

VALUES WORTH FIGHTING FOR

Norwegian sport's international strategy
to promote the values of sport and
its role in society.



NORGES
IDRETTSFORBUND



Sport has the power to change the world. It has the power to inspire. It has the power to unite people in a way that little else does. It speaks to youth in a language they understand. Sport can create hope where once there was only despair. It is more powerful than governments in breaking down racial barriers. It laughs in the face of all types of discrimination.

Nelson Mandela

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INTRODUCTION

The power of sport to unite people, combined with its exceptional ability to generate joy and enthusiasm, puts it in a unique position to promote positive values and bring about change.

Sport brings people together across cultural, geographical and political divides. In an increasingly polarised world, sport's ability to unite people is a strength. People from all over the world participate in sport together, so it can help to promote cooperation, create a sense of community and reduce division.

But sport also reflects the challenges facing society, and it is increasingly exposed to political and economic interests that come into conflict with the values of sport. We must redouble our efforts and work together in order to safeguard and promote the values of sport.

There is a growing expectation that sport should play a clearer social role. That is a positive, which helps to focus our minds when setting new, stricter standards for ourselves.

Norwegian sport is high-profile and privileged. That creates opportunities and places responsibility on us in our international activities. This strategy aims to strengthen our approach and help to capitalise on the potential of Norwegian sport's international involvement.

Both the Norwegian Olympic and Paralympic Committee and Confederation of Sports (NIF) and individual Norwegian sports federations are members of a range of international organisations, and represented on many international boards, councils and committees.

Through our international work, we shall help to bring about a more democratic, open and transparent international sports movement with zero tolerance for corruption. We shall help to make sports more sustainable, and we shall promote fair play. In order to realise sport's potential to play a positive role in society, protecting and respecting human rights must be an integral part of how sport is managed and organised.

Norwegian sport will contribute in the efforts to meet the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement. We shall promote and respect human rights, including those laid down in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Labour Organization (ILO) Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and other relevant human rights conventions.

This strategy is not without dilemmas, and our values are not static. Both

sport and the world are continuously changing. Moreover, Norwegian sport is by no means perfect. That's why Norwegian sport as a body shall always seek to learn and develop in this area. This document cannot give a definitive answer to all questions relating to values, but it seeks to stimulate reflection and set out a direction, as well as providing the basis for a set of online guidelines for athletes and international representatives.

We shall build on Norwegian sport's historical role in international sport, which has emphasised sustainability, good governance and fair play. This shall be further developed in cooperation with partners from within and outside the world of sport.

Our core values and national strategies provide the foundation for our international involvement. Norwegian sport shall make an active contribution and display a consistent set of values both nationally and internationally.

Adopted: 17.10.2021



SPORT VALUES

VISION: Joy of sport – for all.

MISSION: To give everyone the opportunity to participate in sport in accordance with their own wishes and needs, without unreasonable or disproportionate differential treatment.

Our vision and mission cover everyone in Norwegian sport, including the people who represent Norwegian in international sports bodies. This reflects Norwegian sport's desire to promote equal opportunity and non-discrimination as a prerequisite for ensuring that sport is safe and inclusive for everyone.

ORGANISATIONAL VALUES

Our vision and our mission are put into practice by athletes, coaches, volunteers and leaders. Norwegian sport shall promote values that are positive for individuals and society and thus strengthen its position as a grassroots movement and driving force in society. Our work shall be based on volunteering, democratic values, loyalty and equality.

ETHICAL PRINCIPLES

Norwegian sport's ethical principles shall help our leaders, representatives, coaches and athletes to put Norwegian sport's vision, mission and values into practice.

Although the ethical principles are based on the circumstances in which

sport operates in Norway, they are strongly consistent with normative documents in international sport.

VALUES IN INTERNATIONAL SPORT

The ideals of international sport are perhaps most clearly expressed in the Olympic Charter, which states that the role of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) is to:

- Promote and support good governance.
- Ensure the spirit of fair play prevails and violence is banned.
- Cooperate with the authorities and with competent public or private organisations in order to ensure that sport promotes peace.
- Promote the equality of men and women and female participation in sport at all levels and in all structures.
- Protect the integrity of sport, by leading the fight against doping, and by taking action against all forms of manipulation of competitions and related corruption.
- Oppose any form of political or commercial exploitation of sport and athletes.

