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# SPORTS CLUB POLICIES IN EUROPE

Bjarne Ibsen, Geoff Nichols and Karsten Elmosø-Østerlund

SIVSCE REPORT  
SOCIAL INCLUSION AND VOLUNTEERING IN SPORTS CLUBS IN EUROPE



# Sports club policies in Europe

A comparison of the public policy context and historical origins  
of sports clubs across ten European countries

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## Summary

The project, ‘Social Inclusion and Volunteering in Sports Clubs in Europe’ (SIVSCE), is a collaborative partnership co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union. The project has been, and will be, implemented in 2015, 2016 and 2017.

This project seeks to provide comparable knowledge across ten European countries, convert it into concrete suggestions for action, and disseminate this knowledge to politicians and sports professionals across Europe. The main aim is to promote social inclusion and volunteering in sports clubs in Europe. The project includes eleven partners from ten countries dispersed across Europe.

The project is implemented in seven work packages. This report is the results of the first work package with a collection and analyses of sports club policies in the participating countries with a particular focus on social inclusion and volunteering. The aim of the report is to elucidate potential associations between the conditions that the governmental and political framework establishes on the one hand and social inclusion and volunteering in sports clubs on the other hand.

This part of the overall project was conducted in three steps. At the first partner meeting of the project group, where the researchers from all ten countries were gathered, a framework for the analysis was discussed and developed as the basis of each partner’s subsequent description of the country’s sports club policies. Based on this framework, researchers from all ten countries contributed with existing research and available knowledge on sports club policies etc. from their respective countries. Finally, the information from each country was edited into a form that made the descriptions as similar as possible, and then the information was analysed with the aim, firstly, to highlight the similarities and differences between the countries regarding sports club policies, and secondly, to analyse the possible explanations for this.

The theoretical inspiration for the comparative analyses is Esping-Andersen’s famous welfare state typology and subsequent developments thereof. Although welfare state typologies are developed in relation to social and welfare policy, we assume that the special characteristics of the various typologies have an impact on sport policies and the relationships between the public sector and sports clubs.

The analyses show both significant similarities and significant differences, which is summarized in eight conclusions.

1. Across most of the ten countries ‘sports for all’ or ‘recreational sports’ is the main priority in sports policy, but there are great differences in how strong the practical support for recreational sport is.
2. Sports opportunities provided by volunteers almost has a monopoly position within the ‘sports for all’ policies (especially in terms of public support) in both the universalist welfare states (Norway and Denmark) and the conservative/corporatist welfare states (Germany, Switzerland, the Netherlands and Belgium/Flanders).

3. In all countries, sports clubs receive support from the public sector – indirectly and directly, but there are significant differences as to how much and how it is provided.
4. In all the countries, sports clubs have the opportunity to get financial support from the public sector, but there are big differences as to how clubs can obtain such financial support. The most common type of economic support is ‘targeted subsidy’.
5. In all ten countries, the local level of political administration policies (local authorities, local government, municipalities and the like) is the most important administrative level for sports clubs.
6. In all the countries, local sports clubs are typically members of a national sports federation/organisation and/or a regional organisation, which is a member of the national confederation of sports.
7. In most of the ten countries, it is a political priority to increase participation in sports for inactive groups and to promote social inclusion and integration of socially disadvantaged groups. But, usually, this is expressed in very broad terms – as a general goal to increase participation of under-represented groups.
8. It seems to be a general trend, a discourse, in Europe that governments aim to strengthen volunteering and civil society in general, along with cooperation between the public and the voluntary sector. However, practical support for this varies.

Three theoretical approaches are suggested as potential explanations for the similarities and differences regarding sports club policies between the countries. The first theoretical approach, known as ‘social origins theory’ or ‘path dependence theory’, argues that the differences must be explained historically. Thus, the basic assumption of this theoretical approach is that the past influences the present. For example, the present structure of sports clubs and representative organisations in any one country is a historical legacy.

The second theoretical approach seeks to explain the organisational system and policies from the current societal context with a particular focus on the limitations and possibilities that the political system and the public sector in general provide. These societal structures and cultures largely define the ‘space’, or the ‘political opportunity structure’, both practical and ideological, within which different organisational forms must act. The analysis indicates that a significant correlation exists between the welfare state typology and sports club policies.

