



INTERNATIONAL
BIATHLON
UNION

IBU GENDER EQUALITY
Strategy 2021-2026

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1. INTRODUCTION

IBU BACKGROUND

The International Biathlon Union (IBU) is the international governing body for the sport of biathlon. Biathlon combines cross-country skiing with marksmanship shooting and is recognised by the International Olympic Committee as one of the Olympic programme's seven winter sports. The forms of biathlon also governed by the IBU combine rifle shooting with other forms of movement, such as roller skiing, running, mountain biking, or snowshoeing. Biathlon was governed under the auspices of the UIPM from 1953 until 1993 when it was separated and founded as IBU, and the IBU currently counts 55 full and four provisional members. It is set up as an Austrian association and headquartered in Anif, just outside of Salzburg, Austria.

Article 2.3 of the IBU Constitution records IBU's commitment to ensuring that no member of the Biathlon Family will face discrimination on the grounds of race, skin colour, national or social origin, gender, sex, sexual orientation, language, political or other opinions, religion or different beliefs, circumstances of birth, or other improper ground and do not face harassment and abuse, whether, of a physical, psychological or sexual nature, while securing the provision of protection and assistance to those affected. The IBU Constitution records the promotion of diversity and gender equality in the management of and participation in Biathlon.

TARGET 26

The IBU's new strategic plan Target 26 was approved in October 2019. As a result of a structured consultation process, the program provides a framework for developing and growing biathlon dynamically and sustainably until 2026. Target 26 consists of five interrelated targets, divided into 15 specific objectives. By fulfilling these objectives, the IBU will continue to enhance biathlon's appeal to a young, international audience. The vision is to achieve practical, tangible improvements in all areas by the Olympic Winter Games 2026 in Milano-Cortina, Italy.

Delivering against Target 26 will be a multi-year process requiring the engagement and involvement of all IBU stakeholders. This will be realised through interaction and ongoing dialogue with the national federations, local organising committees, athletes, sponsors, partners, and fans.

2. GENDER EQUALITY COMMITMENT

GENDER EQUALITY VISION

The IBU's strategic plan Target 26 provides the mandate to pursue a gender equality program with the vision to strengthen the IBU's governing principles and regulations under Target #4, Objective#1. The IBU sets the framework for biathlon, providing the rules and regulations through which the sport operates. To ensure that biathlon's future lives up to its potential, the IBU must continue to upgrade its governing principles and policies.

THE GOALS SET BY TARGET 26 FOR GENDER EQUALITY ARE AS FOLLOW:

BY 2022

Establish a modern, progressive IBU Constitution, providing clear divisions of responsibility and the framework for future growth. Conduct a full review into the mechanisms to create gender equality across all IBU levels and in all activities, designing and sharing gender equality tools and programs for all Member Federations.

BY 2026

Conduct a review into the new constitution, proposing amendments to Members if applicable. Implement a core standard of gender equality across all IBU levels, to be defined following the review. The IBU believes that achieving equality with athletes, decision-makers and officials build respectful relationships between men and women, change the culture of sport to one that values diversity and enables the full involvement in every aspect of the sport.

