

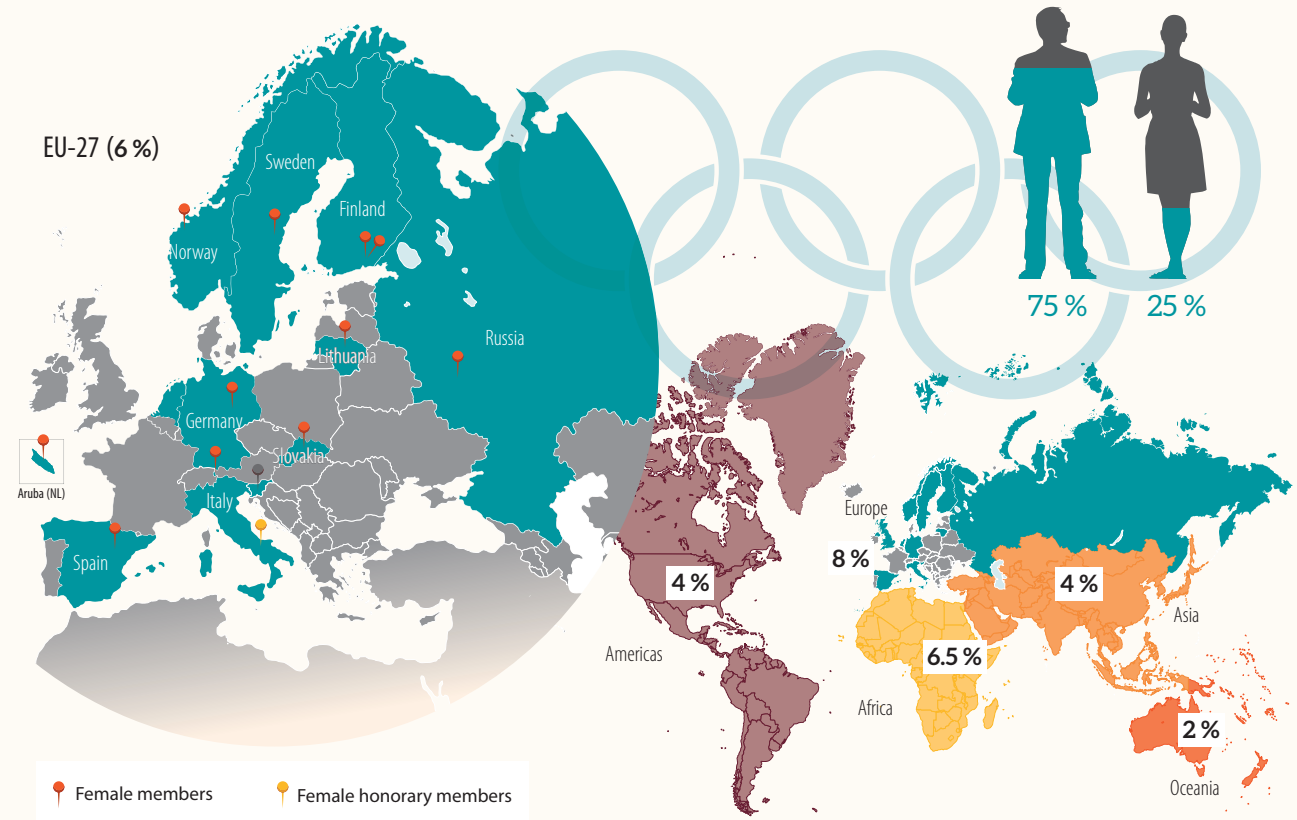
WOMEN IN SPORTS GOVERNANCE STRUCTURES

Researchers [argue](#) that, from a gender perspective, sport is one of the most hegemonic social institutions in modern society. Traditionally, sport has been dominated by men, in terms of both participation and governance. Women were excluded from the first modern Olympic Games, held in Athens in 1896, and were only allowed to gradually start joining in four years later. Pierre de Coubertin – founder of the modern Olympic Movement – [argued](#) that women's participation would be 'impractical, uninteresting, anaesthetic, and incorrect'. He further claimed that the games were created for 'the solemn and periodic exaltation of male athleticism' with 'female applause as reward'.

Even though women's presence and involvement in the Olympic Movement have progressively evolved, girls and women across the world still get fewer opportunities and less investment, training and corporate attention when they play sport. Today, there is still ample room for improvement when it comes to women's participation in sports governance structures. The International Olympic Committee currently [counts](#) just 38 female members and honorary members out of a total of 152, and fewer than 20 % of the members of the governing structures of affiliated bodies are women.