The third theoretical approach builds on insights regarding the relationship between economic inequality and a set of other variables to propose a holistic understanding of societies and differences between them. Analysis has shown that countries with high levels of income equality tend to have higher levels of sports participation, volunteering and generalised trust. However, we conclude that rather than levels of income equality being the sole, or main, determining variable explaining differences, we have to understand the characteristics of society as interacting, and this interaction provides a holistic description of different societies.



## **A short introduction to the SIVSCE-project**

The ‘Social Inclusion and Volunteering in Sports Clubs in Europe’ (SIVSCE) project is a collaborative partnership co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union. The project has been, and will be, implemented in 2015, 2016 and 2017. This chapter provides a brief overview of the project.

### **Purpose**

There is only a limited amount of knowledge on the political conditions for, and structural characteristics of, sports clubs that promote social inclusion and volunteering in sport. Most of the existing knowledge is, furthermore, context-specifically tied to individual member states within the European Union. This project seeks to provide comparative knowledge across ten European countries, convert it into specific suggestions for action, and disseminate this knowledge to politicians and sports professionals across Europe. The main aim is to promote social inclusion and volunteering in sports clubs in Europe.

### **Work packages and project output**

The project is implemented in seven work packages (WPs):

- WP1: A collection of sports club policies in the participating countries.
- WP2: An online sports club survey conducted in each of the participating countries.
- WP3: An online member and volunteer survey conducted in at least 30 sports clubs in each country.
- WP4: Overall analysis of the results from the three studies conducted in WP1, WP2 and WP3.
- WP5: A collection of examples of best practice in relation to social inclusion and volunteering.
- WP6: Creation of a handbook with suggestions for sports policies, club management and the like, capable of promoting social inclusion and volunteering in sports clubs.
- WP7: A broad dissemination of findings and suggestions (e.g. European and national conferences).

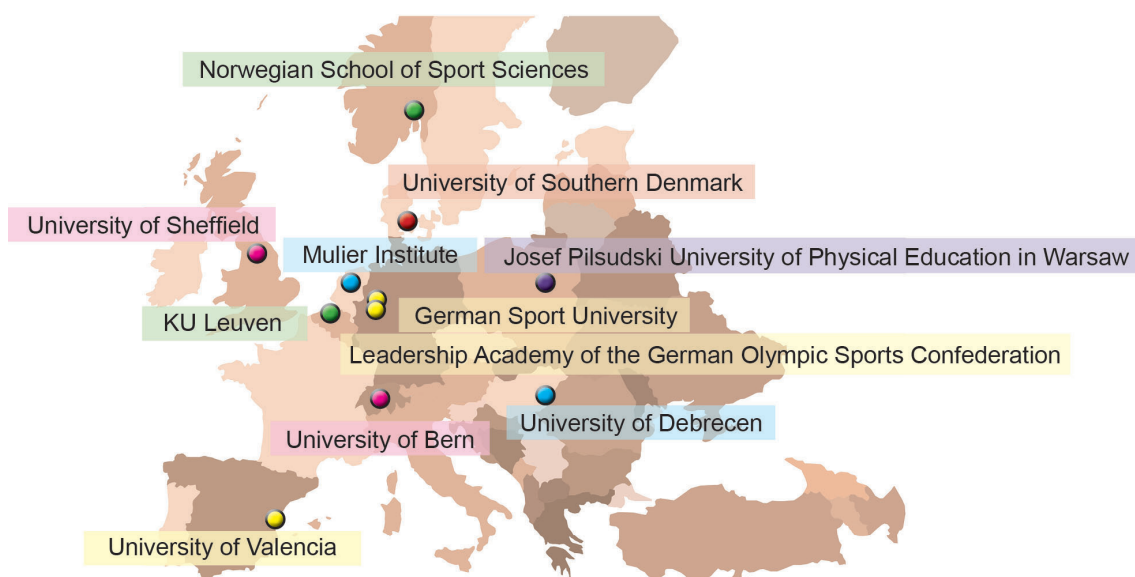
The project generates the following output:

- 5 reports (one for each WP 1 to 5)
- A handbook (WP6)
- A European conference and ten national conferences (WP7)

## Partners

The project includes eleven partners from ten countries dispersed across Europe, as illustrated in the map below. The broad representation of countries from different parts of Europe ensures that project findings will be of broad relevance to nations across Europe.