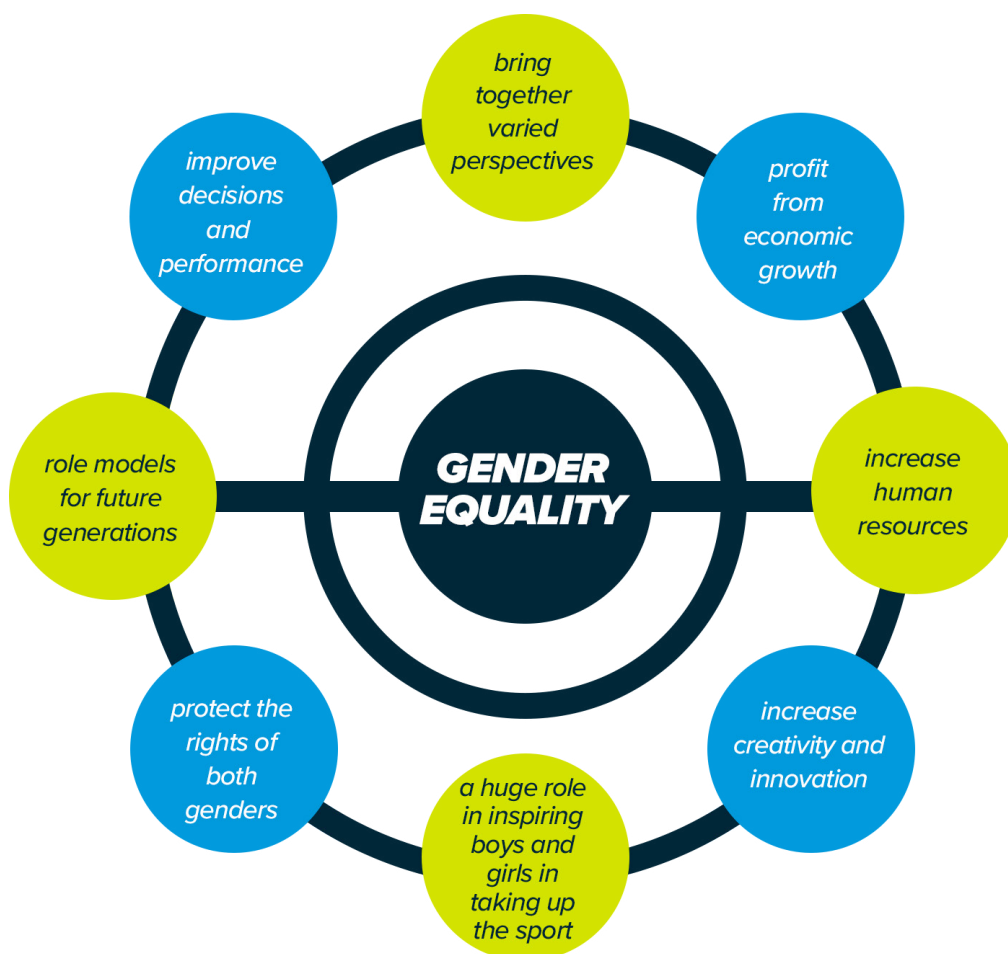
GENDER EQUALITY DEFINITION

Gender equality implies that the interests, needs, and priorities of both women and men are taken into consideration, recognising the diversity of different groups of women and men. Gender equality is not a women's issue but should concern and fully engage men as well as women (United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women). **The IBU defines gender equality as a process of allocating resources, opportunities, and entitlements equitably to both females and males in order to ensure that the sport of biathlon is free of gender discrimination.**

The IBU is committed to encouraging and supporting women's participation in biathlon at all levels to implement the principle of equality for men and women. This will be achieved not only through promoting equality for both men and women practising biathlon, but also through promoting equality at all levels of its management. For the sport, this means a commitment to increasing the recruitment and development of women athletes, coaches, referees, and officials at all but in particular in the highest level of the sport while keeping the existing equal balance in competition participation, formats, and sport technical rules, and equal pay.

BENEFITS OF GENDER EQUALITY

Sport is a highly visible and powerful social institution that can influence the broader drive for gender equality in society. Diversity within teams and organisations brings together varied perspectives, produces a more multifaceted analysis of the issues at stake, and triggers more significant effort from all that leads to improved decisions and performance. It can also increase creativity, innovation, and members' understanding and foster mutual learning and motivation¹. Sports organisations and institutions, which take gender equality seriously and commit to progressive actions, have the opportunity to demonstrate their added value for society, become better-performing organisations, increase human resources, and profit from economic growth. As role models, women and men play a huge role in inspiring boys and girls in taking up the sport. They can ensure that both gender voices and perspectives are heard, their rights are protected, and become confidantes for younger athletes. In the context where sports organisations often face difficulties recruiting coaches, attracting volunteers, finding decision-makers, etc., investing in women can lead to more human resources.



¹UEFA and University of St Gallen, "Benefits of Diversity & Inclusion: Outcomes, Challenges & Opportunities" (2017).

APPROACH TO GENDER EQUALITY STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT

This strategy has been developed based on the **2018 IOC Gender Equality Review Project**² and its 25 recommendations as well as on the United Nations goal 5 of the Sustainable Development Agenda to „achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls“ by the year 2030 and European Union Gender Equality in Sports proposal for strategic actions 2014-2020³.

IBU GENDER EQUALITY WORKING GROUP

To ensure that the IBU's gender equality policy is created and implemented in line with international standards and is focused on priority areas, the IBU set up the Gender Equality Working Group. The members of the Working Group were selected by the Executive Board and comprise female and male representatives with diverse experience and expertise related to gender equality.