- Promote sustainable development in sport and require the Olympic Games to be held in a way that is environmentally responsible.
- Promote safe sport and the protection of athletes from all forms of harassment and abuse.

The mission of the IOC is to promote the Olympic spirit and the Olympic movement throughout the world. Through the 206 national Olympic committees, the IOC works to encourage worldwide participation in sport. Values that reflect the Olympic spirit can be found in international sport organisations' own visions and mission statements all over the world.

Unfortunately, there is often a big gap between words and deeds in international sport. That is a challenge for everyone who has the best interests of sport at heart. Based on the IOC's charter and other international sports federations' values statements, we will challenge those organisations to live up to their visions and values, as well as challenging ourselves to do so.

NORWEGIAN SPORT'S ETHICAL PRINCIPLES

Human values

- Sport shall be inclusive and non-discriminatory
- Sport shall be safe
- Sport shall be honest

Sporting values

- Sport shall be fair
- Sport shall be healthy
- Sport shall be clean

Organisational values

- Sport shall be democratic
- Sport shall be transparent
- Sport shall be well-governed



VALUES WORTH FIGHTING FOR ON THE INTERNATIONAL STAGE

THE VALUES OF SPORT ARE UNDER PRESSURE

Sport makes a positive contribution to society. However, sport also reflects global challenges and is exploited politically. Unfortunately, the financial and political pressure exerted on international sport has too often led to abuse of power, breaches of the values of sport, poor governance, a lack of transparency and a loss of trust and credibility.

If human rights are not safeguarded and respected in conjunction with major sporting events, if important decision-making processes lack transparency, and if women's sport still has to fight against discrimination and for the right to compete on equal terms, it is clear that there is a need to stand up for values such as transparency, democracy and equality in international sport.

The values, norms and practices of sport must live up to the ideals of wider society. Sport can affect and engage people so strongly and widely because it plays a central part in their lives. For Norwegian sport, that informs our participation in, and desire to influence, international sport.

Norwegian sport's international involvement is based on the following principles:

TRANSPARENCY

All change and improvement shall be based on transparency in sport. It is also necessary for sport to be honest and fair.

DEMOCRACY

The democratic values which inform Norwegian sport's ethical principles shall be at the heart of our international participation.

EQUALITY

The joy of participating and interacting is at the heart of sport. It is essential for sport to provide an inclusive space where everyone is welcome to participate.

These principles are also acknowledged in international sport, but too often we see weak compliance. The reason Norwegian sport wants to increase its international influence is to contribute and play a bigger part in ensuring that sport lives up to its own ideals.

In order for us to be able to contribute to change, it is vital for representatives of Norwegian sport in international bodies to consider whether these values are being adhered to, and to take action when they are not. Norwegian sport shall support and engage with its representatives.



Photo: View Apart / Shutterstock / NTB

NORWEGIAN SPORT WANTS TO INCREASE ITS INTERNATIONAL INFLUENCE

All sports nations have a joint responsibility to ensure a sustainable global sports movement. Sport in Norway is privileged, with society providing significant resources and contributions to sport. Norwegian sport also has a long history of local democracy in which sport's ethical principles are put into practice.

Norwegian sport recognises this privileged position, as well as the responsibility that comes with it. Together with others, we shall make an even bigger contribution towards positive change in the international sporting community.

As follows from our vision and mission, Norway's international involvement shall promote sport as a unique opportunity for equal participation, the joy of sport and solidarity. In an even more polarised and fragmented world, where it is becoming increasingly difficult to safeguard the political neutrality of sport, it is becoming ever more important to protect the independence and unifying power of sport.

The battle for political influence in international sport is growing fiercer. In winter sports, Norway is a superpower, but increasing the influence of Norwegian sport will often mean "punching above our weight". We are in many ways an underdog, and for Norwegian sport to succeed, a large amount of systematic and strategic work will be needed across all sport organisations.