Figure 1. Map of partners of the SIVSCE-project



Jointly, the group of partners in the project represents vast knowledge about and experience with studies within the research field of sports participation, sports policies, sports organisations and sports clubs. Basic information about the project partners and their roles is elaborated in a table.

## Central concepts

Particularly central to the project are the following three concepts: Sports clubs, social integration and volunteering. These are described below.

### Sports clubs

Sports clubs are generally considered to be participated in voluntarily, and led by volunteers, as opposed to paid employees. They are therefore part of the voluntary sector of leisure provision; in contrast to the private and public sectors. Even though they share this common characteristic, the population of sports clubs in Europe is highly diverse on a number of structural characteristics and it is therefore extremely difficult to present a clear and unambiguous definition. Instead, researchers have suggested seven characteristics of an 'ideal type' sports club: 1) voluntary membership, 2) orientation towards the interests of members, 3) democratic

decision-making structure, 4) voluntary work, 5) autonomy, 6) a non-profit orientation and 7) solidarity (Heinemann & Horch, 1981; Ibsen, 1992).

### **Social integration**

In the project we have used the concept ‘social integration’ as a more broad term than social inclusion. We distinguish between three – interrelated – dimensions of social integration that draw attention to different aspects of the concept that are relevant to sports clubs (Elling, De Knop and Knoppers, 2001; Esser, 2009).

1. *Structural integration*: The representation of various social groups in the membership, relative to the population.
2. *Socio-cultural integration*: The ability of individuals to know and master dominant values and norms (assimilation) and the acceptance of multiculturalism (pluralism).
3. *Socio-affective integration*: Participation in social life and the formation of social networks (interaction) and the degree of identification and emotional devotion (identification).

### **Volunteering**

In this project, we define volunteering or voluntary work by five central characteristics: 1) Voluntary activities, 2) unpaid or paid for with a symbolic amount, 3) carried out for people other than one’s own family, 4) for the benefit of other people 5) and having a formal character (organised or agreed) (Ibsen 1992).

### **Theoretical framework**

This project is not guided by a single theoretical approach to the study of sports clubs. However, it does subscribe to the understanding that sports clubs are relevant objects of study themselves. In order to understand how sports clubs function and why, it is necessary to study the central characteristics of clubs. At the same time, sports clubs cannot be understood as detached from their environment, since the environment sets the framework in which sports clubs function and develop. Finally, sports clubs have come to exist due to members combining their resources to realize shared interests, which means that sports clubs primarily exist to serve the interests of their members.

In light of the above, this project departs from a multilevel model for the analysis of sports clubs (Nagel, 2007). The multilevel model takes into account the environment of sports clubs (macro level), sports club characteristics (meso level) and the characteristics of members and volunteers (micro level).

### **More information**

Project progress, publications, articles and information about conferences can be found at the project website: <http://www.sdu.dk/SIVSCE>. For more detailed information about the project,

please consult the introductory report (Elmose-Østerlund & Ibsen, 2016), which is also available on the project website.

## 1. Introduction

The sports club policy analysis published in this report represents the first output from the SIVSCE project. The report builds on a collection of sports club policies in all of the participating countries, with the aim of elucidating potential associations between the conditions that the governmental and political framework establishes on the one hand and social inclusion and volunteering in sports clubs on the other hand. The report also includes an analysis of the historical roots of, and developments in, sports clubs in each country. By analysing data and information collected in the same manner across all the participating countries, knowledge is gained about the societal, cultural and organisational conditions conducive to social inclusion and volunteering in sports clubs. This part of the overall project was conducted in three steps.

At the first partner meeting of the project group, where the researchers from all ten countries were gathered, a framework for the analysis was discussed and developed as the basis of each partner's subsequent description of the country's sports club policies. The framework was divided into

- a) national, regional and local government policies and the influence on sports clubs,
- b) the relationship between sports clubs and the national and regional sports organisations and
- c) the history and development of sports policy and sports clubs.

Based on this framework, researchers from all ten countries 'filled in' the existing research and available knowledge on sports club policies etc. for the specific country. This collection of information typically consisted of 10 to 20 pages for each country.