Members of the IBU Gender Equality Working Group

Daniel BOHM	IBU Staff, former athlete
Dr Sarah DENTRY	Biathlon Canada Executive Board
Sofia DOMEIJ	President of Swedish Biathlon Federation
Kari FASTING	Professor Emerita, Norwegian School of Sports Sciences in Oslo
Dr Dagmara GERASIMUK	IBU Development Director
Darya LEOSH	Secretary-General of Belarus Biathlon Association
Greg McKENNA	Head of Biathlon Integrity Union
Karin ORGELDINGER	Executive Board Member Sports and General
Tapio PUKKI	Secretary-General, Finnish Biathlon Association
Emoke SZOCS	Nordic Director and Head Coach, Hungarian Biathlon
Barbora TOMESOVA	Czech Biathlon Union, Sports Club NMNM
and	
Irina GLADKIKH	co-expert, International Olympic Committee

² [Full version of IOC gender equality review project \(2018\)](#)

³ [Full version of European Union gender equality in sport proposal strategic actions 2014-2020](#)

3. IBU GENDER EQUALITY STATUS AND STRATEGY

Biathlon is a sport with very high standards when it comes to Gender Equality at the competition level. The IBU ensures equal quota places for men and women at all IBU events and an equal amount of medal events for women and men not only throughout the World Cup but also at all other international biathlon events led by but not limited to the World Championships (since 1984) and Olympic Games (since 1992). The IBU provides equal prize money to both genders. Mixed Relays (since 2005 WCH) and Single Mixed Relays (since 2016 WCH) formats have become a core part of biathlon.

Women are playing and have played a major role in developing the sport of Biathlon, but there is a lack of female leadership in National Federations and among the coaching staff, officials, referees and volunteers. The IBU Executive Board subsequently established the IBU Gender Equality Working Group (GEWG) in 2020 to help guide and advise the international federation on strategies and policies that will enhance gender equality at all levels of biathlon.

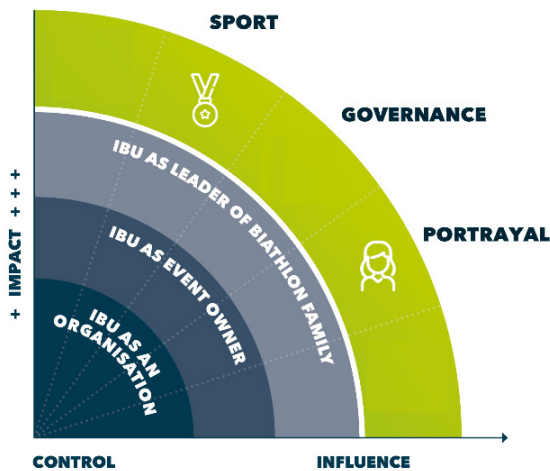
Based on the IBU NF surveys from 2019 and 2020:

IBU

- In 2018 one woman was elected as a member of the IBU Executive Board -11%
- In addition, the Athletes representative (a full member of the IBU EB) is also female which amounted to a total female representation of 22% in the EB
- IBU Athletes Committee has 50/50 representation
- In 2018 one woman was elected as a member of the IBU Technical Committee -10%
- Women represent 40% of the IBU management staff (three men and two women, as of December 2020)
- Women represent 13% IRs (141 women out of 1079 IRs, as of summer 2020)
- Women represent 5-6% TDs (three women out of 55 TDs, as of summer 2020)

IBU MEMBER FEDERATIONS

- There are five women presidents among 59 IBU NFs - 8,5% (as of spring 2020)
- Women represent 22% of NFs' Board members (as of spring 2020)
- Women represent 25% of NFs' controlling bodies (as of spring 2019)
- Women represent 20% of NFs' Directors or Secretaries-General (as of spring 2020)
- Women represent 8% of Head Coaches of National Teams during the last ten years (as of spring 2019)
- Women represent 16% of Youth and Junior Coaches of National Teams during the last ten years (as of spring 2019)
- Women represent 21,6% of registered coaches in the NFs (as of spring 2020)
- Girls and women represent 44% of athletes (from youth to senior classes) registered in NFs licensing system (as of spring 2020)
- 23% of NFs have programs in place to encourage female leadership (as of spring 2020)
- 50% NFs confirm having implemented gender equality or diversity policy (as of spring 2020)



This strategy begins with a focus on the IBU’s own activities, followed by extending its scope to the IBU events and reaching out to the global biathlon family, including the national member federations and their members, partners, and sponsors as well as the media and biathlon fans worldwide.

