of documents in the federations' websites, especially the non-Olympic ones, limited the pool to a total of 16 federations, all of them being the governing bodies of Olympic sports.

State in Greece interfered in the federations' practices with an omnibus bill on the sport sector. An attempt to minimize misgovernance and simplify processes of internal and external control of powers finances. A further analysis will be presented on the impact the omnibus bill had to the National Sport Federations.

Greece is one of the countries that endured austerity measures due to the global financial crisis in 2008. This affected all governing bodies financially dependent to the state, including sport bodies. The analysis of the results that takes place in this current thesis is under the scope of Greece's current financial status. A critical discussion on weaknesses and strengths will be developed and suggestions of how governance in Greek National Sport Federations can improve.

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# **1.0 Introduction**

## **1.1 Introduction and purpose**

This chapter's purpose is to provide the reader with the background needed to understand the concept of good governance in sport. First, when governance was introduced in sport as a matter of research, and second, how the interest on this subject was raised by the researchers. It continues with the reasons that delayed the adoption of good governance in this sector and why good governance in sport is an essential set of policies and rules that can minimize, or even eliminate actions of misgovernance that can create serious problems at an organizational level.

Following up, the research questions that guide this study will be given amongst the aim and objectives set. This will set a frame to this study, narrowing down the focus in a more specific direction it will follow.

Finally, the structure of the dissertation is provided, with the number of chapters and their content. This is helpful to see the stages of this study more clearly.

## **1.2 Background to the research**

### **1.2.1 Good governance in sport**

The first manuscript regarding sport governance exclusively, was published in 1996, in the *Journal of Sport Management*, which establishes a short history of research on this matter. (Ferkins and Shilbury 2019). An increasing interest on this topic has been observed in the last decades. More specifically, from 1982, the publications about sport governance reached the number of 243, while until 2003, only 18 had been published. (Anagnostopoulos and Winand 2019).

Research on sport governance seems to have increased due to scandals sport federations have recently suffered from and issues like corruption, doping and match fixing. But issues

deriving from misgovernance is not the only reason for that. Researchers have been recently driven to a path of promoting gender equality, diversity and balance (Adriaanse 2016), or social responsibility (Breitbarth, Walzel et al. 2015).

According to Hoye and Cuskelly (2007) organizational governance is necessary for all types of groups such as corporations, schools, charitable institutions, universities, religious organizations, nation states, voluntary associations, professional sport franchises or non-profit sport organizations. The reason is that organizational governance is the system that directs, controls and regulated an organization's elements.

### **1.2.2 The significance of good governance in sport**

Governance is important for sport organizations because it is connected to the policy and direction for their performance (Yeh and Taylor 2008). During the last two decades, good governance has become a significant element of study. But only during the last years good governance has become connected to sport (Geeraert, Alm et al. 2014). The reason for the delayed introduction of good governance to sports was the autonomy of sports which endorsed an almost complete self-governance. Sport structure has always been based on the freedom of association as a part of the wider classic liberalism (Szymanski 2006).

Poor governance has led sport organizations in an incapability to avoid cases of big scandals, even at an international level (Geeraert, Alm et al. 2014). For example, well-known cases have been the scandals in International Federation of Association Football (FIFA) with 2015's corruption case becoming widely popular in the media and the International Olympic Committee's (IOC) scandal regarding bribery in the 2002 Olympic Games and the rights to host them by Salt Lake City (Mallon 2000). A "legitimacy gap" has been created between the sport and its stakeholder due to incidents like these scandals which drew the interest of accounted parties (Sethi 1979).

## **1.3 Research question**

The title of the present dissertation is:

Measuring governance: A case of Greek National Sport Federations

The main question asked is:

To what extent Greek National Sport Federations apply standards of good governance?

The sub-questions are:

- What are the reasons behind Greece's ability or inability to fulfill good governance requirements?
- Has the economic crisis affected governance in the sports sector in Greece?
- What actions are taken to reach this level of good governance?

### **1.3.1 Research aim**

“To what extent Greek National Sport Federations apply standards of good governance?”.

Based on this question, the aim is to examine the degree to which principles of good governance are employed by Greek National Sport Federations. Then, understand the reasons behind this study's results based on the country's background.

### **1.3.2 Research objectives**

The following objectives will be useful as a path towards the above-stated research aim

- To understand the concept of good governance
- To identify how the sports sector in Greece
- To report on Greek national sport federations' ability to adopt good governance
- To offer recommendations on how good governance can be implemented in practical use in an organizational environment
- To figure out how this study can be useful in future research

## 1.4 Structure of the thesis

This dissertation is organized in six chapters:

- Chapter one – Introduction

The current chapter has already set an introduction on how this research will progress. The purpose, the research question, the research aim and a brief introduction on sport governance are presented as a first glance on the field of interest this paper is located.

- Chapter two – Literature review

This chapter first deals with the background of corporate governance and its different conceptual frameworks. Then follows the sport governance concept; what sport governance is, what are the roots and what measuring good governance is helpful for.

- Chapter three - Methodology

This chapter sets the method the current research is conducted, the theory supporting it, and the framework in which the findings are derived from the sources.

- Chapter four – Research findings

In the “research findings” chapter the findings from the data collected are pictured in tables and a brief analysis of them takes place.

- Chapter five – Discussion

In this chapter a critical conversation on the findings of the current research takes place, under the literature review’s scope.

- Chapter six – Conclusion

This chapter is a summary of the main findings, limitations the research faced, suggestions on how Greek National Federations can reach higher standards of good governance, and the potential use of the current thesis.

## **2.0 Literature Review and Theoretical Underpinnings**

### **2.1 Introduction and purpose**

The purpose of this chapter is to critically discuss the most relevant literature on the matter and to offer the theory that underpins the present study. It does so by presenting the need of the modern globalized world for adopting corporate governance standards to ensure the shareholders' interests. Following, it attempts to define and explain the management and steering of the sport's governing bodies drawing on the theory of sport governance. Then, it presents the need of 'good' governance due to issues of corruption and 'bad' governance. The application of 'good' governance is performed through good governance tools and monitoring organizations such as the NSGO. Finally, within the measuring governance topic, lies a discussion about the issues in measuring governance and its importance.

### **2.2 Corporate governance**

The 'new economy' era reflects the transition from industrial society to a new type of society characterized by information and changes in all fields, with major economic, social and environmental implications.

In terms of the organization's economic development, the management organization approaches are changing towards the corporate governance mechanisms. An effective corporate governance gives the opportunity to shareholders to make sure that companies which they have invested their shares on are managed according to their own interests. The globalization of capital markets and competition in funds make immediate need of adopting corporate governance standards and procedures to ensure credibility in the investors view.

The corporate governance is based on numerous theories among which are the agency theory, the theory of moral hazard implications, the stewardship theory, the stakeholder theory, resource dependence, transaction cost and political theory. Additional theories that were added later are ethics theory and information asymmetry theory. These theories come

into practice when combined with variables such as: configuration of the board of directors and audit committee; the independence of directors; the role of top management and their social relations beyond the legal regulatory framework. Consequently, effective corporate governance is a combination of existing theories depending on the above variables rather than one individual theory (Borlea and Achim 2013).

## **2.3 Sport governance**

According to Shilbury, Ferkins et al. (2013) Governing is “to steer an organization and make decisions that are consequential, strategic and impactful, usually on behalf of others” (p.249). Another definition about governance is offered by Kooiman (1993) as ‘the activities of social, political and administrative actors that can be seen as purposeful efforts to guide, steer, control or manage sectors of society’. With a more specialized focus on sports, Henry and Lee (2004) expanded the meaning of governance about direction, management and power from a single organizational form to a multi-level network of organizations that fits better to sport contexts like international and Olympic sports. This network governance refers to the different organizations working, planning and delivering specialized products more effectively together than alone.

However, despite the various attempts to define governance, this is not the case in the world of sports, where it is complicated to have a universally agreed definition of sport governance. This can be justified partly to the interest of scholars in focusing on the theoretical notions of sport governance such as agency, stewardship, institutional, resource dependence constructs that will be developed further below under the theoretical underpinnings of sports governance or on the distinction between the governance of an organization and governance between organizations (Shilbury, Ferkins et al. 2013).

Another area of interest for scholars within the sport governance has been the establishment of the role of the board in sport organizations. Examples of the derived themes are volunteer motivations for serving in the governing role (Cuskelly and Boag 2001); board performance and structure (Hoye and Doherty 2011); and board strategic capability (Ferkins and Shilbury,2010) which were evident within the literature developed in countries such as Canada, Greece, Portugal, Spain, Taiwan, UK, Australia, and New

Zealand where the dominant in sports are the non-profit sport organizations (Shilbury, Ferkins et al. 2013).

Overall, in an attempt to grab the essence of sport governance and to define it, Ferkins and Shilbury (2010) claimed that sport governance “is the responsibility for the functioning and overall direction of the organization and is a necessary and institutionalized component of all sport codes from club level to national bodies, government agencies, sport service organizations and professional teams around the world” (p.235).

## **2.4 Theoretical underpinning of sport governance**

Ferkins and Shilbury (2019) provide a complete and detailed overview on the theoretical underpinnings of sport governance. The framework of the theories is described as a multi-level view of governance including the individual level, the board level, the organization level and the wider system level of sport organization interactions. The authors draw on the work of significant researchers in governance research (Peachey, Zhou et al. 2015, Ferkins, Shilbury et al. 2018) to place major theories used within sport governance at diverse levels within a federated sport governance system. They justify this choice as almost 50% (49.8%) of the governance studies were systemic, moving thus beyond single-level research.

### **2.4.1 Primary theories of sport governance**

There are eight primary theories according to Ferkins and Shilbury (2019); four are linked to organizational governance and the remaining four to the systemic sport governance.

The organizational governance is connected to studies that concentrate on individual directors, the board grouping and the individual sport organization. As a result, the organizational governance is better explored through the theories of agency, stewardship theory, leader-member exchange theory and managerial hegemony theory. As initially described by Fama and Jensen (1983) and Jensen and Meckling (1976), the agency theory focuses on the conflicting interests between the principals and agents by putting emphasis on shareholders' interests. Leader-member exchange theory was used by Hoye (2003),



Hoye (2004), Hoye (2006) to monitor the relations between board chairs and paid executives within Australian state sport organizations. On the other hand, Managerial hegemony theory suggests that despite the legal power held by the board, the main responsibility for the organization lies with management (Stiles 2001). Ferkins, Shilbury et al. (2009) drawing on this theory, encouraged bigger board involvement in designing strategy to aim a balance in CEO influence. Lastly, Stewardship theory “describes the role of management leadership in maintaining and developing the organization’s value” (Borlea & Achim, 2013,p.120). Originated from the psychology and sociology fields, this theory assumes that managers are trustful, responsive and effective people being thus, good administrators of the resources given. Conversely to the agency theory, where the managers act on decisions according to their own advantage and not that of the owners, the stewardship theory assumes that managers decide not on their own interests but put the company’s benefit and interests first instead of the personal gain (Borlea and Achim 2013).

The further four (stakeholder theory, network theory, recourse dependence theory and institutional theory) were connected to systemic sport governance. Of them four, institutional theory seems to be the most used. Similarly, to institutional theory, stakeholder theory and network theory are widely used in sport management literature to investigate the relationship forms beyond a single organization. The need to view governance broadly, in order to move further than an individual organization or board group setting, led the researchers to use more systemic governance theories.

Stakeholder theory was developed by Freeman (1984) and refers to the corporate responsibility’s view related to numerous categories of stakeholders. The name “stakeholders” stands for all the persons, groups or organizations that affect the company’s activity or are influenced by the company. In other words, an organization operating according to the stakeholder’s theory, aims to maximize the company’s value by not ignoring the interests of their social partners, which can include customers’ demands, views of employees or protecting the environment (Borlea and Achim 2013).