Finally, the information from each country was edited into a form that made the descriptions quite similar (see 'country summaries', chapter 9) and then the information was analysed with the aim, firstly, to highlight the similarities and differences between the countries regarding sports club policies, and secondly, to analyse the possible explanations for this.

The framework for the collection of information regarding sports clubs policies and the analysis of the possible explanations of the similarities and differences between the ten countries is mainly inspired by three theoretical approaches to the understanding of the size, character and function of the voluntary, non-profit sector. The first approach is known as 'the social origins approach' or as 'path dependence theory'. It argues that the specific characteristics of the organisational system and the policies can be explained by its historical origin.

The second theoretical approach – 'the political opportunity structure approach' – seeks to explain the organisational system from the current societal context in which organisations exist, with a particular focus on the limitations and possibilities that the political system and the public sector provide. The third theoretical approach that has inspired the analysis is named 'the economic inequality approach', which assumes that economic inequality in a society has a fundamental impact on the way society functions. In the last part of the report, we will return to these theoretical approaches in a discussion about what may explain the differences and similarities we find in sports clubs policies among the ten countries included in this study.

The report is structured as follows: In chapter 2, a state typology for the division of the ten

countries is described and discussed. In chapter 3, the historical background and development of sports clubs and sports clubs policies in the different countries is briefly described. Chapter 4 compares the political governance of sports clubs in the countries studied. Chapter 5 provides an analysis of the specific sports club policies, followed in chapter 6 by descriptions of how the countries are working to strengthen volunteering and social inclusion in sports clubs. In chapter 7, the analysis is summarized and possible explanations – inspired by the theory – for the similarities and differences between sports club policies are discussed. Chapter 8 provides suggestions for further research. The final chapter – chapter 9 – presents descriptions of the significant relations – for each of the ten countries - between sports clubs on the one side and national, regional and local governments as well as national and regional sports organisations / federations on the other.



## 2. State typologies

Many comparative studies of the policies of different countries in certain areas of society has divided the countries into different types of state, on the assumption that it is likely that there is a series of interconnected relationships – historical, socio-structural, economic and cultural –that together have ‘shaped’ the existing system. It makes no sense to search for a few decisive variables to arrive at an understanding of the ‘sports club system’ in the various countries.

Esping-Andersen’s famous welfare state typology (1990) has been an inspiration to several comparative analyses of the voluntary sector in different countries. The typology is based on a comparative historical analysis of social policy development in OECC countries during the 1980s. The point of departure for his analyses was, that:

*‘... the institutional arrangements, rules and understandings that guide and shape concurrent social policy decisions, expenditure developments, problem definitions, and even the respond- and demand structure of citizens and welfare consumers. The existence of policy regimes reflects the circumstance that short term policies, reforms, debates, and decision-making take place within frameworks of historical institutionalisation that differ qualitatively between countries’* (Esping-Andersen, 1990, p. 21-22)

According to Esping-Andersen, a stratification of welfare states can be based on two main dimensions: The intensity of redistribution and the level of universality of solidarity (‘... when a service is rendered as a matter of right, and when a person can maintain a livelihood without reliance on the market’, p. 21-22) that is imposed by the welfare state. Based upon these two dimensions, Esping-Andersen distinguished between three main types of welfare state:

- The Liberal (Anglophone) welfare state (USA as the most typical – a low level of redistribution and welfare rights).
- The Conservative / Corporatist welfare state (Germany as the most typical).
- The Universalist welfare state (Sweden as the most typical – a high level of redistribution and welfare rights).

Other scholars have claimed that a distinct Latin-Rim or Mediterranean model exists. According to Leibfried (1992), the distinct features of the Latin-Rim countries (Spain, Portugal, Italy, Greece and France) are the lack of an articulated social minimum of living standards and a right to welfare.

Others have argued that none of the three models fit the former communist countries of Eastern Europe. From a path-dependency perspective, we might expect the communist legacies to be strong enough to impose a distinct path of development on at least some of the post-communist countries (Pierson 2004). In contrast, from a policy diffusion perspective, we would expect the transfer of ideas, knowledge and other resources to guide these countries’ developments in the direction of one of the well-known welfare regimes in Europe (Fenger 2007). Based on the above, it seems reasonable to assume that the sports policies in the former communist countries are a result of both the continuation of many structures

and policies from the communist regimes and the influence of the dominant structures and policies from other EU countries, which might result in a convergence between the Eastern European countries and other European welfare states.

