

Recommendations on the exemption policy regarding the 3-max gender rule

Organizers: organizing parties of competitions operating under the IQA rulebook, such as tournament directors, NGB Boards, etc.

Recommendations for low-stake competitions:

Organizers of low-stake competitions are invited to give exemptions upon a simple request made by team representatives, in the event where their team is unable to present a roster of players collectively apt to play the full competition under a 3-max rule.

Organizers should strive to make this procedure as transparent, simple and fast as possible.

However, if complaints are raised (either on the importance of the competition, or on the legitimacy of the request), organizers should make all possible efforts to find an acceptable solution for all involved parties.

It is ultimately up to the organizers to decide whether to grant an exemption.

Recommendations for high-stakes competitions:

Organizers are encouraged to apply stricter exemptions for official games or tournaments where allowing teams to play under the 4-max rule might have substantial effects on the national ranking of such teams, or on their qualifications to high-level competitions, or on their ranking in said high-level competitions. Organizers can also decide not to allow any exemption at all, in particular if the competition is hosting well-established teams.

The purpose of the following procedure is to ensure that exemptions are not requested abusively.

IQA recommends organizers to grant exemptions to teams fulfilling the following criteria:

At least one month prior to the competition, representatives of a team seeking an exemption should send to the organizers a letter detailing:

- the reasons why the team might not be able to present a roster of players collectively apt to play the full competition under a 3-max rule;

- which measures were taken in an effort to fix the situation, in particular with regards to the recruitment of players of underrepresented genders such as women;
- (if relevant) whether the Board of their NGB has already approved this exemption request.

At least 3 weeks prior to the competition, organizers should publicize the names of teams that requested an exemption.

(If relevant) If, at least two weeks prior to the competition, the Board of an NGB raises objections to the exemption requests made by one or more of their teams, it will be up to these teams to obtain the approval of their NGB before the captains' meeting of the competition.

IQA believes that the organizers should make it clear that they reserve the right to publicize or communicate the exemption request letters as they wish, if complaints are raised (for instance by other teams, third NGBs or individuals).

It is ultimately up to the organizers to decide whether to grant an exemption.

Exemption policy for competitions organized by the IQA:

At least two months prior to the competition, national teams seeking an exemption shall make their request by sending a letter to the IQA.

The letter shall detail the reasons why the national team believes it might not be able, on the first day of the competition, to present a roster of players collectively apt to play the full competition under a 3-max rule.

The letter shall be accompanied by:

- Proof of active and public recruitment attempts, targeting both existing and new players of underrepresented genders, such as women, starting at least six months prior to the competition. One of these initiatives must include asking the IQA, at least 3 months prior to the competition, to publicize a targeted recruitment ad;
- Proof of an open consultation within the NGB or community from where the team originates to identify barriers that prevent players of underrepresented genders, such as women, from participating in the IQA competition; and
- Proof of measures taken to mitigate these barriers.

The IQA will assess each exemption request and reply diligently to the team seeking the exemption, no later than two weeks after the request was received. Two types of answers may be given:

- Either IQA will approve the exemption request; or

- if IQA believes that the exemption request is not substantiated enough, it will ask for further information and/or invite representatives of the team to take additional actions.

The IQA may accept the exemption request only when the national team has provided sufficient proof that it made every effort to abide by the 3-max rule. Both IQA and the national team should ensure that this process is as smooth and timely as possible.

Example of additional actions that may be requested: if financial issues were identified during the consultation as a key barrier to the participation of players of underrepresented genders, the IQA may ask the national team to organize a short fundraising campaign to help these players finance their travels. The IQA will support the campaign on its social networks.

If complaints are raised (by other teams, NBGs, or individuals), IQA reserves the right to publicize or communicate the entire correspondence.

It is ultimately up to the IQA to decide whether to grant an exemption.

IQA will review its exemption policy at the end of the current competition cycle (foreseen mid-2025).