Resource dependency theory highlights the significance of the board and pictures a role of the board beyond the traditional control responsibility as promoted from the agency theory perspective; The theory pictures the organizations as open systems and their operational

environment combined with their social relations are the foundation in decision making about resources allocation.

Institutional theory suggests that the existence of clear rules, guidelines and structures leads to the effective and efficient operation of an organization. Practically, this means that a sport organization may make changes in its systems, practices and services in order to adapt to what is normally done within the organization and satisfy any moral concerns. The theory also suggests that the role of the board is to comply with legislations, capital financial management and to avoid conflict of interests. In other words, the theory suggests that the boards are resistant to change without explaining why that is. Resistance is likely to derive from a fear of the unknown, likely to cover financial and non-financial costs and from a hesitance of stakeholders with specific interests. If resistance is the case in a sport organization, then that may result in the organization losing money from a reduction of investment in sport or a loss of valuable state subsidies. Eventually, sport organizations need to adopt to upcoming changes despite any substantial resistance. In some cases, they may comply symbolically to new changes in order to live up to the interests of external parties rather than fully accept and adopt the new regulations (O'Boyle 2012).

Network theory tries to explain how organizations relate to their environment. According to that theory, organizations have socially binding contracts to deliver services which create a sort of interdependency between organizations. Thanks to that interdependency, the organizations can develop informal communication and profit from resource flow between them. An example of that interdependency is when many sport organizations are largely dependent on government financial support or political connections to help them gather support and alliances. The institutional theory, resource dependency theory and network theory-all combined together- underscore the importance of examining governance within the context of external pressures faced by the organizations, and the ways they follow to cope with these pressures (Hoye and Cuskelly 2007).

From the above theories the most popular was the agency theory perspective, which offered the basis for governance standards, codes and principles developed by many institutions (ICGN 1999, OECD 2004). Different scholars have followed different approaches or limited themselves to one theory. As such, Boyd (1995) used the contingency approach while Hillman and Dalziel (2003) combined the agency and

resource dependency perspectives by saying that each board acquires board capital by affecting both board monitoring (agency perspective) and the provision of resources (resources dependency perspective). This short review of different perspectives shows that an integrated approach is preferable than a single perspective to grasp the results of good corporate governance (Yusoff and Alhaji 2012).

## **2.4.2 Additional theories in sport governance**

Despite the aforementioned eight theories, there are some additional ones that influence the sport governance scholarship but not yet identified as theories of sport governance (Ferkins and Shilbury 2019). These are collaborative governance theory, theory of property rights, board strategic balance and psychological ownership theory.

Collaborative governance theory tends to explore cross-sectorial governing relationships, meaning that various organizations cooperate to achieve common goals and results that are unlikely possible to achieve when working isolated (Emerson, Nabatchi et al. 2012). Shilbury, Ferkins et al. (2013) used the collaborative governance theory into sport governance in order to better grasp on the tensions and dynamics formed when a sector transitions from an amateur to a more professional and commercial state.

The theory of board strategic balance (Ferkins and Shilbury 2015, Ferkins and Shilbury 2016) proposes “the idea of the board of a national governing body integrating its state or regional entities into the governing role” and is considered as the one indigenous theory for sport governance (yet not identified as one).

The two last theories-namely psychological ownership and the theory of property rights-were used to explore ownership in sport governance. Specifically, García and Welford (2015) focused on the role of supporters in football governance. They concluded to a distinction between micro-level studies consisted of clubs/ supporter groups and macro-level (government/policy) with a little overlap between them.

Ferkins and Shilbury (2019) conclude by observing that there are few indigenous theories (see theory of board strategic balance) in sport governance. As such, parent theories, concepts and models have been adapted and extended. It is time for new theory to come out in surface as sport governance evolves. As Cunningham, Fink et al. (2015) encourage, where no relevant theory exists, or existing ones do not fully grasp the nuances and concepts of the sport setting, researchers in the field need to develop their own theoretical basis.

## 2.5 Good governance

The significance of ‘good’ governance has been increasing within sport the last years since sports have been directly linked with issues of corruption and ‘bad governance’. That resulted in closer examination of sport organizations such as national governing bodies (NGBs), so it can be ensured that they are following international best practice in their governance. On one hand, sport organizations need to become more professional and transparent throughout their operations and on the other hand, students, researchers and professional working in sport need to familiarize with what is good governance and how it should be achieved (O’Boyle and Bradbury 2015).

The World Bank was the first to officially formalize the concept of ‘good’ governance in 1989 (Woods 2000). Chappelet and Mrkonjic (2013) note that good governance in sport was originally created by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) through *the Basic Universal Principles (BUP) of good governance of the Olympic and sports movement* in 2008, which establish that ‘good’ governance covers a large range of sports actors all over the world. The IOC stand responsible for ensuring the application of the principles of good governance. During the decade following the publication of the principles, the sports world was challenged by some governance failures (e.g Salt Lake City, Balco, Festina).

Consequently, the IOC saw the BUPs and specifically the triptych of good governance: transparency, responsibility and internal accountability and control- as the chance to preserve the sports autonomy by responsibly addressing the past governance failures and by developing an enterprising approach toward good governance in the future (Pielke Jr, Harris et al. 2019). In fact, the importance of the BUPs to the IOC reflects on the Olympic Charter as well:

*Recognizing that sport occurs within the framework of society, the sports organizations within the Olympic Movement shall apply political neutrality. They have the rights and obligations of autonomy, which include freely establishing and controlling the rules of sport, determining the structure and governance of their organizations, enjoying the right of elections free from any outside influence and the responsibility for ensuring that principles of good governance be applied. (IOC 2019)*

Recently, various good governance tools (e.g. Chappelet and Mrkonjic 2013, Geeraert 2015) and codes of good governance (e.g. Australian Sport Commission, 2012) have been developed to ensure further guidance and closer observation of the governance arrangements in the sport industry. Yet, the development of these tools coincides with an era in the sports world highlighted by sport governance scandals such as the corruption case in FIFA, doping in Russian athletes or issues of sexual abuse in numerous sports creating questions about the efficacy of such tools and their ability to have a change in the rooted set cultures, leadership and behaviors of international sport governance (Pielke Jr, Harris et al. 2019).

Back in 2012 and 2013, the Danish Institute for Sports Studies and Play the Game reviewed the literature on good governance in sport to document a large total of governmental, non-governmental and academic studies and reports. Out of this literature review, Geeraert (2015) extracted some indicators to distribute good practice in terms of good governance in international sport, under the name Sports Governance Observer. Following that, Geeraert (2015) applied 36 SGO indicators to 35 international Olympic sports federations. Accordingly, the SGO indicators were applied in national contexts in Columbia, Brazil, Albania, the Netherlands, Montenegro and Germany. Similarly, Play the Game continued working on the tool by developing 274 governance indicators focused on national sports organizations (Geeraert 2017). The methodology of the current paper is based on the project named “National Sports Governance Observer: Benchmarking sports governance across national boundaries (NSGO)” (Geeraert 2018), which will be described in detail further below (see Methodology chapter). Ultimately, the aim of the project was to “assist and inspire national sports federations to enhance the quality of their governance by measuring governance and building capacity” (Geeraert 2018).

### **2.5.1 Implications for policymakers**

Governments, sport agencies, umbrella federations and National Olympic Committees are showing increasing interest in implementing policies that reassure good governance in sports federations. Geeraert (2018) recommends four ways to maximize the benefits on the implementation of good governance.

The first recommendation is about building an inventory of the status quo. Each federation should note down its strengths and weaknesses, so that priorities are put in line for the best policies of good governance.

Second, federations need to discuss which are to them the appropriate elements of good governance. The good governance principles can be implemented in the right way only if the federations support them in first place. When the federations recognize the principles as legitimate, then it is more possible to implement them further than the formal requirements.

Third, the implementation of good governance is facilitated by the existence of a good governance code. The code should include existing best practices, expert input, suggestions from discussions with sports federations as well as existing policies and regulations. The code should not be too stiff but give the freedom to federations to decide on their own the practical implementation of the provisions. The code's aim is not to provide a holistic template, but rather set the minimum standards and guide the federations on how to implement broader principles.

The fourth suggestion is about the tailoring of specific policies to help willing federations to implement good governance. This can be done in two ways. On one hand, capacity-building policies should exist and focus on the federations' needs. These needs can range from providing financial support to smaller federations, giving out templates on how to implement formal regulations and procedures to exchanging best practices and organizing workshops. On the other hand, willing federations may need exact guidance on how to implement the formal minimum requirements. Thus, specific policies need to work on the federations' understanding on how to implement obligations.

Eventually, Geeraert (2018) argues that it is possible that some federations may decline the implementation of good governance principles despite the supporting policies in place. Federations on their side may think of the good governance policies as not a legitimate standard of good conduct or they may feel intimidated of the consequences on the organizational balance or personal interests. In this case, an enforcement policy should be in place bringing unwilling federations in compliance with minimum requirements of good governance. One such policy can use independent monitoring to discover and sanction the

reluctant federations to implement the minimum requirements either by losing part of the funding or by naming and shaming.

Conversely, there must always exist a balance between the supporting and enforcing policies mentioned above. To reach that, an open dialogue is required between the public and the sports sector on suitable good governance policies. This suggests that supporting policies that focus on merely the implementation of good governance, can easily not succeed on its universal implementation. Yet, enforcement policies may only achieve implementation of good governance on minimum requirements, excessive bureaucracy or unjustifiable political interference that can eventually lead to the diminishing independent character of sports governance (Geeraert 2018).

## **2.6 Measuring governance: A handful task**

‘Governance’ is a broad term with no single definition. In defining the notion, various dimensions are used such as transparency, democratic processes and internal accountability and control. The problem with these dimensions is that they are abstract and unmeasurable which calls for replacing them with “intermediate objectives whose achievement can be observed and measured” (Nardo et al., 2005, p.5). Therefore, there is need of constructing indicators that allow for comparison and evaluation.

Geeraert (2019) reports that the indicators for measuring governance in a qualitative way often consist of dichotomous or ordinal variables. Dichotomous variables have only two levels (e.g. yes or no) whereas ordinal variables have two or even more categories that can be ranked. The first ones are classified as more appropriate for a strict measurement of governance while the latter leaves a gap for interpretation and thus less suitable for governance measurement.

Continuously, Geeraert (2019) explains the methodology behind the construction of indicators. Specifically, he says that the variables are quantified so that the indicators can represent values. The values stand for “the different dimensions of a concept whose description is the objective of the analysis” (De Lombaerde, Flôres et al. 2011).

Ultimately, composite indicators carry multi-dimensional realities by combining sub

indicators into a single index. An index helps with the comparison of performance across organizations.

The drawbacks on this methodology are reported to be unavoidable subjectivity and “measurement error” in relation to the concept the governance indicator is measuring at a time (Kaufmann, Kraay et al. 2008). Either way, following are the advantages of why measuring governance is important.

## **2.7 The importance of measuring governance**

Oman and Arndt (2010) present the main causes of the large growth of interest in measuring the quality of governance in developing countries. These causes are namely: International investment; End of the Cold War; Failed policy reform.

The first one is the outstanding increase in international investment flows to developing economies counting an increase from \$10 billion in the 80s to over \$200 billion after 2004. Consequently, many developing-country governments became more market-oriented by implementing investor-friendly policy regimes. The investors started to focus more on the perceived quality of local governance, including both political and corporate governance, to assess the country’s policy credibility (Oman 2000). Therefore, differences between countries concerning the quality of local governance was the key to attract international investment flows to a country.

After the end of the Cold War and the demise of Soviet Union, there was lots of corruption and bad governance in developing countries and immediate need for change. Steps for change were initiated by the World Bank and many other official development agencies in the 1990s when they decided to lend large money packages to borrowing countries to improve public governance and initiate economic development.