However, Fenger (2007) finds that there are good reasons to consider the post-communist countries as being differentiated. By using a hierarchical cluster analysis of data relating to a) government income and expenditure, b) social situation (inequality, life expectancy, unemployment etc.) and c) level of trust, he finds that the Eastern European welfare states can be clearly distinguished from the traditional European welfare state typologies. But the analysis also shows that the Eastern European countries consist of several subgroups of welfare states: ‘Former-USSR type’, ‘Post-communist European type’ (including Hungary and Poland) and ‘Developing welfare states type’.

The table below shows the welfare state typology that (best) characterizes the countries included in this project.

**Table 1. Welfare state typology**

Type of welfare state	Countries
Liberal	England
The Conservative / Corporatist	Germany, Flanders, Netherlands, (Switzerland)
Social Democratic / Universal	Norway, Denmark
Latin	Spain
Post-Communist	Poland, Hungary

The welfare state typology, however, is developed primarily from studies of social policy, and it is not obvious that cultural and sports policy can be classified in a corresponding manner. However, we would argue that this is likely.

Firstly, some of the core dimensions in the definition of the welfare typology are also essential for sports policy. Among other things, the typology is determined by the degree of economic redistribution in society, which is largely associated with the public sector’s total consumption. It can be assumed that welfare states with a large public sector not only have a high level of public welfare schemes and income redistribution, but also spend relatively large sums on sports policy objectives and programmes. Furthermore, the welfare state typology differentiates between states according to the importance of the subsidiarity principle, and, as we shall see later, this principle also guides the sports policy in several countries.

Secondly, studies of various countries’ sports policies find a correlation between the way the welfare state is generally functioning and the principles of the respective national sports policies. In an analysis of Danish sports policy, Ibsen and Ottesen conclude ‘... *that universalist welfare ideals have had a powerful influence on the ideals of sport in Denmark and on the legislation governing it*’ (2003: 52). Esping-Andersen’s welfare state typologies were also the point of departure in the book ‘Sports Policy – A Comparative Analysis of Stability and Change’ (Bergsgard et al. 2007), where sports policies in Canada, England, Germany and Norway were analysed and compared. On the one hand, the authors find a correlation between welfare regimes and sport policies. On the other hand they conclude that ‘... *our*

*assumptions need to be modified. In all four countries, voluntary sport organisations have played important roles in the historic development of modern sport and they still play prominent roles as organisers of sport activities. However, in all four cases we also find that government is strongly involved with sports. This is not only the case in the 'state friendly' social democratic welfare state of Norway. Public policies are important for sports in the conservative welfare regime of Germany and the liberal welfare regimes of Canada and England' (Bergsgard et al. 2007: 244-245). In a comparative analysis of sports policy in the Scandinavian countries, Bergsgard and Nordberg find several common features between the main characteristics of the universal welfare typology and sports policy in Sweden, Norway and Denmark (Bergsgard and Nordberg 2010: 567-582).*

Although welfare state typologies are developed in relation to social and welfare policy, we assume that the characteristics of the typologies have an impact on sport policies and the relationships between the public sector and sports clubs. In the following chapter on the social and cultural origins of sports clubs, the description is classified according to welfare state typologies and at the end of the report we discuss whether there is an association between the different typologies and sports club policies.

### 3. The social and cultural origins of sports clubs

As described in the introductory section, the analysis is based on the assumption that sport policies and the voluntary organisation of sports in each country can be partly explained by the ‘path dependence theory’. The sport policies and the organisational system have a tendency to remain unchanged, although, in many cases, the political and social conditions that led to the formation of the policies and the organisational system have changed. Over the years, a number of institutional frameworks have been created, and the organisational system is ‘protected’ against new and competing forms of organisation. This helps understand differences between countries and the potential transferability of policies.

Below, we present descriptions to illustrate the social and cultural origin of sports clubs and sports policies in selected countries. We use the welfare state typology to illustrate the differences between the different types of states and to show how path dependency is prevalent across different types of states.