IBU STAKEHOLDERS AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

To implement gender equality practices at all levels of the sport, all the IBU’s stakeholders’ engagement and commitment are crucial. As part of this analysis, the IBU’s stakeholders were identified and divided into three levels based on the ability of the IBU to influence their decisions and behaviour:

IBU AS AN ORGANISATION

The IBU leads by example through its everyday practices and behaviours.

IBU EVENTS

The IBU supports local organisers in broadly integrating gender equality into their sports events.

GLOBAL BIATHLON FAMILY

The IBU assists and motivates the members of the global biathlon family to implement gender equality policy and strategies through advocacy and special programmes and partner with athletes and fans to enable behavioural change.

Level 1: IBU as an organisation	Level 2: IBU events	Level 3: Global biathlon family
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IBU Executive Board • IBU management team and staff • Biathlon Integrity Unit (BIU) board and staff • IBU Technical and Athletes Committees • IBU Technical Officials • IBU Officials • IBU contractors, e.g. media team • IBU service providers, e.g. accreditation, anti-doping, and data & timing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IBU Biathlon World Championships • IBU Summer Biathlon World Championships • IBU World Cup • IBU European Open Championships • IBU Cup • IBU Youth/Junior World Championships • IBU Junior Cup • IBU Regional Events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member national federations 1. NF Executive Board members 2. NF staff 3. Clubs 4. Athletes (from senior to children and masters) 5. Coaches 6. Referees 7. Voluntaries 8. Events, activities, and operations including facilities 9. Fans • Media • Sponsors • Partners • Suppliers
<p>Level 1 includes all operations, activities, and meetings organised by individuals in these groups.</p>	<p>Level 2 includes the organising committees, their host communities, partners, and suppliers.</p>	<p>Level 3 includes the above and the IBU's counterparts in other international sports organisations.</p>
Strategic objectives per Level		
<p>The IBU leads by example through its everyday practices and behaviours at each level of its organisation.</p>	<p>The IBU encourages local organisers to broadly integrating gender equality into their events.</p>	<p>The IBU assists and motivates the global biathlon family members to implement gender equality through advocacy and special programs and to collaborate with athletes and fans to enable behavioural change.</p>

FOCUS AREA AND GOALS

Governance: ensuring that women are recruited to senior management governance and leadership positions and are assigned roles of influence with decision-making responsibilities while entrenching gender equality in national and international biathlon organisations through statutes, policies, and the electoral process.

Sport: increasing the recruitment and development of women coaches, referees, and officials at the highest level of the sport while keeping the existing equal balance in international competition participation, formats and sport technical rules, and equal pay. Safeguarding athletes from harassment and abuse in sport.

Portrayal: avoiding prejudice and stereotypes in the portrayal of women and men in all biathlon areas by raising awareness of what constitutes bias both conscious and unconscious and ensuring an equal media presence.

Governance Goal	Objectives
<p>Lead in advocating to ensure that women are recruited to senior management and leadership positions and assigned roles of influence with decision-making responsibilities and entrenching gender equality in national and international biathlon organisations through statutes, policies, and the electoral process</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement IBU gender equality policy, strategy and plan 2021-2026 • Educate NFs' leaders about the benefits of gender synergy (from 2021) • Identify the opportunities and barriers to achieving gender equality in sport governance within the IBU members (2021/2022) • Encourage all NFs to implement gender equality or diversity policy (2022) • Encourage and promote a balance of application for men and women for nomination to the IBU Executive Board and Technical Committee at Congress 2022 to achieve a minimum 20% representation of one gender • Ensure a 30% of applications for men and women for nomination to IBU Committees, Working Groups (from 2022) • Amend the IBU Constitution to require a minimum 30% representation of one gender in the Executive Board and Technical Committee (applied from Congress 2026) • Ensure transparent and regular reporting on gender statistic and action taken by NFs (from 2021)

Governance Goal	Objectives
<p>Lead in advocating to ensure that women are recruited to senior management and leadership positions and assigned roles of influence with decision-making responsibilities and entrenching gender equality in national and international biathlon organisations through statutes, policies, and the electoral process</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advocate and partner for gender equality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Inspire external and internal stakeholders including fans and spectators to action through creative campaigns (HeforShe) » Organise a yearly Gender Equality Seminar to educate leaders, athletes, coaches, staff and discuss new approaches and share best practises » Create a tailor-made succession policy within the IBU to make it attractive for women to take the step up from the athlete or official to a management position within the Biathlon Family (NFs, OCs) » Develop ambassadors and role models to motivate and lead by example