The third cause concerns the failure “of policy reforms promoted through conditional lending by multilateral financial organizations and widely implemented by developing countries in the 1980s and 1990s” (Oman and Arndt 2010) . That failure made clear that strong markets are in need of good governance and that poor local governance is to blame



for the failure of the policy reforms and the prohibition of a successful international cooperation.

Following the reasons why the interest in measuring governance has increased throughout the years, I will try to discuss briefly why it is important to measure governance.

Geeraert (2019) distinguishes the two central approaches to governance measurement. One school argues that the use of indicators to capture reality's complexity is faulty and cannot be quantified (Sharpe 2004). The second school defends that the governance indicators have value even though they do not paint a complete picture of reality (Kaufmann, Kraay et al. 2008). The latter argument shows that measuring governance can assist advocacy, decision-making and boost accountability. Correspondingly, governance indicators can function as the needed step to reach good governance since they can be utilized as monitoring services by public or private agencies. However, there are some dangers worth mentioning in the misuse of governance indicators; they can be misleading if wrongly used, poorly constructed or misinterpreted or they could even 'hide' government failures by not quantifying accurately certain dimensions (Geeraert, 2019).

## **2.8 Summary**

In this chapter, I have presented the main theories that have informed my study from the very beginning, have conceptualized the data and helped me to interpret and understand the findings of the study. The theoretical basis of the study comprises of three central notions in sports studies; corporate governance, sport governance and good governance. These notions seem to be interlinked and informed by various theoretical underpinnings. Within good governance, lies the need of measuring governance which is the foundation of the current study. For the purpose of measuring governance, I made use of the National Sports Governance Observer (NSGO) on the Greek National Sport Federations to monitor the quality of their governance in place and building capacity, which will be presented in detail in the Methodology chapter below.

## **3.0 Methodology**

### **3.1 Introduction and purpose**

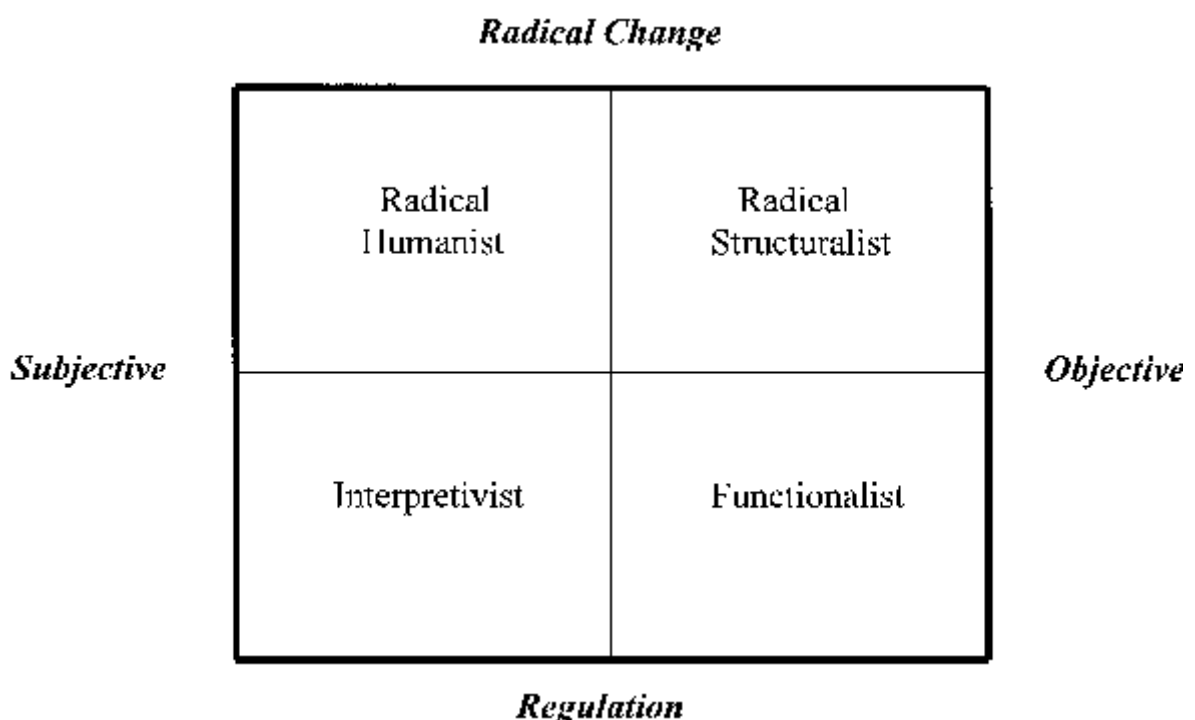
The purpose of this chapter is to analyze the methodology the data will be gathered, and the theory supporting this methodology. Prior to methodology of the current research paper, it is important to mention the opportunities and limits arise by the measuring of good governance. “Governance” is a broad and abstract term, with multiple definitions and scholars use multiple and different dimensions when they picture this notion (Geeraert 2018). Transparency, Internal accountability and control and democratic processes are unmeasurable concepts often used in the projection of the dimensions (Kaufmann and Kraay 2008). Subsequently, there are two different schools in governance measurement approach. One, in which the concept of ‘governance’ is an abstract and complex concept that cannot be projected by indicators; thus, the use of indicators is inherently flawed (Sharpe 2004). A second school agrees that indicators are “imperfect proxies for the concepts they are intended to measure”, however, “measuring governance is both feasible and informative” (Kaufmann & Kraay 2008, p. 8). According to a number of researchers, measuring governance may comprise advocacy, support decision-making and increase accountability (Saisana and Tarantola 2002, Espeland and Sauder 2007, Saltelli 2007, Marlier and Atkinson 2010).

Indicators can be considered as an essential step to successfully perform good governance since they can ‘galvanize action’ (Marlier & Atkinson, 2010, p. 286). The misapplication, the misconception or a poor construction of the indicators may lead in governance malfunctions, in cases that certain aspects are not quantified, or quantified improperly (Saisana and Tarantola 2002, Nardo, Saisana et al. 2005). Thus, it is important to fathom that governance indicators cannot be useful per se, regardless the opportunities they create (Geeraert 2018).

## 3.2 Philosophical stance

Van Fraassen (1994) was the first to come up with the idea of presenting the philosophical positions as ‘stances’ rather than factual beliefs, and ever since there have been several attempts to define what a philosophical stance can be. In this paper, I examine the philosophical stances as paradigms, meaning the constructed outcomes as ‘pragmatically justified perspectives or ways of seeing’ (Boucher 2014). In these terms, Burrell and Morgan (1979), after the first distinction into ontology, epistemology, human nature and methodology, in order to explain the different approaches to social sciences, they moved on to constructing a grid composed of four different paradigms; functionalist, interpretivist, radical structuralist, and radical humanist.

Figure 1: Burrell and Morgan's four paradigms



According to the grid above, the functionalist paradigm is set to give explanations of the status quo, social order and social integration. The goal is to explain how the individual

parts of a social systems come together, interact with each other to form an integrated whole. The interpretivist paradigm attempts to offer an explanation in the realm of subjectivity: 'social roles and institutions exist as an expression of the meanings which men attach to their world' (Silverman,1970 as cited in Goles & Hirschheim, 2000,p.134). The radical structuralist paradigm views the society and organizations through the lens of exceeding any limitations placed on existing social and organizational arrangements. The focus of the paradigm lies with the structure and analysis of economic power relationships. Additionally, Saunders, Lewis et al. (2009) write that the focus is to approach a research project with a view to achieving fundamental change based upon an analysis of such organisational phenomena as power relationships and conflicts. Even though these two themes can likely be found in a study that examines to what extent Greek National Sport Federations apply standards of good governance, however, I don't aim to do an analysis that lead to fundamental changes.

Lastly, the radical humanist paradigm seeks radical change (changing the status quo), emancipation, and potentiality. However, there are obstacles that hinder the road to emancipation such as ideologies, power and psychological compulsions and social constraints and thus, the radical humanist paradigm searches for ways to overcome them (Goles and Hirschheim 2000). This paradigm views the social world in a subjective stance, where the reality is only a reflection of human cognition. Yet, it recognises that societies are built out of negative elements and controlled by a dominant, reluctant to change powerful system. In that stance, this project is seeking 'change', that is to change the current status quo of the national federations and to understand the reasons behind Greece's ability or inability to fulfil good governance requirements. It is a more descriptive account of what is happening and thus I try to understand the status quo in order to change it. However, I do not intend to build a theory aiming at changing the way that good governance is implemented on national federations, supporting as a result partially the positioning of the radical humanist paradigm.

### **3.3 Research setting**

#### **3.3.1 Research Approach**

There are two distinct types of data collection based on its characteristics. These types are 'Quantitative' and 'Qualitative'. Quantitative approach is based on the numerical measurement and analysis. Qualitative is based on capturing meanings or qualities that cannot be measured, such as feelings, thoughts, experiences etc. (Gratton and Jones 2010).

Although the current thesis is based on a dichotomous questionnaire which gathers numerical data, the goal is not to just gather information on how the Greek NSFs implement good governance. First, as mentioned in the chapter of literature review, the term and concept of "good governance" is abstract and researchers try to define it in literature. Second, an interpretation of the data will take place, placing it in the Greek sport governance landscape, and try to understand which changes can be made. Last, the answers on the questionnaire are given through a desk research approach, with online sources from the Greek NSFs and national governing bodies giving information on regulations and policies which are decoded in order to provide the information needed.

#### **3.3.2 Sport industry and Governance landscape in Greece**

Sport industry covers only a small part of the Greek overall economy. During 2011-2012, the European Commission and the Directorate-General Education and Culture conducted a study on the consisted economic segment covered by sport, resulting that it covers only 0.36% for the statistical definition of sport, 1% of the narrow definition of sport and 1.44% of broad definition of sport. In the narrow and the broad definition, scores were lower than the EU average, scoring 1.13% for narrow and 1.76% for broad definition. The term "narrow definition of sport" describes all the activities needed for doing sport including the statistical definition, which represents the sum of organized sport associations and facilities. The term "broad definition of sport" describes the sum of the activities that need sport for their implementation, and the narrow definition. In the narrow definition, a total of 1.74 billion euros were spent for sport in Greece, while in the broad definition, 2.52 billion euros were spent. In the employment spectrum, 56.226 persons have been occupied

directly to sport in the narrow definition, 70.878 in the broad definition and 19.594 in the statistical definition in 2012 (European Commission 2012).

The structure of sport governance in Greece starts from the Ministry of Culture and Sport. The General Secretariat of Sport is under the administration of the Ministry of Culture and Sport. The Secretariat is responsible to fulfill tasks such as: to develop and put in action the national sport policies, to promote the participation in sport, to make the best of use regarding the public sport facilities and fund the national sport federations. The General Secretariat of Sports houses the individual National Sport Federations. These are the individual sports' governing units, statutory in order to develop and promote the sport from a regional up to an international level. The General Secretariat of Sports is responsible for the fund distribution between the federations. Next, sport federations use these funds to assist the sport clubs and associations attached to them (Alexandris and Balaska 2015). *Sport for excellence* is the main criteria for the fund distribution from the General Secretariat of Sport to the national sport federations; the number of elite athletes produced is what determines the *sport for excellence* strength (Giannoulakis, Papadimitriou et al. 2017).

According to Alexandris and Balaska (2015) and Balaska and Kouthouris (2014), the governing system in Greece shows an inability to adopt a detailed policy formulation by the government, strategies on the promotion of elite, recreation and mass participation sport, and strategies on public funding based on the performance.

For a long time, the higher institutional body promoted a path of following entirely public funding models for the National Sport Federations, which was lacking resources and displayed a weak market orientation (Papadimitriou 1998). The government body responsible for the National Sport Federations supervision encouraged them to follow a plan of rules away from the economically weak public sector, leading into less productive marketing activities. Academic theory exposed these organizational frameworks as *institutional isomorphism* based on the reasoning that organizations should not function based on the expectations of such frameworks, for which imposing managerial actions have to be taken (DiMaggio and Powell 1983).