WORDS INTO ACTIONS: PRIORITIES AND TOOLS FOR INCREASING OUR INFLUENCE

Norwegian sport's priorities and tools for increasing its international influence shall facilitate greater involvement by leaders, representatives, support teams, coaches and athletes.

COMMITTING TO HUMAN RIGHTS AND SUSTAINABILITY

Systematic and strategic cooperation and commitments are vital in order to keep up the pressure on ensuring sustainable development and respect for human rights.

If sports are to make a positive contribution, it must take place within a sustainable framework. That applies both in Norway and internationally – from major sporting events to local travel and purchase of equipment and materials. Sport is expected to make a positive contribution to sustainable development. As the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights set out, there is a need to carry out due diligence to ensure that there are no negative impacts on people, society and the environment. The UN Sustainable Development Goals are an important framework for our own activities and our partnerships.

One key priority is to raise awareness and to highlight the opportunities for greater involvement and influence amongst athletes, coaches, representatives and managers within their respective areas of responsibility. At the international level, that means getting more representatives into governing bodies, as well as developing the knowledge and skills needed for our representatives to successfully exert their influence within a global organisation and culture.

Climate change affects us all, including the sporting community. Sport has a big responsibility to reduce its own carbon footprint. This must be applied both to major sporting events and when planning fixture lists in such a way as to make travel between events and competitions more efficient.

Norwegian sport will:

- Sign NIF up to the UN Global Compact Norway and adhere to its reporting standards.
 - Work to encourage international sport organisations to sign up to the UN Global Compact. Ensure that commitments and expectations to transparent reporting are adhered to.
 - Operate in accordance with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs) and the OECD Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Business Conduct, and encourage international sport organisations to do the same.
 - Sign NIF up to the UN Sports for Climate Action initiative within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and encourage international sport organisations to also sign up to the initiative.
 - Play an active role in ensuring that international sport organisations have binding plans of action and report transparently on their own work in the field of human rights.
 - Ensure that representatives from Norwegian sport have access to good information and training related to human rights and sustainability.
 - Ensure that athletes and support staff who will represent Norway at international sporting events are offered a briefing on the human rights situation in the country they are visiting.
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TRANSPARENCY AND GOOD GOVERNANCE IN SPORT

The question of good governance has been high on the agenda for international sport in recent years, and a number of highly undesirable situations have been uncovered – often involving corruption. Police actions against international sports federations and stories in the media have revealed systematic challenges relating to governance and control mechanisms.

Good governance is a fundamental prerequisite for combating corruption. Norwegian sport believes that it is necessary to insist on transparency in decision-making processes and cash flows in order to bring about change.

International sport organisations are increasingly expected to help achieve social goals, such as promoting participation in sport, physical activity, good health, respect

for human rights, inclusion and equal opportunity. Good governance in national and international sport organisations is a prerequisite for this being successful.

Adherence to principles for good governance in sport is vital to the future of global sport as an independent, politically neutral movement.

Norwegian sport will:

- Promote transparency and democratic principles in all decision-making processes in sport.
 - Support transparency about cash flows, zero tolerance for corruption and effective anti-corruption programmes.
 - Promote control mechanisms and transparency about their findings and any irregularities.
 - Propose term limits and length of periods of office for elected international positions and term limits for senior management positions in sport.
 - Work internationally to ensure that sport maintain its position as a powerful member-based grassroots movement.
 - Contribute to develop an anti-corruption handbook for international sport, in collaboration with Transparency International and international sport organisations.
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FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION FOR ATHLETES

Athletes are increasingly using sporting events to show their support for human rights and anti-discrimination. Norwegian sport wishes to cooperate internationally to strengthen the freedom of expression of all athletes.

Norwegian athletes are positive, high-profile ambassadors for Norwegian sport and Norway as a nation. There is a lot of interest in their opinions. The Norwegian national football teams' strong show of support for human rights, and the women's national beach handball team's demonstration against discriminatory clothing rules, are examples of actions that make Norwegian sport proud. We want to support actions that embody the values that Norwegian sport wishes to defend, and that are laid down in values statements both in Norway and internationally. This means, for example, defending the right of athletes to carry symbols relating to human rights, anti-discrimination and equality during sporting events, and also ensuring that our athletes are aware of the human rights situation in host nations.