Sport Goal	Objectives
<p>Increase the recruitment and development of women coaches, referees, and officials at the highest level of the sport and keep the existing balance in international competition participation, formats and technical rules, and equal pay. Safeguard athletes from harassment and abuse in sport.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage women participants to enrol for the IBU Academy courses and seminars and organise dedicated courses for women (from 2022) • Encourage NFs to assign women to International Referees' seminars, Coaches' seminars and grow the number progressively by 10% per year (base 2020) • Collect relevant data and maintain statistics on women's biathlon participation and availability of training facilities and training groups (2020/2021) • Keep the existing balance in competition participation, formats, sport technical rules, and equal pay organised by IBU and at international and national levels • Support Biathlon Integrity Union to develop and implement safeguarding policy to prevent of harassment and abuse in sport

Portrayal Goal	Objectives
<p>Avoid prejudice and stereotypes in women and men’s portrayal in all biathlon areas by raising awareness of what constitutes bias both conscious and unconscious. Ensure an equal media presence.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish principles and guidelines for fair and balanced portrayal in all forms of communication • Encourage the IBU member NFs to utilise the portrayal communication toolkit and adopt IOC and/or IBU portrayal guidelines • Establish metrics and monitor them to measure the quantity of material published on women and men biathlon as well as the quality of communication and coverage. • Advocate for eliminating stereotypes in the portrayal of women and men, including outreach to media and marketing partners • Educate journalists about the conscious and unconscious bias • Define and evaluate the GE status of accredited media at IBU events

4. PROGRAM DELIVERY, OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

To ensure that the program is focused on specific goals, we implement the following activities plan:

FOCUS AREA: GOVERNANCE

Objectives	Level	Activities	Responsible	Deadline
IBU achieves 20 % representation of one gender in Executive Board and Technical Committee in 2022	1 - IBU as an organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IBU implements a gender equality policy and strategy, and advocates for change within its NF Members IBU understands barriers to a leadership position through a research project IBU develops funding and implementation plan for gender equality educational actions (development of awareness programmes and support for projects to develop and maintain education and training programmes and mentoring systems for (future) female leaders in formal and non-formal education - workshops, seminars, mentorship programs) IBU EB members advocate for change and promote the gender equality policy (IBU joins the HeForShe movement) IBU establishes an ambassador programme to create role models to motivate and lead by example 	EB IBU Dev.	by 2022
IBU achieves a minimum of 30 % representation of one gender in the Executive Board and Technical Committee in 2026	1 - IBU as an organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IBU amends the IBU Constitution to require a minimum 30% representation of one gender in the Executive Board and Technical Committee (applied from Congress 2026) 	EB	by 2026
IBU achieves 30% in applications for men and women to IBU Committees, Working Groups	1 - IBU as an organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IBU ensures a diverse representation of members in Committees and Working Groups to include diverse voices in decision-making processes at all levels IBU grows a pipeline of candidates to increase the NF representative diversity concerning gender and geographical diversity. IBU creates a network in social media biathlon leaders 	IBU all departments	by 2022

FOCUS AREA: GOVERNANCE

Objectives	Level	Activities	Responsible	Deadline
100% NFs with gender equality or diversity policy (2022)	3 - Global biathlon family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IBU provides a template for a national-level gender equality policy to be used by IBU members • IBU educates the global biathlon family about conscious and unconscious bias and the importance of gender equality and diversity during the Presidents meeting, IBU gender equality seminars • IBU enables the exchange of good governance practices (IFs, NFs) • IBU rewards NFs for the adoption of gender equality policy and taking part in IBU gender equality activities with financial support 	IBU Dev. with Sust.	by 2022
IBU achieves 30% representation of one gender in IBU Congress (NFs delegations)	3 - Global biathlon family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NFs ensure that among the three delegates at the IBU Congress there are a minimum of one representative of each gender 	SG	by 2022