Reduction of funding leads the National Sport Federations to seek more challenging to tackle the modern economic crisis Greece is facing nowadays (Giannoulakis, Papadimitriou et al. 2017). The Resource Dependence theory provides a better understanding on how organizations react and operate in altering economic resources; Well-being and survival of a body being based on securing resources, using them for affiliated needs (Pfeffer and Salancik 1918). It is a common goal for non-profit organizations all fields to secure tangible and intangible resources (Morrow and Robinson 2013). State activities, commercial activities and private contributions are the dominant resources for the organizations (Froelich 1999). Throughout the years, Greek National Sport Federations have adopted management strategies based on the public funding, forced to face occasional obstacles regarding their dependency on their resource.

### **3.3.3 Austerity and effect on NSFs**

Greece was one of the countries that faced serious debt issues caused by the international financial crisis (Christodoulakis 2010). In Eurozone, imposed austerity is an issue in which firmly interest is shown (Sen 2015). These financial conditions have seriously affected sport in the European Union in funding terms; Funding from the public sector has been reduced significantly making alternative ways of receiving economic support a common choice with an example of the National Lottery (Jones, 2008 as cited in Girginov 2008). In such cases of economic decline, securing public funding to sport becomes a more demanding and complicated task. For example, these conditions force the sport system of a country, including national federations and governing bodies to develop new strategies, investing the funds more efficiently, aiming in specific sport systems and sport talent (Martindale, Collins et al. 2007). The difficulties the public sport funding system faces are challenging, causing it to deal with scenarios of wide-scale closure of sport services, turn their interest in either private resources or volunteering and changing the structure of local authority development units (Jones, 2008 as cited in Girginov 2008).

Since the beginning of the global financial crisis in 2008, there is a constant debate on austerity policies until today. Defenders of such policies justify austerity claiming it is a “strenuous workout for a healthier future” (Sen, 2015. p. 30). Governments across Europe had to take measures and follow austerity policies due to the financial crisis in the

European Union as a medium for weary economies to recover from debt and become financially healthier. On the other side, some economists support a theory in which austerity is damaging the economy: an anti-growth measurement forcing the reduction of public expenditure, in extension the reduction in private expenditure leading in the increase of the unemployment percentage in a country. This directly leads in a loss of financial prosperity, forcing a part of a country's population to face extreme poverty (Marmot and Bell 2009). During the last decade, Greek governments have adopted austerity policies in order to remove economic and moral impropriety whilst diminishing the public debt. Amongst other, this affected the country's sport segment, too (Giannoulakis, Papadimitriou et al. 2017).

Giannoulakis et al. (2017, p.76) stated:

“Austerity measures have unavoidable consequences on: (a) the current state-of-play within sport development, (b) sport policy and institutional reforms, and (c) stakeholders of the greater sport industry.”

## **3.4 Research design**

### **3.4.1 Use of the design as per NSGO**

### **3.4.2 Benchmarking tool**

In order to get the data, the current dissertation uses the NSGO benchmarking tool, providing a quantitative approach of data collection. It was retrieved from 'Play the Game'. 'Play the Game' is an initiative run started in 2011, by Idrættens Analyseinstitut (IDAN); in English, Danish Institute for Sports Studies. IDAN is a research center based in Denmark's Aarhus, set up by the Danish Ministry of Culture in 2004, with a primary objective of developing social sciences research projects regarding the sports sector (Idrættens Analyseinstitut 2019).



The NSGO benchmarking tool is a type of questionnaire with dichotomous type of answering each question set (yes/no) gives variables; they are directly measurable and be converted into a numerical form and statistically analyzed. The type the questions in the benchmarking tool is a closed/pre-coded one. They are answered based on the federations' fulfillment on each question/indicator. The information provided in a closed type of question is relatively simple, providing information with the simplest format, easy to analyze. The questions in the current tool are grouped under distinct principles. Example of questions included in a principle can be found on figure 2.

Figure 2: Example of questions/indicators of a principle

Principle 5		Principle applies?	Comment		
5	The organisation publishes information about its members (athletes and clubs) on its website.	Yes	Please comment		
Indicator		Score (yes / no / NA)	Evidence	Comment	Best practice?
5.1	Does the organisation's website list basic information about affiliated clubs?				
5.2	Does the organisation's website list information about the number of affiliated clubs?				
5.3	Does the organisation's website list information about the number of affiliated athletes?				

### 3.4.3 The four dimensions

Good governance is split up into four dimensions; transparency, democratic processes, Internal accountability and control and societal responsibility. The four dimensions are connected by their mutual reinforcement and constitution.

According to Nardo, Saisana et al. (2005), in order to be able to measure the abstract concept of the four dimensions of good governance, they have to be replaced with 'intermediate objectives'. Best practice recommendations and existing governance indicators can be used as a foundation on identifying these objectives (Aguilera and Cuervo-Cazurra 2004, Nardo, Saisana et al. 2005; De Peuter et al., 2007, as cited in Geeraert, 2018).

- 'Transparency' is the dimension regarding an organization's internal workings, allowing thirds parties to monitor them (Meijer, 2014 as cited in Goodin, Bovens et al. 2014).
- 'Democratic processes' include all the processes that ensure free, fair and competitive elections and internal debates and participation of all the involved

sides in decision making processes that affect them (Bexell, Tallberg, & Uhlin, 2010 as cited in Geeraert, 2018).

- ‘Internal accountability and control’ distinguish the powers within an organization clearly and sets a system of rules and procedures which guarantees the staff’s and official’s compliance to internal regulations (Parsons Miller).
- ‘Societal responsibility’ is the dimension referring to an organization’s current and potential positive effect to both internal and external stakeholders and society (Geeraert 2018).

#### **3.4.4 Principles**

The four dimensions of good governance are split into 46 principles (Table 1). Those principle are based on documents issued by national governments, international organizations and sport organizations that focus on national and international sports federations, as well as the non-profit, corporate and cultural sectors (Geeraert 2018). Each principle has a different weight, which is the number of questions appertain to them.

Table 1: Dimensions of good governance (Geeraert, NSGO, p18-21,2018)

<b>Dimension 1: Transparency</b>
<b>[Principle 1]</b> The organisation publishes its statutes/ constitution, internal regulations, organisation chart, sports rules and multi-annual policy plan on its website.
<b>[Principle 2]</b> The organisation publishes the agenda and minutes of its general assembly meeting on its website.
<b>[Principle 3]</b> The organisation publishes board decisions on its website.
<b>[Principle 4]</b> The organisation publishes information about its board members on its website.
<b>[Principle 5]</b> The organisation publishes information about its members (athletes and clubs) on its website.
<b>[Principle 6]</b> The organisation publishes an annual report, including financial statements, on its website.
<b>[Principle 7]</b> The organisation publishes regulations and reports on the remuneration, including compensation and bonuses, of its board members and management on its website.
<b>Dimension 2: Democratic processes</b>
<b>[Principle 8]</b> Board members are democratically (re-)appointed according to clear procedures.
<b>[Principle 9]</b> The organisation takes steps to achieve a differentiated and balanced composition of its board.
<b>[Principle 10]</b> The organisation has a nomination committee.
<b>[Principle 11]</b> The organisation establishes a quorum (a minimum number of attendees required to conduct business and to cast votes) in its statutes or internal regulations for the board and the general assembly.

**[Principle 12]**

The organisation has established term limits as well as a retirement schedule.

**[Principle 13]**

The general assembly represents all affiliated members and meets at least once a year.

**[Principle 14]**

The board meets regularly.

**[Principle 15]**

The organisation ensures the participation of athletes in its policy processes.

**[Principle 16]**

The organisation ensures the participation of referees in its policy processes.

**[Principle 17]**

The organisation ensures the participation of coaches in its policy processes.

**[Principle 18]**

The organisation ensures the participation of volunteers in its policy processes.

**[Principle 19]**

The organisation ensures the participation of employees its policy processes.

**[Principle 20]**

The organisation implements a gender equality policy.

**Dimension 3: Internal accountability and control**

**[Principle 21]**

The general assembly supervises the board appropriately.

**[Principle 22]**

The board establishes procedures regarding the premature resignation of board members.

**[Principle 23]**

The organisation defines in its statutes those circumstances in which, due to a serious conflict of interest, a person is ineligible to serve as a member of the board.

**[Principle 24]**

The organisation applies a clear governance structure according to the principle of separation of powers.

**[Principle 25]**

The board supervises management appropriately.

**[Principle 26]**

The organisation has an internal financial or audit committee.

**[Principle 27]**

The organisation implements a financial control system.

**[Principle 28]**

The board annually evaluates its own composition and performance.

**[Principle 29]**

The organisation's finances are externally audited by an independent auditor.

**[Principle 30]**

The organisation has or recognises a code of conduct applicable to the members of the board, management and personnel.

**[Principle 31]**

The board establishes clear conflicts of interest procedures that apply to the members of the board.

**[Principle 32]**

The board establishes procedures for the processing of complaints in the internal regulations.

**[Principle 33]**

The organisation's decisions can be contested through internal or external mechanisms.

**[Principle 34]**

The board adopts an annual meeting schedule.

**Dimension 4: Societal responsibility**

**[Principle 35]**

The organisation offers consulting to its member organisations in the areas of management or governance.

**[Principle 36]**

The organisation implements a policy aimed at mitigating health risks of sporting activities.

**[Principle 37]**

The organisation implements a policy on combating sexual harassment in sport.

**[Principle 38]**

The organisation implements an anti-doping policy.

**[Principle 39]**

The organisation implements a policy on social inclusion through sport.

**[Principle 40]**

The organisation implements a policy combating discrimination in sport.

**[Principle 41]**

The organisation implements a policy to promote gender equality in sport.

**[Principle 42]**

The organisation implements a policy to combat match-fixing.

**[Principle 43]**

The organisation implements a policy for the promotion of environmental sustainability.

**[Principle 44]**

The organisation implements a policy on promoting the dual career of athletes.

**[Principle 45]**

The organisation implements a policy on promoting sport for all.

**[Principle 46]**

The organisation ensures the fair treatment of professional athletes.

### **3.4.5 Indicators**

The benchmarking tool consist of 274 indicators, which are a way of simplifying and quantifying data. They are based on dichotomous variables: ‘yes’ or ‘no’. There are clearly defined minimum criteria that the federation meets or doesn’t meet in every indicator. The answers do not rely on the researcher’s personal judgement, but clearly on the federations’ capability on each indicator, which helps in making the measurement reliable.

## **3.5 Data collection techniques**

### **3.5.1 Desk research**

For the data collection I conducted desktop research, and more specifically, external desk research. There are two types of desk research. Internal Desk Research and External Desk Research (Slater 1989). Internal desk research involves research within an organization, with internal sources of information. External desk research is conducted outside an organization's boundaries. It can have three different types of resources:

First, Online desk research, which is conducted via internet. Second, government published data, which refers to documentation government publishes, and third, customer desk research, that refers to extracting data from the customers of an organization (Juneja, 2015).

### **3.5.2 The study's population**

The study is focused entirely on the Greek National Sport Federations (NSF). According to the Greek General Secretary of Sports (GGSS) the number of sport federations based in Greece is 50. This consists of the Greek Olympic Committee (1), Olympic sports federations (27), non-Olympic sports (17), Greek Paralympics committee (1) and adapted sports federations (4). There are 9 extra bodies regarding retired athletes and sport referees' unions, which are not considered governing bodies for each sport. These bodies can have a role in sport only if the federation's statute or eternal regulations grand it.