#### England: A liberal welfare state

In *England*, the tradition for volunteer-led sports clubs dates back to the second half of the 19th century, where the proliferation of small independent voluntary clubs reflected a society in which civic institutions were able to develop freely and the public and commercial provision of leisure was very underdeveloped, so that the voluntary sector could fill a gap in the demand for leisure opportunities. As a consequence of this, the tradition of volunteer-led sports clubs, independent from the state, was established. In England, the right of free association was assumed, it did not need to be enshrined in legislation. The emergence of a multitude of independent small volunteer-led organisations in the late 19th century and first half of the 20th century reflected a low level of ‘statism’: the extent to which the state or civil society is the principal locus of public life.

Anglo-Saxon countries are at the low end of the ‘statism’ scale. This scale has been used to explain the ‘mosaic of local civic institutions that developed in nineteenth-century Britain’ (Schofer & Fourcade-Gourinchas, 2001, p. 812), and that ‘*voluntary action in Anglo-Saxon countries is still enshrined in a powerful liberal ideology that continues to celebrate voluntarism as autonomous and jealously defends its arm’s length relationship from government*’. This helps understand the tension between the traditional independence of NGBs and their role in representing clubs; and the conditions they need to accept for receiving support from government within Whole Sport Plans. Also, it explains some of the antipathy of community sports clubs to the idea that they should be a medium for promoting government policies (Harris et al. 2009). Often, they don’t know what the government policies are, because they do not need to know. The strong amateur tradition associated with sports in the 19th century, combined with the liberty of free association, has led to an almost complete dominance of the management of clubs by volunteers.

## **Denmark and Norway: Universalist welfare states**

As is the case in England, voluntary organised sports in *Denmark* have great independence from the state in the sense that the voluntary clubs can act very independently of the public sector, but voluntary organised sports differs from England by being relatively highly dependent on direct and indirect public support. The government clearly “favours” democratic sports clubs over private and commercial organisations for sport and exercise. This can be seen in the distribution of governmental aid and tax benefits. This duality: statutory public support associated with little political steering, exists both in the legislation regarding state support to national sport organisations and the legislation for the municipal support for sports clubs, and it can be traced back to the first time these laws were adopted by the Danish parliament 1948 and 1968. Since these laws were enacted, the basic principles of public support for voluntary organised sports in Denmark have not changed – despite significant changes in both sport and the way the public sector operates. It characterizes voluntary organised sports in Denmark in that, for more than 100 years, there has been competition between several organisations with different goals and ideals of sports. We also find this in other countries, but, unlike these countries, the state has not tried at any time to assimilate sports into one organisation, as has happened in Norway, Sweden and Finland (Ibsen, 2002). On the contrary, the way the state supports sports organisations, which in principle has not been changed since 1948, has contributed to maintaining an organisational pattern that might have been different if government support were performance-based, unlike the current grant-based system.

The organisational and the political governance of sport in Norway has many features in common with Denmark, but the Norwegian model differs in two main ways from the Danish. Firstly, sport is organised under one umbrella organisation, The Norwegian Olympic and Paralympic Committee and Confederation of Sports (NIF), and, secondly, the relationship between the state and NIF has a more corporatist character in Norway than in Denmark (Bergsgard and Rommetvedt 2006, Bergsgard and Nordberg 2010, Enjolras and Waldahl 2007, Goksøyr 1996). One organisation (NIF) represents all sports and has a form of monopoly on organising and representing sports, and one office in the ministry is responsible for sports. Historically, the relations between the state and NIF have been very close, people moving between leading positions with NIF and the authorities in the state responsible for sports. More generally, these relations have been described as a ‘family relation’ (Selle 1995): The ties are very tight, and discussions and decisions are not taken or made in the public. This organisational system and the relationship between state and sports in Norway was founded in the years before and immediately after World War 2 by the formation of one overall sports organisation resulting from the merging of two sports organisations – with the state as a mediator – and it has basically not changed since.

## **Germany: A corporative welfare state**

Germany represents what Esping-Andersen labels a conservative, corporative welfare regime. The ‘essence’ of this welfare state type lies in its blend of status segmentation and familialism. Social security systems are based on occupational schemes and corporatist status

divisions (Bergsgard et al. 2007: 6). A significant part of social insurance and health care is non-state, but this is mainly due to the role played by non-profit, voluntary organisations.