Norwegian sport does not believe in punishing athletes who carry out these kinds of protests in conjunction with competitions, official ceremonies or on the podium. In view of this, Norwegian sport will enter into dialogue with the IOC and other relevant bodies about adjustments to the rules covering this. This should be done in a way that safeguards the values and independence of sport, and ensures that the rights of all affected athletes are respected.

Norwegian sport will work to protect the right of all athletes to express their opinions at press conferences, on social media, in meetings with human rights defenders and in the media during international championships.

Freedom of expression also includes the right not to express an opinion.

Norwegian sport will:

- Introduce procedures to ensure that athletes and support staff, in all sports, are offered a briefing on human rights and social conditions in the countries that they will be visiting, in order to support and facilitate informed, individual choices in relation to matters such as exercising freedom of expression.
 - Promote freedom of expression and access to information for athletes during international sporting events, including access to digital platforms and the opportunity for them to express themselves freely to the media and at official press conferences.
 - Not punish athletes who carry out protests in defence of human rights, non-discrimination and equality in conjunction with competitions or medal ceremonies, and consequently it will enter into dialogue with other bodies to discuss changes to the rules covering this.
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GENDER EQUALITY, INCLUSION AND NON-DISCRIMINATION

Sport shall be an inclusive arena where everyone has equal opportunities, feel a sense of affiliation and experience mutual respect. We shall reflect the diversity of society and do not accept negative discrimination under any circumstances. Everyone shall be entitled, regardless of their background and ambitions, to participate in and influence the decisions that affect them.

Sport shall be a safe space where we look after each other and where everyone is seen, heard and can be themselves. We have zero tolerance for all forms of bullying, harassment, violence and abuse.

Norwegian sport will:

- Promote greater diversity, including a minimum 40% quota of each gender on international boards, committees and commissions.
- Have zero tolerance for any discriminating practices that affects participation in a given sport by, for example, gender, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, place of residence, political beliefs or religious affiliation.
- Work to ensure that international sport organisations have zero tolerance for all kinds of bullying, harassment, violence and abuse, and that they have mechanisms for whistleblowing and sanctions.
- Actively support efforts to promote inclusion and anti-discrimination, such as protests against racism and the use of rainbow symbols in conjunction with events in order to combat discrimination.

BIDDING AND SELECTION PROCESSES FOR MAJOR SPORTING EVENTS

Sport is best placed to bring about change in society when it works in partnership with other actors. That's why Norwegian sport wishes to strengthen its cooperation with authorities, associations, civil society, labour organisations and the private sector. Norwegian sport believes in the intrinsic value of athletes, coaches, representatives and sports leaders coming together in global competitions and meetings. Our view is that sport can and should contribute to building bridges.

Growing scepticism amongst people in many countries must be tackled through transparent and credible bidding and selection processes. The cost of holding the biggest global sporting events is too high. Norwegian sport will support the current trend towards requiring greater use of existing facilities and finding sustainable use for the facilities after the sporting events. This must be developed further. Where new infrastructure is built, the selection criteria must explicitly require compliance with the ILO's core conventions and implementation of due diligence assessments to ensure that no forced or child labour is used. Major sporting events must do more to contribute to a circular economy in which the climate, the environment and responsible production are priorities. In order for this to happen, cost levels, sustainability and transparency must live up to people's expectations and demands.

Norway and Norwegian sport are in a strong financial and organisational position to take on responsibility for

hosting a variety of major sporting events. Norway should lead the way by holding sporting events that embody the values we believe in.

Sport's unique ability to generate enthusiasm and create interest at all layers of society creates a risk of it being exploited for political means. Holding major sporting events can, for instance, be used to distract attention away from human rights violations and other matters that would give rise to criticism. Selection processes must be based on due diligence assessments in order to ensure that major sporting events do not have a negative impact on people, society and the environment.