For data collection and analysis in this dissertation the Olympic Sports' federations that provided documents regarding governance were chosen. The reason behind this decision is that more than 50% of the non-Olympic sports, Greek Olympic Committee, Greek Paralympics and adapted sport federations did not provide any documents such as statute, internal regulations or didn't have a website. These federations and unions wouldn't provide efficient data for further analysis.

### 3.5.3 The study's sample

A list of all the Olympic Sports having a Federation in Greece is provided in table 2. The sport federations examined have a “Yes” indicator on the list “Documents”:

Table 2: List of Greek Olympic NSF

	<b>Sport or Quality</b>	<b>Acronym</b>	<b>Greek name</b>	<b>Documents</b>
1	Table Tennis	Ε.Φ.Ο.ΕΠ.Α.	Ελληνική Φίλαθλη Ομοσπονδία Επιτραπέζιας Αντισφαίρισης	Yes
2	Gymnastics	Ε.Γ.Ο.	Ελληνική Γυμναστική Ομοσπονδία	Yes
3	Sailing	Ε.Ι.Ο.	Ελληνική Ιστιοπλοϊκή Ομοσπονδία	Yes
4	Rowing	Ε.Κ.Ο.Φ.Ν.Σ	Ελληνική Κωπηλατική Ομοσπονδία Κ.Φ.Ν.Σ.	No
5	Weightlifting	Ε.Ο.Α.Β.	Ελληνική Ομοσπονδία Άρσης Βαρών	Yes
6	Golf	Ε.Ο.Γ.	Ελληνική Ομοσπονδία Γκολφ	Yes
7	Equestrian	Ε.Ο.Ι.	Ελληνική Ομοσπονδία Ιππασίας	Yes
8	Basketball	Ε.Ο.Κ.	Ελληνική Ομοσπονδία Καλαθοσφαίρισης	Yes
9	Canoe Kayak	Ε.Ο.Κ.Κ	Ελληνική Ομοσπονδία Κανόε- Καγιάκ	No
10	Karate	Ε.Ο.Κ.	Ελληνική Ομοσπονδία Καράτε	No
11	Modern Pentathlon	Ε.Ο.ΜΟ.Π.	Ελληνική Ομοσπονδία Μοντέρνου Πένταθλου	No
12	Fencing	Ε.Ο.Ξ.	Ελληνική Ομοσπονδία Ξιφασκίας	Yes
13	Wrestling	Ε.Ο.Π.	Ελληνική Ομοσπονδία Πάλης	No
14	Volleyball	Ε.Ο.ΠΕ.	Ελληνική Ομοσπονδία Πετοσφαίρισης	No
15	Cycling	Ε.Ο.Π.	Ελληνική Ομοσπονδία Ποδηλασίας	Yes



16	Boxing	Ε.Ο.Π.	Ελληνική Ομοσπονδία Πυγμαχίας	No
17	Taekwondo	ΕΛ.Ο.Τ.	Ελληνική Ομοσπονδία ΤΑΕ ΚΒΟΝ ΝΤΟ	No
18	Judo	Ε.Ο.Τ.	Ελληνική Ομοσπονδία Τζούντο	Yes
19	Archery	Ε.Ο.Τ.	Ελληνική Ομοσπονδία Τοξοβολίας	Yes
20	Football	Ε.Π.Ο.	Ελληνική Ποδοσφαιρική Ομοσπονδία	Yes
21	Tennis	Ε.Φ.Ο.Α.	Ελληνική Φίλαθλος Ομοσπονδία Αντισφαίρισης	Yes
22	Badminton	Ε.Ο.Φ.Σ.Α.	Ελληνική Ομοσπονδία Φίλαθλων Σωματείων Αντιπτερίσης	No
23	Winter Sports	Ε.Ο.Χ.	Ελληνική Ομοσπονδία Χειμερινών Αθλημάτων	No
24	Swimming	Κ.Ο.Ε.	Κολυμβητική Ομοσπονδία Ελλάδας	Yes
25	Handball	Ο.Χ.Ε.	Ομοσπονδία Χειροσφαίρισης Ελλάδας	Yes
26	Shooting	ΣΚ.Ο.Ε.	Σκοπευτική Ομοσπονδία Ελλάδας	Yes
27	Athletics	Σ.Ε.Γ.Α.Σ.	Σύνδεσμος Ελληνικών Γυμναστικών Αθλητικών Σωματείων	No

### 3.5.4 Access to the NSFs

The access to the NSFs was limited to what the official website of each federation provides. According to NSGO's methodology, the data collected must be validated with at least one representative from the examined federations. This is done to either clarify

answers that have a different practice than the one given in the benchmarking tool or to correct mistakes made by the researcher.

Due to the pandemic Covid-19 and the global situation caused by that, the possibility to travel between countries was eliminated. Thus, the data collection is done without the step of clarification.

## 3.6 Data analysis

### 3.6.1 As per NSGO

The data analysis is processed according to the NSGO reports on sport federations governance. The scoring system is based on a percentage format. The scores are also marked by a color based on a traffic lights system, and a naming label of the NSF's' good governance (Figure 3).

Figure 3: The traffic light system of labels (Geeraert, NSGO, p26,2018)

Not relevant	Not fulfilled	Weak	Moderate	Good	Very good
	0-19 %	20-39 %	40-59 %	60-79 %	80-100 %

## 3.7 Ethical considerations

Ethical considerations are always an important part of research in all areas. Apart from plagiarism and honesty in the results, ethical issues emerge, concerning social and biological science when human and animal subjects are involved. The principles of ethics are universal, with respect towards the individuals, animals and the ecosystem (Veal and Darcy 2014).

During the data collection for this dissertation I had to be equally analytical towards all the federations I examined. All the website maps had to be browsed in depth, providing the most precise possible data. I also directly communicated with the federations via phone,

asking for basic information such as the number of employees. During the process, I had to explain the current dissertation's topic and my goal while conducting this research.

I am currently involved in NSGO's research project on good governance, which under a different scope analyses the NSF's good governance. Under the organization's and Arnout Geeraert's permission I was able to use the benchmarking tool for my thesis.

The last two chapters of this dissertations were the most challenging in terms of ethics. Analysis and critical debating had to be fair and non-biased; the study's goal is to present and discuss the data of the sum of Greek NSFs. The main purpose is to monitor reality and help the Greek NSF's to understand how they can make use of their potential.

### **3.8 Summary**

In this chapter the methodology of the data collection was provided. An analysis of the research approach, how the NSGO benchmarking tool is built and where the data is derived from. This moves us to the next step, where the data is presented.

## **4.0 Findings**

### **4.1 Introduction and purpose**

In this chapter the findings from the analysis of the NSFs' that provide documents about governance in their websites. Good governance scores of a more general picture will be given, followed by a more detailed analysis of the federations' strong and weak points in areas of sport governance. The purpose is to give a clear image of the NSFs' good governance practices and create a pool of data which will be used in the discussion chapter.

## **4.2 The new sport laws**

In November 2018, a new omnibus bill was presented in the Greek Parliament by the Hellenic Ministry of Culture and Sports. It is a group of laws that amongst others, it refers to governance on committees appertain to the GSS, employment in the sport sector, functioning of sport clubs, and governance on Greek NSFs. In the case of analyzing the NSFs, it is a crucial component that should be considered in the data outcome.

According to the omnibus bill of October 2018, a few important changes are made in the NSFs' governance rules, which are not mentioned in most of their statutes. Thus, the analysis of data will be done under two scopes: First, before the application of the omnibus bill on the NFSSs' operations, and second, after the application.

## **4.3 Greek National Sport Federations**

### **4.3.1 Without the omnibus bill**

The Greek NSFs scores on good governance entirely based on the documents provided on their websites will be illustrated and analyzed in this chapter.

#### **4.3.1.1 The Greek NSFs' total scores**

The total score and the scores per dimension are pictured in the next table (3)

Table 3: Total and dimensional scores before the omnibus bill

<b>NSGO index</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>Weak</b>
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<b>Dimension</b>	<b>Score</b>	<b>Label</b>	<b># indicators</b>	<b>indicators used</b>
<b>Transparency</b>	25%	<b>Weak</b>	672	670
<b>Democratic processes</b>	31%	<b>Weak</b>	880	850
<b>Internal accountability and control</b>	25%	<b>Weak</b>	1424	1386
<b>Societal responsibility</b>	8%	<b>Not fulfilled</b>	1408	1373

A total of 4384 indicators have been available in the NSGO benchmarking tool for the analysis of the Greek NSFs, with 4279 being used after excluding the “not relevant” ones. The total score of the Greek NSFs is 22%, deriving from the four dimensions.

In detail, “Transparency” scores a 25%, labeled as “Weak”. In this dimension, the Greek NSFs have weaknesses on providing information about them. For instance, the board member’s bio and history are not present in their websites, neither the decisions taken by the board or the general assembly. Publishing the annual reports seem to be missing in most of the federations amongst the remuneration of the employees. Most of the NSFs list their affiliated clubs.

In “Democratic processes” the Greek NSFs score a bit higher, with a 31%. It is labeled as “Weak”. Regarding this dimension, the Greek NSFs have their voting procedures on the board elections and decision making clearly explained in their documents. The general assembly and board meet regularly and in special occasions, while there is an explanation on the board positions’ responsibilities and regulations on their powers. None of the federations have a nomination committee, and no term limits have been set on the boards’

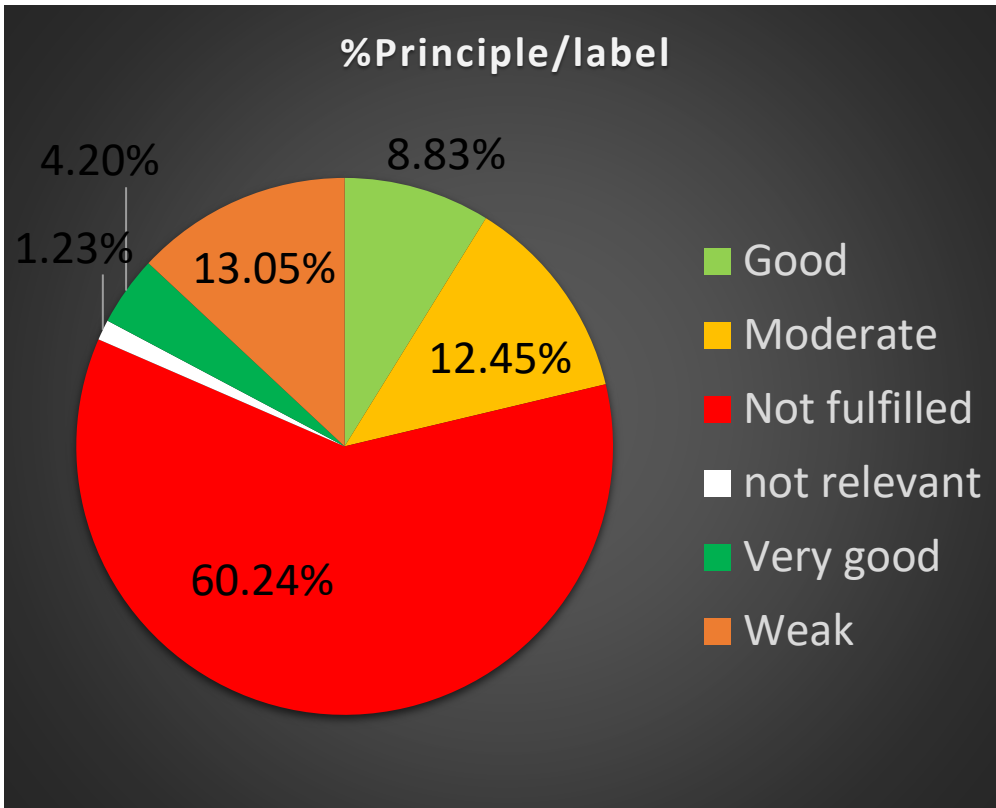
members. Athletes, referees, volunteers and employees of the federations are not included in the decision-making processes, while there are no strong gender equality policies set.

