

ANNUAL REPORT 2023

The Ethics Committee held a number of meetings between July 2022 and the end of June 2023 to deal with the cases referred to it and to consider certain improvements to procedures in the area of ethics.

In summary, the activities were as follows:

1. Cases referred to the Ethics Committee

4 cases were referred to the Ethics Committee.

For reasons of confidentiality inherent in the activities of the Ethics Committee, this report cannot give further details on the cases referred to it, which in summary concern the European Fencing Confederation, the proceedings of the last FIE Congress and the problematic situation arising from Russia's war in Ukraine.

All these cases were dealt with, and answers were given to the various stakeholders.

The Ethics Committee notes that, in certain cases, its role is not yet very well perceived by the members of the fencing family, given that the said Ethics Committee can only intervene within the framework of the prerogatives and competences conferred upon it by the FIE Statutes.

It is therefore recommended that, in the future, efforts be made to improve communication and information for FIE members on the exact role of the Ethics Committee, which is available to intervene in this area if the FIE so requests.

2. Code of procedure for handling ethical cases

As the Ethics Committee has had very few cases referred to it in recent years, it has been able to act with due regard for the rights of those involved, in particular their right to be heard, but has had to proceed without being able to rely on the rules of procedure established for this activity.

For this reason, he asked the FIE to appoint a lawyer to draw up a code of procedure along the lines of what other international federations have done.

After various discussions with the FIE Legal Commission and the Executive Committee, this request from the Ethics Committee was accepted and a mandate was given to a specialist in sports law, Mr Jorge IBAROLLA, Libra Law (libra-law.ch), who worked on drawing up this code of procedure.

The Code has been examined by the Ethics Committee, which has approved it in its entirety, given that it is an excellent piece of work, subject to a few minor amendments which will be discussed and made to the text.

This text has also been submitted to the FIE's Legal Commission with a view to its adoption at the next FIE Congress, which will take place in Sharm El-Sheik on 25 November 2023.

The adoption of this text, which the Ethics Committee would like to see, will also enable the FIE to submit to the Congress delegates the possibility of increasing the number of members on the Ethics Committee in order to facilitate the management of cases, particularly with regard to the skills, nationalities and potential conflicts of interest that a member of the Ethics Committee could have in relation to certain cases.

It should also be noted that, in the current context, the Ethics Committee operates with 5 members, which makes discussions considerably more cumbersome when urgent decisions have to be taken.

The Procedural Code will make it possible to appoint a panel of 3 people who can, on a case-by-case basis, act with greater ease when deadlines are short, while also taking into account the various criteria mentioned above in order to avoid any conflict of interest.

The Ethics Committee would like to thank Mr Jorge IBAROLLA and the FIE for their excellent collaboration in putting this code in place, which will enable significant progress to be made in the area of ethics procedures.

3. New recommendations

As the role of the Ethics Committee is also to suggest improvements or new ideas, we thought it would be a good idea for it to be involved in the analysis of candidates when a new Chairman or Executive Committee member is elected.

After internal discussions within the Ethics Committee, it came to the conclusion that this idea should be proposed to the Legal Commission, but in a restricted form, i.e. that the Ethics Committee should only be involved in analysing possible candidates for the presidency, and not those for the Executive Committee, as this would represent too much work and would therefore be difficult for the Ethics Committee to manage.

On the other hand, it notes that other international federations have put in place certain rules whereby they involve the Ethics Committee in the analysis and acceptance of candidates for the presidency.

This idea has been submitted to the Legal Committee for consideration and, if it is successful, to define the framework.

In this context, the Ethics Committee is of the opinion that its power, at this stage, should be that of a recommendation to be made to Comex as to whether or not to accept a candidacy for the presidency, but without giving the Ethics Committee the power to decide on a candidacy.

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The Ethics Committee has worked smoothly over the past year and looks forward to continuing its work in this context until the end of 2024, when new elections will be held.

Lausanne, 11 August 2023



Olivier CARRARD
President