Sportswashing is a threat to the intrinsic value of sport. That's why Norwegian sport will combat sportswashing by working to ensure that respect for human and labour rights are included as explicit criteria in selection processes for major sporting events, and that compliance is enforced through binding agreements and transparent reporting. A sporting event can never be successful if it breaches, or contributes to violations of human rights. An important requirement of host nations must be that the media is able to cover not only the sporting event and sporting performances, but also matters surrounding the preparations for, and implementation of, the event, as well as wider societal issues. Norwegian sport will work to ensure that access of media organisations is not restricted as response to articles about other societal issues in the country.

Norwegian sport's efforts to promote change are based on the principle of seeking influence through participation. Using boycotts as a tool can

take away or significantly weaken other opportunities for exercising influence in high priority areas in Norwegian sport's international strategy. Norwegian sport will primarily consider boycotts as a method when they form part of a wider international boycott involving various sectors of society.

Norwegian sport will:

- Work to ensure that selection criteria for major sporting events include requirements relating to cost levels, sustainability, and the protection of human rights and labour rights, and that there is transparent reporting on compliance.
 - Work on drawing up clauses in host city agreements to ensure that breaking requirements relating to sustainability and human rights can result in the host city being deselected.
 - Demand that requirements relating to transparency and democratic principles be followed in selection processes.
 - Help to establish requirements for host nations to ensure that the media is able to freely cover both the sporting events and wider societal issues.
 - Bid to host more international sporting events in Norway.
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CHILDREN'S SPORT

Children's sport in Norway, which is defined as up to the age of 12, is based on the UN's Convention of the Rights of the Child, which lays down the right of children to leisure and play. This has been adapted to the context of sport and is expressed through Children's rights in sport. Sport shall ensure that children feel safe, experience a sense of mastery and friendship, and have an opportunity to influence their own activities. In short, the focus is on the best interests of the child, and safeguarding their rights.

In Norway, 93 percent of all children have been members of a sport club. In line with our vision "Joy of sport – for all", the goal is for all children to have the opportunity to participate, and for children to have a positive experience each time they take part in a training session, competition or other activity. In sport, children should enjoy social interaction, feel safe, enjoy trying out new things and not be afraid of failure. Children's sport has an important intrinsic value in children's development and is not a tool for elite sport.

In international elite sport, there are examples where what is done goes against the spirit of the UN's Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Norwegian model, on the other hand, shows that excellence in elite sport can be achieved through play-based sport for children and youth.

Norwegian sport will:

- Promote an approach to children's sport based on play and participation, with the main focus being on the intrinsic value of children's sport and the best interests of the child.
 - Have zero tolerance for all forms of bullying, harassment, violence and abuse towards children in sport, and help create a framework for whistleblowing and sanctions, adapted to the needs of children and youth.
 - Work to ensure that children can be children, and not small adults, by organising activities and competitions that reflect their growth, development and maturity, even when they are competing at an international level.
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ALLIANCES AND PARTNERS

A number of the challenges that international sport faces can only be tackled through cooperation with the authorities. These include match fixing, anti-doping activities and combating corruption. Norwegian sport therefore wishes to improve cooperation with the Norwegian authorities in areas where sport cannot bring about the necessary changes by itself.

Norwegian sport wishes to deepen its cooperation with other civil society organisations in order to provide its sports leaders, coaches and athletes with better access to information in areas such as: promoting good governance, human rights, sustainability, and equal opportunity in governing bodies. The work on this has begun, with one example being that Norwegian sport is working with Amnesty International Norway in conjunction with the preparations for the football World Cup in Qatar in 2022 and the Olympics and Paralympics in Beijing in 2022.

Norwegian sport wishes to establish networks of like-minded sports organisations in order to achieve progress in its priority areas. In the case of NIF, these networks can be based on the organisations of which NIF is a member. In the case of individual Norwegian sports federations, it will be important to form alliances with the relevant international sports federations and with national sister organisations.