In “Internal accountability and control”, the Greek NSFs are labeled as “Weak”, scoring a 25%. Most of the Greek NSFs have clear rules on board members premature resignation such as the reasons that can cause it and the appointment of substitutes. There is a lack in long-term planning on finances or policies and meetings regarding them. Internal or external evaluation is missing on matters of performance or finances. Only the Football federation (E.P.O.) provides documentation on its code of conduct, and the financial control system is weak in all the federations.

“Societal responsibility” is the weakest dimension of all four. There is no activity from the federations on consultation about management or governance to their members, no policies regarding risks of sporting activities or promotion of the environmental sustainability. Although actions on promoting sport for all, raising awareness of sexual harassment and discrimination in sport, gender equality, and implementing anti-doping policies, they are still weak and not very clear on setting goals. In this dimension an 8% is reached, labeled as “Not fulfilled”.

### 4.3.1.2 Principle analysis

Figure 5: Principle analysis after Omnibus bill



A 60.24% of principles is labeled as “Not fulfilled”. This is the biggest part of principles, in which the Greek NSFs scored a percentage of 0% - 19%.

A 13.05% of the principles is labeled as “Weak”. It is the second largest group of principles according to their scores, hitting a 20% - 39%.

A 12.45% comes third in this chart pie, with a “Moderate” label on the Greek NSFs’ score in the principles, between 40% and 59%.

An 8.83% of the principles are labeled as “Good”. This is the fourth more common score, between 60% and 70%.

“Very good” is the label of 4.20%, of the principles, being the least common amongst the labels. This indicates a score between 80% and 100%.

A 1.09% of the principles is excluded and labeled as “Not relevant”.

### 4.3.1.3 Dimension scores per NSF

The score of all NSFs on the four dimensions is showed in the next tables (7-10)

Table 4: Transparency scores per NSF before the omnibus bill

Dimension	Organization	Total
Transparency	E.Φ.O.A./ H.T.F.	24%
	E.O.A.B.	13%
	E.I.O.	28%
	E.O.K	19%
	K.O.E.	22%
	E.Π.O.	11%
	O.X.E.	35%
	E.O.T. (Archery)	34%
	E.O.Π.	26%
	E.O.I.	44%
	E.O.Ξ.	19%
	E.O.Γ /H.G..F	27%
	E.Γ.O.	37%
	E.O.T. (Judo)	15%
	ΣΚ.O.E.	17%
E.Φ.O.Επ.Α/ H.T.T.F.	27%	
		<b>25%</b>

- In Transparency, E.O.I., the Equestrian Sports Federation scores a 44%, marking the highest score amongst the NSFs.
- E.Π.O., the Football Federation scores a 11%, being the lowest in this dimension.
- 6 federations are labeled as “Not fulfilled”.
- 9 federations are labeled as “Weak”.
- 1 federation is labeled as “Moderate”.



Table 5: Democratic processes scores per NSF before the omnibus bill

Dimension	Organization	Total
<b>Democratic processes</b>	E.Φ.O.A./ H.T.F.	35%
	E.O.A.B.	38%
	E.I.O.	39%
	E.O.K	27%
	K.O.E.	32%
	E.Π.O.	31%
	O.X.E.	32%
	E.O.T. (Archery)	30%
	E.O.Π.	32%
	E.O.I.	31%
	E.O.Ξ.	28%
	E.O.Γ /H.G..F	34%
	E.Γ.O.	26%
	E.O.T. (Judo)	5%
	ΣΚ.O.E.	38%
E.Φ.O.Επ.Α/ H.T.T.F.	33%	
	<b>31%</b>	

- In Democratic processes, E.I.O., the Sailing Federation scores a 39%, scoring the highest among the NSFs.
- E.O.T., the federation of Judo, scores a 5%, which is the weakest of the federations' scores in Democratic processes.
- 1 federation is labeled as “Not fulfilled”.
- 15 federations are labeled as “Weak”.

Table 6: Internal accountability and control scores per NSF before the omnibus bill

Dimension	Organization	Total
<b>Internal accountability and control</b>	E.Φ.O.A./ H.T.F.	32%
	E.O.A.B.	35%
	E.I.O.	31%
	E.O.K	19%
	K.O.E.	22%
	E.Π.O.	49%
	O.X.E.	32%
	E.O.T. (Archery)	25%
	E.O.Π.	20%
	E.O.I.	34%
	E.O.Ξ.	19%
	E.O.Γ /H.G..F	28%
	E.Γ.O.	14%
	E.O.T. (Judo)	1%
	ΣΚ.O.E.	21%
	E.Φ.O.Επ.Α/ H.T.T.F.	24%
	<b>25%</b>	

- In Internal accountability and control the highest score is achieved by the football federation, E.Π.O., reaching a 49%. This is the highest score amongst every dimension the federations were analyzed without considering the omnibus bill.
- E.O.T., the federation of Judo, scores a 1%, which is the weakest of the federations' scores in the current dimension.
- 4 federations are labeled as “Not fulfilled”.
- 11 federations are labeled as “Weak”.
- 1 federation is labeled as “Moderate”.

Table 7: Societal responsibility scores per NSF before the omnibus bill

Dimension	Organization	Total
<b>Societal responsibility</b>	E.Φ.O.A./ H.T.F.	6%
	E.O.A.B.	11%
	E.I.O.	1%
	E.O.K	3%
	K.O.E.	3%
	E.Π.O.	19%
	O.X.E.	18%
	E.O.T. (Archery)	16%
	E.O.Π.	6%
	E.O.I.	4%
	E.O.Ξ.	4%
	E.O.Γ /H.G..F	9%
	E.Γ.O.	7%
	E.O.T. (Judo)	2%
	ΣΚ.O.E.	0%
	E.Φ.O.Επ.Α/ H.T.T.F.	21%
	<b>8%</b>	

- In Societal responsibility, E.Φ.O.Επ.Α., the table tennis federation scores a 19%, being the strongest NSF.
- ΣΚ.O.E., the chess federation, scores a 0%, which is the weakest of the federations' scores in the current dimension, and the weakest amongst every dimension the federations were analyzed without considering the omnibus bill.
- All federations are labeled as “Not fulfilled”.

### 4.3.2 With the omnibus bill

In this part, the scores of the federations are analyzed, after considering the omnibus bill as a NSF's document. Changes on the scores and a more detailed focus on the dimensions and principles affected by the implementation of the rules set will be examined.

#### 4.3.2.1 The Greek NSF's total scores

The following table (8) gives a picture of Greek NSF's in total.

Table 8: Total and dimensional scores considering the omnibus bill

<b>NSGO index</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>Weak</b>		
<b>Dimension</b>	<b>Score</b>	<b>Label</b>	<b># indicators</b>	<b>indicators used</b>
<b>Transparency</b>	25%	<b>Weak</b>	672	670
<b>Democratic processes</b>	37%	<b>Weak</b>	880	850
<b>Internal accountability and control</b>	36%	<b>Weak</b>	1424	1386
<b>Societal responsibility</b>	17%	<b>Not fulfilled</b>	1408	1373

According to the NSGO benchmarking tool after applying the omnibus bill regulations, Greece in total scores a 29% in sport governance, is still labeled as “Weak”. There is an improvement of 7 units in percentage.

“Transparency” shows no changes. There are no indicators affected by the implementation of the omnibus bill in this study.

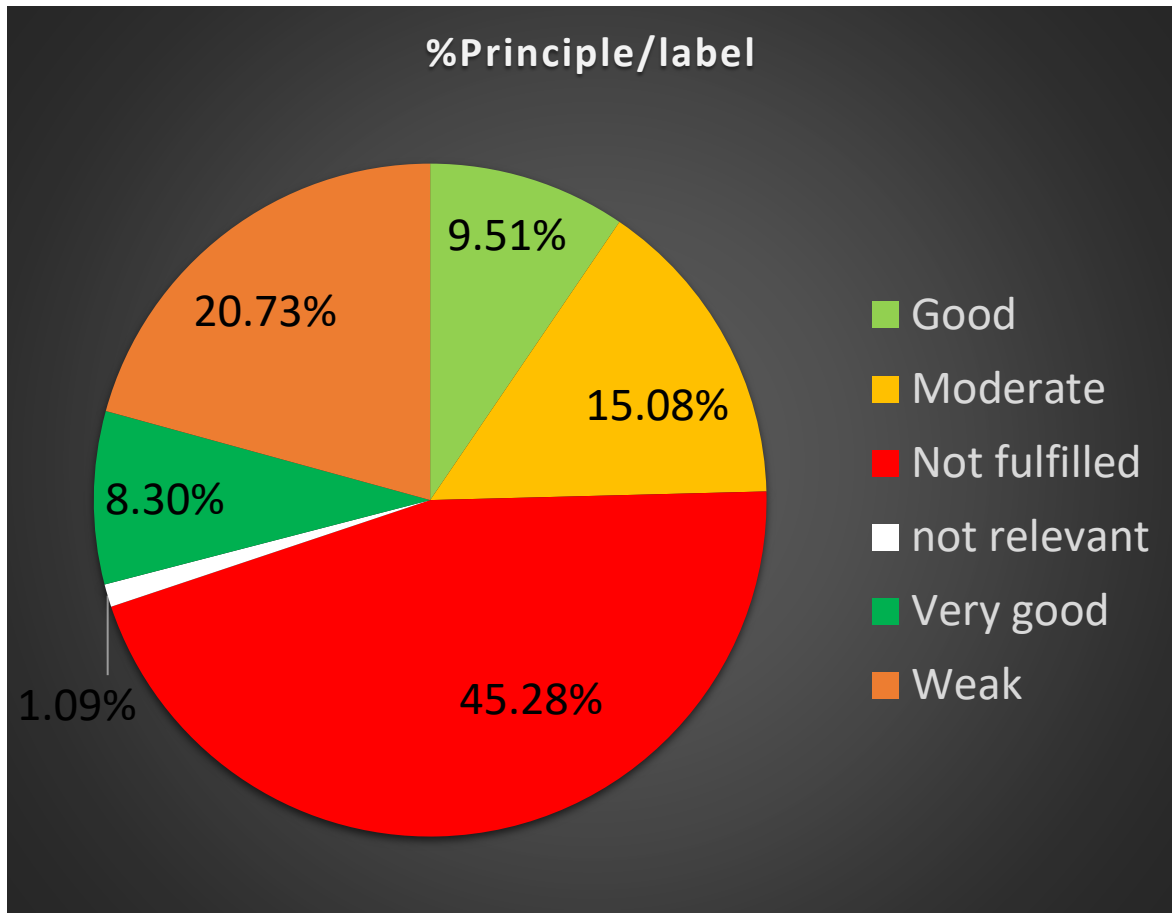
“Democratic processes” shows an improvement of 6 units, scoring a 37%. Term limits have been set for the members of the boards, which changes this dimension dramatically, since the principle of “The organizations has established term limits as well as a retirement schedule” is affected by the omnibus bill.

“Internal accountability and control” is the most affected dimension after the implementation of the omnibus bill. There is an improvement of 11%, scoring a 36%. Changes have been made on the procedures regarding the premature resignation of board members, and regulations about complaints are set.

“Societal responsibility” shows a progress of 9 units, reaching a 17% based on the changes the omnibus bill brings. This brings changes on policies against discrimination in sport with rules on reporting such cases, as well with combating match-fixing. The state sets rules on the athletes’ contracts and wages, and penalties are given for cases of violation. Another change the omnibus bill brings is on the doping rules, were the federations are obliged to take action on preventing, detecting and combating relevant practices.

### 4.3.2.2 Principle analysis

Figure 6: Principle analysis considering the omnibus bill



45.28% of principles is labeled as “Not fulfilled”. This is the biggest part of principles, in which the Greek NSFs scored a percentage of 0% - 19%.