The creation and growth of sports (and physical exercise) has been strongly politicised in Germany. *'Much of the nineteenth century was dominated by debates over the particular form of gymnastics that should be promoted among German youth and the underlying purpose of participation in sport'* (Bergsgard et al. 2007: 55). This continued after the First World War, when nationalists wanted to introduce military-style physical training in the public schools, while the Social Democrats wanted to introduce sports and games rather than training. When the National Socialists came to power, they introduced a highly centralized unitary state, and the *'federal sports associations lost their independence and were incorporated in the German National Socialist Reichsbund of Physical Activities and all sports clubs associated with other than the National Socialists were required to close (...)* The intense politicisation of sports was accompanied by the rapid governmentalisation of sports through the disbandment of independent regional sport associations and their alignment with state administrative boundaries, which in turn were co-terminus with Nazi-Party districts' (Bergsgard et al. 2007: 56).

After World War 2, two different sports systems developed in West Germany and East Germany. *'The sports system that was established in West Germany during the post-war period was designed to contrast with the earlier Nazi system and with the emerging East German system'* (Bergsgard 2007: 57). The federal states (Länder) retained significant responsibility for funding sports and rebuilding facilities, and strong national sports federations, financially supported by the state, were established. *'Despite the dependence of FRG [West Germany] sports organisations on state funding the degree of direct control exercised over sport was light by comparison to that found in the GDR [East Germany] where sport remained tightly under state management (...)* The emphasis on autonomy should be seen in the light of a wish to re-establish the independence of voluntary associations after the heavy politicization of German sport and civil society during the Nazi and communist periods' (Bergsgard 2007: 57-58).

German sports policies are therefore based on the principle of autonomy of organised sports; establishing and maintaining its independence and self-responsibility as fundamental guidelines of sports policy in the Federal Republic of Germany. There are no specific laws concerning sports affairs and clubs – neither at national nor federal level. The only legal position for clubs is derived from a few decisive regulations concerning 'Gesellschaften bürgerlichen Rechts' in the 'Bürgerliches Gesetzbuch' (Engelhardt and Heinemann 2003: 140). *'Corporatism thus represents a specific institutional arrangement (...) of a societal bargaining process with respect to self-governance: The two sides of the barter are: (1) the provision of legal securities and financial grants, so to speak, offered by the state authorities, for (2) the taking over of public tasks at promised or prescribed standards by para-, quasi- or non-government organizations (quangos) or even private clubs and their roof associations in 'Eigenverantwortung – self-responsibility' and 'treuhänderische Selbstverwaltung – fiduciary self-administration'* (Engelhardt and Heinemann 2003: 175).

In summary: After World War 2, a sports system was established in Germany which was based on a) a high degree of decentralization in the form of independent sports clubs (based on the principle of subsidiarity) and b) a kind of corporative agreement between the national



sports organisations and the state, being that sports Federations (members of one big umbrella organisation) were responsible for sports – in principle independent of the state, even though the government provided substantial financial support, while sports in return should be apolitical – in accordance with the corporative principles that apply to other areas of society in Germany. These principles for the relationship between organised sports and the state in Germany have not changed in principle since the establishment thereof after the Second World War.

## **Hungary: A post-communist welfare state**

In contrast to England, Denmark, Norway and Germany, Hungary does not have a recent history of volunteering in sports. This tradition was lost under a centralized economy, where the emphasis was on elite competitive sport to enhance political status. Thus, coaches in clubs in these countries still tend to be professionals, although poorly paid, as professional coaching is expected. In Hungary, the public perception of ‘volunteering’ and the ‘sports club’ is a product of these historical influences.

The past decade’s development of sports policy in Hungary is a good example of a sports policy that is marked both by history (‘path dependence’) and the influence of political sports models in the Central and Western European countries. Until World War 2, the development of sport in Hungary in many ways resembled the development of sport in a number of other countries in Europe, where various social and political movements (classes) stood behind the formation of voluntary sports associations to promote national and civic values.

When the Communist regime took power, strongly state-controlled sport in a state corporatist system emerged, which was controlled by the Communist party and related satellite organisations. New leadership was appointed, where it was necessary to create these organisations to be “trustworthy” for the purposes of the party, and sports became entirely funded by the state budget. The importance of membership fees and local revenues representing personal commitment became marginal. Especially until the 1970s, a very large apparatus organised the Hungarian sporting life, providing employment for both athletes and sports professionals. Following the political and economic changes since 1989, sports federations became independent of the state, regulated by the new Civil Law (1991), and their funding no longer came from direct and automatic governmental resources, but the first legislation that was specific to sports was enacted in 1996. Despite these adaptations to the dominant European model of sport, sports in Hungary remains relatively state-controlled, and volunteerism does not have the same high status and value as in the Western European and the Nordic countries.