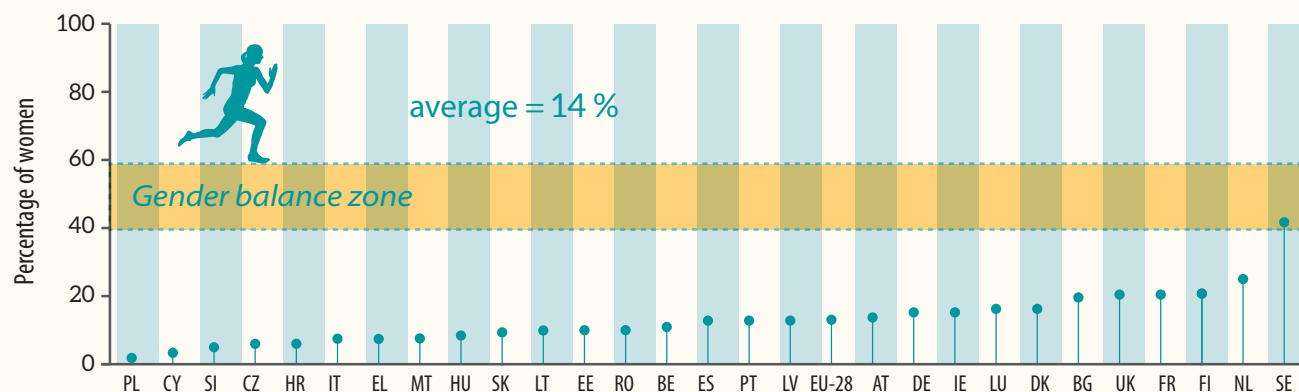
Similarly, in 2015 only 14 % of all top decision-making positions in individual EU sports federations were [occupied](#) by women, ranging from 3 % in Poland to 43 % in Sweden. With the notable exception of the latter, the majority of countries display a share of less than 20 %.

Women in the International Olympic Committee



Source: The [International Olympic Committee](#), 2019, own calculation.

Proportion of women among all decision making positions in national sport federations in the EU, 2015



Source: European Institute for Gender Equality, *Gender in sport*, 2017.

WOMEN AS COACHES AND ROLE MODELS

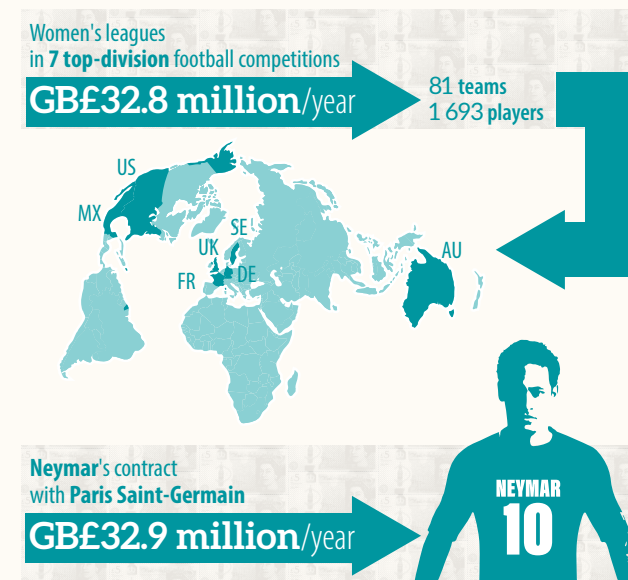
In spite of the fact that the number of women actively involved in sport has increased dramatically over the past 50 years, female coaches across the globe are a statistical minority in nearly all sports, at all performance levels. In Europe, between 20 % and 30 % of all sports **coaches** are women. Researchers **highlight** the importance of having strong female role models in sport, particularly in coaching, notably to inspire others to pursue and realise similar achievements or to provide insight and advice on how to navigate in a difficult environment. Indeed, practitioners **argue** that having a female coach has a positive impact on coaching intentions and can be related to the importance of having a female role model. The lack of such **role models** can lead to an inability to challenge or resist negative stereotypes regarding gender and leadership.

INEQUALITY IN PAY AND MEDIA COVERAGE

A total of 83 % of sports now award men and women equal prize money. Notwithstanding the fact that the gender pay gap in sport has been narrowing over the years, it still very much exists. Football is among the sports displaying the greatest disparities. Indeed, a 2017 **global sports salaries survey** revealed that the combined salaries paid to women's leagues in seven top-division football competitions in France, Germany, England, the USA, Sweden, Australia and Mexico, comprising 81 teams and 1 693 players, stood at GB£32.8 million a year, a little less than the GB£32.9 million earned by Brazilian forward Neymar for his contract with Paris Saint-Germain in 2017-2018. There are also still significant differences in the media coverage of women's and men's sports. Statistics **show** that sports journalism in the print media is a man's world, with over 90 % of the articles being written by male journalists and more than

85 % of the coverage being dedicated to male athletes. In 2010, in a bid to establish greater equality in the most popular sport for girls and women – football – the European football governing body UEFA launched a women's football development **programme** and funded an extensive series of projects across Europe to drive growth and sustainability in women's football. The European Parliament has also been consistently advocating for gender equality in sport. As part of the institution's campaign for the 2019 European elections, high-profile players such as Nilla Fischer **encouraged** women to vote on issues that matter to them.

Gender pay gap in football



Source: SportingIntelligence, *Global sport salaries survey*, 2017.