A 20.73% of the principles is labeled as “Weak”. It is the second largest group of principles according to their scores, hitting a 20% - 39%.

A 15.08% comes third in this chart pie, with a “Moderate” label on the Greek NSFs score in the principles, between 40% and 59%.

An 9.51% of the principles are labeled as “Good”. This is the fourth more common score, between 60% and 70%.

“Very good” is the label of 8.30%, of the principles, being the least common amongst the labels. This indicates a score between 80% and 100%.

A 1.09% of the principles is excluded and labeled as “Not relevant”.

### 4.3.2.3 Dimension scores per NSF

Table 9: Transparency scores per NSF considering the omnibus bill

Dimension	Organization	Total	Changes - %
<b>Transparency</b>	E.Φ.O.A./ H.T.F.	24%	0%
	E.O.A.B.	13%	0%
	E.I.O.	28%	0%
	E.O.K	19%	0%
	K.O.E.	22%	0%
	E.Π.O.	11%	0%
	O.X.E.	35%	0%
	E.O.T. (Archery)	34%	0%
	E.O.Π.	26%	0%
	E.O.I.	44%	0%
	E.O.Ξ.	19%	0%
	E.O.Γ /H.G..F	27%	0%
	E.Γ.O.	37%	0%
	E.O.T. (Judo)	15%	0%
	ΣΚ.O.E.	17%	0%
	E.Φ.O.Επ.Α/ H.T.T.F.	27%	0%
			<b>25%</b>

In “Transparency, the scores remain the same. No changes on the principles and their indicators is noted.

Table 10: Democratic processes scores per NSF considering the omnibus bill

Dimension	Organization	Total	Changes - %
<b>Democratic processes</b>	E.Φ.O.A./ H.T.F.	37%	2%
	E.O.A.B.	43%	5%
	E.I.O.	45%	6%
	E.O.K	34%	7%
	K.O.E.	38%	6%
	E.Π.O.	31%	0%
	O.X.E.	38%	6%
	E.O.T. (Archery)	39%	9%
	E.O.Π.	38%	6%
	E.O.I.	37%	6%
	E.O.Ξ.	36%	8%
	E.O.Γ /H.G..F	41%	7%
	E.Γ.O.	36%	10%
	E.O.T. (Judo)	24%	19%
	ΣK.O.E.	43%	5%
	E.Φ.O.Επ.Α/ H.T.T.F.	37%	4%
		<b>37%</b>	<b>7%</b>

In Democratic processes, the Sailing federation, E.I.O. scores the highest, reaching 45%. The weakest federation is the Judo federation, E.O.T. with a score of 24%.

The Football NSF (E.Π.O.) wasn't affected by the changes of the omnibus bill, while the Judo NSF (E.O.T.) shows a progress of 19%.

12 federations are labeled as "Weak" and 4 federations are labeled as "Moderate". The omnibus bill implementation changes the total score of this dimension by 7%.



Table 11: Internal accountability and control scores per NSF considering the omnibus bill

Dimension	Organization	Total	Changes - %
<b>Internal accountability and control</b>	E.Φ.O.A./ H.T.F.	40%	8%
	E.O.A.B.	52%	17%
	E.I.O.	43%	12%
	E.O.K	29%	10%
	K.O.E.	34%	12%
	E.Π.O.	49%	0%
	O.X.E.	45%	13%
	E.O.T. (Archery)	36%	11%
	E.O.Π.	33%	13%
	E.O.I.	39%	5%
	E.O.Ξ.	27%	8%
	E.O.Γ /H.G.F.	39%	11%
	E.Γ.O.	30%	16%
	E.O.T. (Judo)	18%	17%
	ΣΚ.O.E.	30%	9%
	E.Φ.O.Επ.Α/ H.T.T.F.	34%	10%
		<b>36%</b>	<b>11%</b>

In the dimension of “Internal accountability and control”, the highest score is achieved by the football federation. A 49% is achieved, which is the strongest dimension amongst every dimension the federations after including the omnibus bill was analyzed. The weakest federation score is the Judo federation. It scores a 18%. 1 federation is labeled as “Not fulfilled”.

There is no change in the Football NSF (E.Π.O.), keeping the same score as before the implementation of the omnibus bill. The most significant progress is done for the federations of weightlifting (E.O.A.B.) and Judo (E.O.T.), by 17%.

10 federations are labeled as “Weak”. 5 federations are labeled as “Moderate”. The omnibus bill implementation changes the total score of this dimension up to 11 units.

Table 12: Societal responsibility scores per NSF considering the omnibus bill

Dimension	Organization	Total	Changes - %
<b>Societal responsibility</b>	E.Φ.O.A./ H.T.F.	16%	10%
	E.O.A.B.	22%	11%
	E.I.O.	13%	12%
	E.O.K.	13%	10%
	K.O.E.	13%	10%
	E.Π.O.	20%	1%
	O.X.E.	26%	8%
	E.O.T. (Archery)	23%	7%
	E.O.Π.	13%	7%
	E.O.I.	13%	9%
	E.O.Ξ.	13%	9%
	E.O.Γ. /H.G..F.	17%	8%
	E.Γ.O.	19%	12%
	E.O.T. (Judo)	13%	9%
	ΣΚ.O.E.	12%	12%
E.Φ.O.Επ.Α/ H.T.T.F.	28%	7%	
		<b>17%</b>	<b>9%</b>

In Societal responsibility, the Table tennis federation (E.Φ.O.Επ.Α), scores the highest, 28%. Chess federation, ΣΚ.O.E., score a 12%, being the weakest amongst every dimension the federations after including the omnibus bill in the analysis.

The most significant changes are observed in 3 NSFs (Sailing, Gymnastics, Shooting) at 12%, while the lowest is in the Football federation (E.Π.O.) by 1 unit.

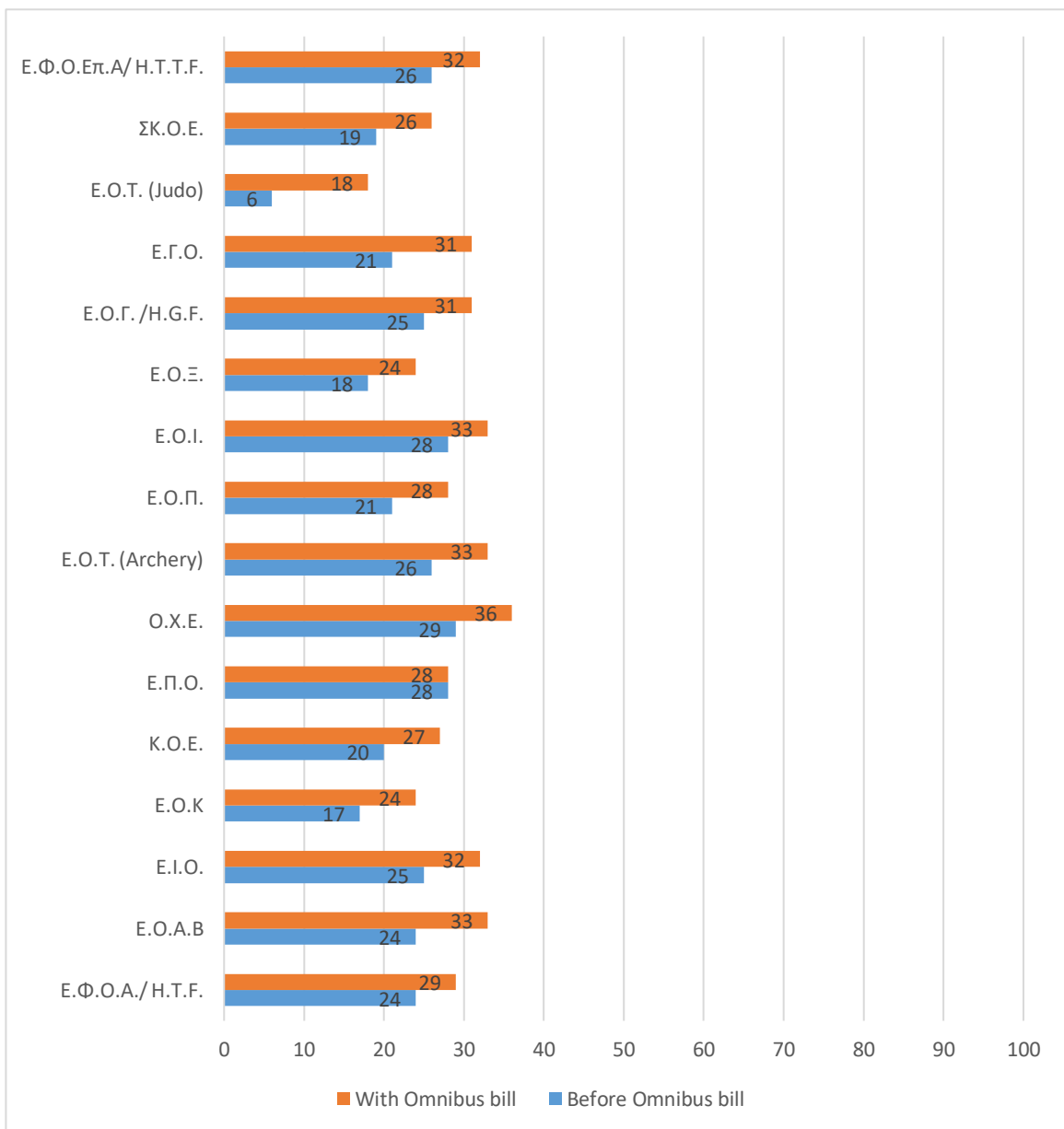
There are 7 federations that score 13% in Societal responsibility after the inclusion of the omnibus bill. These are the sailing, basketball, cycling, swimming, equestrian sports,

fencing and Judo NSF's. 11 federations are labeled as “Not fulfilled” 5 federations are labeled as “Weak”. In total, a 9% difference is observed in this dimension.

### 4.3.3 Index score of Greek NSFs

The index score of the Greek NSFs in both before and after the implementation of the omnibus bill is in the figure 6. It is the total score of all dimensions for each federation.

Figure 6: Individual index scores of Greek NSFs



The Greek Handball national federation (O.X.E.) is in both cases the NFS that scored the highest amongst all. Considering only the documents and information provided on its website, O.X.E. scores a 29%, while after including the rules set by the omnibus bill, the score is improved by 7 units, reaching a total of 36%. The lowest scoring NSF is E.O.T. (Judo) in both cases, scoring 6% and 18% respectively, having the biggest impact by the omnibus bill with a difference between the two measurements at 12%. The Greek Football Federation “E.Π.O.” showed no improvement after the considerations of the omnibus bill, staying at 28%.

Regarding the labels on the NSFs, 4 are characterized as “Not fulfilled” and 12 as “Weak” before the omnibus bill, and after it, 1 is “Not fulfilled” and 15 as “Weak”. No federation managed to reach a score labeled higher (Moderate, Good, Very good) in total.

#### **4.4 Summary**

In this chapter the findings using the NSGO benchmarking tool have been presented in tables. Due to the omnibus bill set by the Greek Ministry of Culture and Sports which sets a pile of rules Greek NSFs must implement in their function the analysis had to be done under two different scopes. One, according to the documents the NSFs provide in their website, and a second one, including all the external rules set by the omnibus bill. The difference between the two analysis scopes is more noticeable in the “Democratic processes” and “Societal responsibility” dimensions.

Before the implementation of the omnibus bill, the total index score of the Greek NSFs was 22% labeled as “Weak”. In detail, “Transparency” was at 25%, “Democratic processes” at 31%, “Internal accountability and control” at 25% and “Societal responsibility” at 8%. Apart from “Societal responsibility” which was labeled as “Not fulfilled”, the rest of the dimensions were labeled as “Weak”.