FOCUS AREA: SPORT

Objectives	Level	Activities	Responsible	Deadline
Increase the number of women as volunteers and employed Coaches to 30%	1 - IBU as an organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IBU Academy designs educational programs following gender-sensitive approaches and specificity of women's sport IBU promotes the dual-career system through education credits for NFs who educate their women athletes and coaches through IBU Academy IBU Academy creates women only' coach courses as a mechanism for engaging, empowering and increasing the technical skills of female coaches IBU engages successful female elite coaches as role models in coach recruitment and educational material IBU implements code of conduct and/or ethical guidelines to ensure that the coaching environment is free from discrimination or harassment (together with BIU) 	IBU Dev. BIU	by 2026
A minimum of 25% of all NEW IRs and TDs shall be female until 2026. IBU supports diversity and gender equality in OCs.	2- IBU events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IBU encourages NFs to focus on female referees' development; this approach shall start at the lowest level and shall reach up to national & international referee licenses. The international referee license is the eligibility basis to join the IBU Technical Delegates Group IBU promotes awareness among OCs about gender-sensitive approaches during the OC meeting IBU supports women to take part in IR and TD seminars and requests from NFs to appoint both men and women in their applications IBU implements a financial contribution system for such NFs that are fulfilling/implementing GE goal percentages successfully; the same shall be implemented for OCs putting a reasonable number of female referees and key staff into service at their events. 	IBU Dev. with S&E TC	by 2026

FOCUS AREA: SPORT

Objectives	Level	Activities	Responsible	Deadline
Keep the existing balance in international competition participation, formats and technical rules, and equal payments.	1 - IBU as an organisation 2- IBU events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IBU continues ensuring participation, formats and sport technical rules and equal pay on all level of IBU competitions IBU promotes development projects based on gender equality to support equal representation and youth and junior level 	IBU Dev. with S&E TC	by 2021
Safe biathlon free from harassment and abuse	3- Global Biathlon Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> BIU develops safeguarding policy and implements procedures when sexual harassment and abuse occur, including complaint procedures IBU promotes integrity and social responsibility among athletes IBU defines and launches a global campaign to promote safe youth participation in entry-level competitions 	BIU with IBU Dev.	by 2022
Zero tolerance for discrimination	3- Global Biathlon Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IBU develops promotional activities on „say no to discrimination“ for activation at IBU Events BIU sets guidelines for events to ensure zero discrimination and promote diversity & accessibility (both staff and spectators) IBU develops evidence-based programmes for coaches, which should be made mandatory in all coach education to act and intervene in the right way preventing gender-based violence between peers or others. 	BIU with IBU Dev. and Comm.	by 2022

FOCUS AREA: PORTRAYAL

Objectives	Level	Activities	Responsible	Deadline
Balanced media portrayal of both genders at the IBU level	1-IBU as an organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IBU creates a programme to enhance awareness of stereotypical gender roles and their portrayal (workshops for media before each season) In cooperation with Athletes Committee, IBU sets up an athlete ambassador program and campaign to promote gender equality and diversity IBU launches program & create a promotional campaign with GE ambassadors and educates athletes about their self-portrait in the media. IBU defines metrics to measure the quantity of material published on women’s biathlon as well as the quality of communication and coverage IBU educates journalists about the unconscious or conscious bias IBU defines and evaluates the GE status of accredited media at IBU events 	<p>IBU Dev. with Comm.</p> <p>IBU Comm.</p> <p>IBU Dev. with Comm.</p>	by 2022
Balanced media portrayal of both genders at the IBU members and partners level	3 - Global biathlon family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> IBU members and partners utilise the portrayal communication toolkit and adopt IOC and/or IBU portrayal guidelines IBU shares gender equality communication best practices and knowledge among NFs IBU Academy designs educational programmes for athletes and coaches on how to communicate with the media and how to control the rights of the ethical and appropriate use of their names and images. 	<p>IBU Dev. with Comm.</p>	by 2022

5. PROGRAM APPROACH

PROGRAM GOVERNANCE

Each IBU Member NF should develop, monitor, and review a national action plan on gender equality. IBU, as a responsible organisation, should play a model role in that area. Equality between women and men is a fundamental principle of our organisation that helps us grow and extend our reach. To ensure the above actions' implementation, key goals are identified alongside other activities to help implement/complement those actions. It is imperative to use all available resources to follow up this process. The IBU Executive Board will be responsible for overall decision-making and providing oversight of policy and resourcing for the gender equality program. Under the Secretary-General, the Development Director has the lead for the overall development and execution of the strategy, supported by the entire Management Team and the IBU Gender Equality Working Group.

MONITORING AND REPORTING

Implementing policy actions to promote gender equality in sport should be monitored systematically at both the national and IBU levels. To ensure that progress toward objectives is tracked, statistics must be collected systematically, broken down by gender, and published regularly and disseminated widely in the annual IBU Activity report. The EB should consider evaluating the progress made on gender equality at each level of participation, volunteering, leadership, coaching positions, and media presentation.