Norwegian sport will:

- Cooperate with organisations that possess the necessary knowledge and expertise, in ways that commit Norwegian sport to working strategically and systematically to ensure sustainable development in sport.
 - Cooperate and form alliances with sport organisations from other countries that are in practice giving priority to promote sport values, human rights and sustainability.
 - Learn from the field of international development cooperation to support sustainable development and respect for human rights, particularly in development projects involving sports cooperation in the global south.
 - Build on cooperation with the Norwegian authorities, and work to establish regular forums for meeting labour organisations.
 - Seek influence through participation and election to leadership positions in international sport organisations.
 - Develop individual strategies for Norwegian sports federations in order to help them gain representation on the boards of international organisations.
 - Strive for greater representation in the international organisations that NIF is a member of, by intensifying and prioritising this area at NIF.
 - Intensify work on identifying and training future candidates for international positions – at NIF and the individual Norwegian sports federations.
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SUPERVISION AND REPORTING

Norwegian sport's work on influencing international issues starts by putting our own house in order. That means Norwegian sport shall aim for greater transparency, and strengthen systematic efforts to achieve its own goals.

Norwegian sport will:

- Develop a sustainability report as part of NIF's annual report.
- Report on the work and performance of Norwegian sport with respect to environment, social and governance (ESG).

Within those three areas, reporting should cover the work and impact of sport in relation to climate, social matters – such as human rights, labour rights and equal opportunity – and the effectiveness of Norwegian sport's own systems for monitoring and supervision. Both internationally and in Norway, this is referred to as ESG reporting (Environment, Social and Governance).





CONCLUSION

Norwegian sport has a track record of being not just the world's best winter sports nation in recent years, but a top sports nation throughout the year. Norway shouldn't just aim for sporting excellence; it should also be a clear, forceful voice in the world of international sport. This is in line with our ambition to create the world's best sport organisation.

Sport has a unique power to unite, and it brings countries together in peaceful interaction and competition. However, sport is also about power, considering the massive interest and amount of money it generates. One of the key goals of Norwegian sport is to prevent sport being exploited for political means, and to defend the independence of sport.

This strategy document sets out high ambitions and states the priorities for Norwegian sport's international involvement.

The document aims to be of assistance to representatives at international sport organisations, athletes, coaches and staff representing Norway internationally. NIF will develop practical guidelines for our international work supporting this strategy, as well as a code of conduct to help and support everyone who represents the Norwegian sporting community internationally.

Norway should have a clear profile both nationally and internationally. With this strategy, Norwegian sport is setting out an ambitious and clear direction for its international involvement over the coming years.

In order for Norwegian sport to succeed in strengthening its international efforts to promote the values and social role of sport, it is necessary to build on this strategy through systematic work and continuous improvement, both within the world of sport and in cooperation with other people.

Only by keeping this work high on the agenda will Norwegian sport be able to make a positive difference in terms of the values it is worth fighting for in Norwegian and international sport.



Photo: Aline de Nadai, Unsplash

EXTERNAL CONTRIBUTORS

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Innovation Norway
International Olympic Committee (IOC)
Norwegian Confederation of Trade Unions (LO)
Confederation of Norwegian Enterprise (NHO)
Rafto Foundation
Transparency International
UN Global Compact Norway
The NIF Athletes' Commission

The working group that has written this strategy document has met with various external parties with specialist expertise on some areas covered by the report. This has been important for ensuring that it has a sound framework and has helped to give an external perspective on the world of sport.

WORKING GROUP – APPOINTED BY THE NIF EXECUTIVE BOARD

Chair (external)	Bård Glad Pedersen
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Norwegian Board Sports Federation	Ola Keul
Norwegian Football Federation	Ane Guro Skaare-Rekdal
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NIF Athletes' Commission	Stian Skjerahaug
NIF (Secretariat)	Rune Arctander
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The Governance Group, represented by Henning Kristoffersen, Dyveke Elset and Joachim Nahem, has also assisted the secretariat and the working group with drawing up the text.

Ambitious

Inclusive

Playful

Honest

VALUES WORTH FIGHTING FOR

Norwegian sport's international strategy to promote the values of sport and its role in society

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