In the second section of findings the omnibus bill set by the state improved the total index score by 7 units, moving up to 29% labeled as “Weak”. In “Transparency”, the Greek NSFs are labeled as “Weak” scoring a 25% having no changes at a principles level. In “Democratic processes”, 37% makes it the highest scoring dimension, improving by 6

units. Internal accountability and control is the dimension with the most significant change in score by 12%, moving up to 36%, while “Societal responsibility” is still the lowest of all with a 17%, improving by 9 units. The labels of dimensions didn’t change, having 3 out of 4 labeled as “Weak” and only “Societal responsibility” as “Not fulfilled”.

Regarding index score, the strongest federation in both cases is the Handball (O.X.E) with 29% and 36%. The weakest NSF is Judo’s (E.O.T.) with 6% and 18%, making it the most improved federation having a difference of 12 units. E.Π.O., the Greek Football Federation showed no changes, keeping the same score of 28% in both cases.

Findings are useful in order to move on to the next chapter of this paper, “Discussion”. They will be analyzed and debated based on the literature review and the Greek governance landscape.

## 5.0 Discussion

In this chapter the findings will be discussed and debated based on the literature review of this paper. The research question will be leading the discussion, with the sub-questions and research aim becoming tools of helping this chapter unfold and give a better understanding on what the findings represent in the case of Greece. Sport governance, and in extension, good governance in sport, are not very popular concepts in Greece. No significant academic research has been conducted before on this area of interest until this day.

Although research on sport governance exists for the last decades, Greece, as a case, didn't seem to attract the interest of researchers. Without a strong research background regarding Greece, this is an attempt to understand why the ratings of Greek NSFs have been kept low, even after the state's interference.

### 5.1 Greek NSFs' scores

Greece, in total of the NSFs reached a 22% in the application of good governance standards. The label of this score is "Weak", only 3 units away from being labeled as "Not fulfilled". Most of the Greek NSFs individually are close to this score, with only a few exceptions. This shows that there is a common level in application of good governance from the federations, with the vast majority having a "Weak" index score.

A deeper look at the four dimensions will give a better look on which areas of governance the federations have strong practices or lack good governance. In Transparency, a 25% is a "Weak" score. The federations examined provide documents on their website, but limited. Although some internal practices are held, there is a lack of sharing documents in public. Agendas of meetings of the board and the general assembly are distributed to the federations, but they don't get published for third parties. Information about the members of the board and the club members are given in most of the federations, but most of the times there is only a basic reference on the names, with no further information given. Finances and remunerations are not public in none of the federations. It seems that "Transparency" has a low score due to the lack of depth in the actions taken, which are mostly used for their convenience, and not for the accessibility the public can have.

In “Democratic processes” the Greek NSFs scored a 31%, labeled as “Weak”. It was the strongest of the four dimensions of good governance, still having a low score. In the level of principles, there is a variation on how efficient the application of good governance is. Most of the statutes clearly determine the procedures of elections in the general assembly. The quorum of both general assembly and board is explained, while an analytical voting system on decisions is present in the documentation of most of the federations. Democratic processes lack in areas of participation of bodies outside the general assembly and the board in decision making and setting future policies. Gender representation is also another area of good governance that most of the federations don’t implement in their regulations.

Internal accountability and control by the Greek NSFs scored a 25%, labeled as “Weak”. Apart from the principle regarding a structure of a clear separation of powers, the rest are labeled as “Weak” or “Not fulfilled”. There is a distinct set of powers, functions and responsibilities for the members of the board. The Greek NSFs don’t support mechanisms regarding the evaluation of their composition and performance, therefore no further actions are taken on submitting complaints. Federations, in their vast majority, either don’t provide a code of conduct for the public or have a rule that settles one in their statutes or internal regulations. Having external auditors on finances is not a common practice for the federations, and the internal financial control system is weak or absent. Matters on conflicts of interest of the board members are not mentioned and the decisions are not contested through internal or external mechanisms.

In the “Societal responsibility” dimension, the Greek NSFs scored the lowest between the four dimensions. Labeled as “Not fulfilled”, with a total of 8%, it shows a weakness or even a total lack of the federation on implementing goals, strategies and actions towards this direction. Apart from very plain policies on doping control and promotion of sport for all, the federations don’t take further actions on application of good governance in this dimension. None of the federations adopt policies on consulting their members on management and governance, take actions regarding the fair treatment of professional athletes, and the promotion of dual careers of athletes. There is little activity in the rest of principles which regard combating match fixing, discrimination and sexual harassment policies, or promoting the environmental sustainability, gender equality and raising awareness on the health risks of sporting activities.

## 5.2 State's interference

The aforementioned scores from the “Findings” chapter derived before the application of the omnibus bill the Greek Parliament voted for. Scandals at an international and regional level seems to have been the reason behind these actions the state conducted, with the omnibus bill bringing changes in the way the federations function in particular areas of governance, and more specifically in the dimensions of Democratic processes, Internal accountability and control and Societal Responsibility. Although these changes are not mentioned in none of the statutes, internal regulations and website content, the federations are obliged to follow and implement them in their internal and external processes. The most important changes made concern the elections system, the financial audit processes and rules regarding doping.

For instance, term limits have been set for the board members, preventing them from being elected no more than 2 consecutive times in a board position, and a maximum age limit of 71 for the candidates. According to Geeraert (2013), the lack of term limits can cause serious threats, since a concentration of power has been observed in such cases. Refreshing the boards in Greek NSFs seemed necessary in order to create a more reliable image towards the stakeholders. In Greece, two of the examined federations, the Basketball federation (E.O.K.), with the support of the Handball federation (O.X.E.) protested open, through official statements in the news section of their website against the decision of setting term limits to the board members. This caused a big debate in the Greek media, asking if this is rule is right or wrong and if it offends the principles and ethics of democracy.

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Another example is the financial audit processes, which, according to the new rules, it is conducted by the Greek Sport Secretariat in the end of the financial year. This is a way of controlling all the transactions the federations conduct during the year, ruling out possibilities of malfunctioning. Although most federations have never been exposed in the media for such cases, there is a mistrust towards them by the public. These changes can be a step closer to a more transparent and trustful relationship between the two sides, helping the sports to become more attractive.

It is also important to mention that the state have set rules for combating doping, by setting goals and complaint-process mechanisms, and obliging the federations to implement the World Anti-Doping Association (WADA) rules in their policies. Although doping control is in the rules of every national championship, there was not a common written policy from the federations, creating a more stable environment for the safety of the athletes and the validity of every sport.

By taking this new set of rules the score raised by 7 units reaching 29%. Per dimension, there have been no changes in Transparency. Democratic processes, Internal accountability and control and Societal Responsibility scores were improved since some key principles were affected positively, heighten their scores by 6, 12 and 9 percent respectively. This shows us that the omnibus bill offered some improvements in the good governance standards application by the Greek NSFs, but not enough to change it dramatically.

### **5.3 Factors**

There are two major factors behind the Greek NSFs' low scores. Financial and management factors. Although they are distinct ones, there is a strong connection between them, since the management is affected by the financial support by the state.

### **5.3.1 Financial factors**

Financing sport is not a concept of modern times, more specifically, history of such practices begins from very early. Financing sport is almost as old as sport itself. Since the first Ancient Olympic Games there was a need for financial, human and material resources to make it happen (Andreff 2006). It has been an important factor for sport to exist, and keeps up until today, in a commercialized environment. Federations need financial help from the state to cover expenses like remuneration of employees, bonuses for achievements of athletes, coaches and clubs, and common expenses. Numbers have been kept low, especially after the global economic crisis in 2008, which majorly affected Greece. Austerity measures lead to a huge reduction in financing all the country's sectors have been made since then, including Sport. This created obstacles in the federations' progress towards a better understanding and implementation of good governance practices.

In the recent years, and more specifically 2019, the Greek Sport Secretariat funded the NSFs with a total of around 31.162.000€ distributed between 145 federations and sport unions (GSS 2019). The Football federation is not included in these 145 bodies, since there was no financial support from the state since 2016. This accounts for 0.0044% of the national annual budget of Greece, a total of 704.876.218.000€, according to the Greek Ministry of Finance (2018).

### **5.3.2 Management factors**

A weakness in the inclusion of all the internal stakeholders of the Greek NSFs in the decision and policy making have been recorded through the process of analyzing the dimension of "Democratic processes". According to Papaioannou, Kriemadis et al. (2012) directors of Sport federations should decentralize the decision authority and encourage employees to get involved in the decisions and activities that influences both their jobs and the federations' direction and performance.

The limited number of employees in the Greek NSFs justifies the weakness in implementing principles regarding inclusion of employees in policy processes. This is an obstacle created by the lack of funds, making it a factor that derives from the financial factor analyzed earlier in this chapter.

Most federations can't occupy enough numbers of employees, with the complexity of reaching high good governance standards requiring higher specialization than the existing in Greece. Decision and policy making with the inclusion of all the stakeholders in such practices, financial audits, societal responsibility, internal and external evaluation on performance are practices that need more than most Greek NSFs can provide in human resources and finances.

## 6.0 Conclusion

This thesis research question is “To what extent Greek National Sport Federations apply standards of good governance?”. The sub-questions were helpful in guiding the research to an understanding the reasons the federations implement good governance in their functioning in the current level. In this chapter I present the outcome of this study, the limitations, recommendations on how some improvement can be achieved, and how the current thesis can be of use in the future.

Greek NSFs in total are labeled as “Weak”, with a 22% index score. Even after considering the interference of the state by initiating into the federations’ rules with an omnibus bill, it still scored a “Weak” labeled score of 29%. This is because the changes referred to a few, but at the same time crucial principles of good governance the federations didn’t publish in their websites and documents. It also seems like a convenient way of creating common good governance strategies for federations in their internal regulations.

The Greek NSFs shows weaknesses in the application of good governance in all four dimensions. Especially in Societal responsibility matters, it looks like it is not a priority to adopt policies regarding their contribution to the society. Basic functions around democratic processes, such as elections and voting for decisions are present in the documentation provided, but there is no deeper look in other important principles which can possibly provide solutions and transparency. There are no in-depth policies regarding modern concepts like environmental sustainability or gender equality, which sometimes are not taken in account at all.

It seems that the Greek NSFs’ level of good governance serves the necessary processes to make them marginally functional, not seeking ways that improve their public profile. Although we can think that in a society that suffered heavy austerity measures, it is way more important than before for all the governing bodies that absorb public funds to be transparent and towards the public.

The most important reason behind the low scores seems to be the current financial support from the state. This causes the problem of inability to recruit more employees, preventing them to increase the specialization in areas of good governance. The lack of inclusion of athletes, referees, coaches, employees and volunteers in the decision and policy making, is a key factor of prohibiting Greek NSFs to adopt policies which will serve not only the management of the federation, but sport itself. By following a policy of consulting their sport members, Greek NSFs can create a bigger pool of people involved and understand their point of view on how to tackle problems at all levels of governance. This would be almost costless and creating opportunities for people to get familiar with the concept of governance, which could lead into raising awareness on this area and probably younger athletes want to follow a career relevant to this.

While conducting research for my thesis, I realized I had to face two major limitations. First, the number of examined federations was narrowed down to a small number, since most of them don't publish any documentation on their websites while some of them do not have a website. Second, there was no validation of the questionnaires with the federations. The health crisis of Covid-19 prevented me from traveling to Greece and have a thorough analysis of the sheets with a representative from each of the NSFs.

A positive way to approach the low scores of the Greek NSFs is to see that there is enough space and potential to major improvements, by implementing smart strategies. This can create new approaches to good governance and trigger the interest for further research on how financially weak NSFs can exploit their resources at the fullest.

The current thesis can be used as a starting point for further research on good governance in NSFs. For the case of Greece, researchers can use the current data and debate the results under a different basis and scope. Although it analyzes the Greek National Sport Federations, the principles can be used in different cultures and regions making them useful for cases of other countries and individual National Sport Federations.

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