A complete organisational restructuring was enacted in 2012, aimed to design a clear structural system in which tasks are grouped together and assigned to responsible institutions so as to eliminate overlapping task distribution and to create a transparent, one-channel financing support system with clear controlling elements (Amendments on Act on Sport 2011).

## Spain: A Mediterranean welfare state

To varying degrees, we find the same transformations of sports policy in *Spain* as in Hungary, where the initially developed system of independent volunteer-led clubs and organisations was replaced by a concentration of state control. When the Franco regime (1939-1975) took power in Spain at the end of the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939), radical change came to the structure of sports, which was assimilated into the structure of the state. The political authorities appropriated sports and transferred control thereof to the single party Falange in line with a theory that predicated absolute one-party control over society. Sports organisations were forced under the control of a state body set up in 1938, the National Sports Delegation (later renamed into National Sports Council), which was overseen by the Falange Española y de las JONS. In this way, sports clubs and Federations lost their private character, their autonomy and their democratic ethos. In their statutes, clubs had to acknowledge their subordination to the provisions and authority of the National Sports Delegation. If they failed to do so, they were refused legal recognition and denied authorization to take part in sporting competitions.

During the transition to democracy, sports began to undergo a democratisation process. Sport was introduced into the Spanish constitution (adopted in 1978), which made it possible to include sport within the legal framework of the state. The first half of the 1980s saw a strong push in the construction of a sports infrastructure, and municipal governments started focusing on the need to promote sport for all, which led to a booming sports movement in Spanish society. At the beginning of the decade, in 1990, the enactment of a new Sports Law (Law 10/1990 of 15 October) once again regulated the responsibilities and functions of the state on the subject of sport, drawing a line between professional sport, top-tier sport and sport for all.

In the last 20 years, sports clubs and associations have grown in importance and gained autonomy within the Spanish sports system, despite the unquestionable dominance that the state continues to exert as a supplier and financial supporter of numerous sporting activities. In the nineties, all seventeen of Spain's autonomous communities had adopted their own laws for sport, with specific provisions on sports associations spelled out in decrees, ordinances, plans and programmes. The Spanish sports model is based on the state's collaboration with sports clubs – the state provides resources to the clubs in exchange for the clubs' promotion of the practice of sport by the public. But the state is not merely an ancillary promoter of the clubs' activities, but it also gets involved in the provision of a wide range of opportunities for the practice of sport. Thus, the model can be viewed as interventionist, because their collaboration with the state makes the clubs reliant on the state's financial help (Burriel & Puig, 1999; Rodríguez, 2008). A stark consequence of this is that sports clubs play a weak role in the provision of sport in some regions, which is left very much in the hands of municipalities and other bodies, to which the promotion and development of sports activities is delegated.

In summary, this historical analysis shows, firstly, that there is a correlation between the key characteristics of different welfare state typologies and characteristics of sport club policies in several of the countries in this study. Secondly, the analysis shows that the main features of the existing sports club policy can be traced back to the years after World War 2 in most countries, with the exception of the former authoritarian regimes (Spain, Hungary and Poland), where the transformation to democratic regimes has resulted in an adaptation

of parts of the sports policy to the policies that especially characterize Western European democracies.

## 4. Governance of sport

It is a general assumption for this analysis that sports policies and the organisation of sport reflect overall societal structures – to varying degrees. In this context, we focus on the structure of government and the political governance of sports. First, we look at the overall societal structure of the ten countries (federal and unitary states) and the degree of centralization / decentralization and the resulting implications for sports policy. Secondly, we analyse the way that sport is governed in the different countries (governance form).

### Federal and unitary states

In *countries with a Federal structure* (or similar) – where regional states / communities have relatively extensive political autonomy – the public / political governance of sports (legislation, economic support etc.) is largely left up to the regional level. This is particularly true in Belgium but also in Germany, Spain and Switzerland.

- In *Belgium* – since the constitutional revision in the 1970's – each of the three language communities has its own sports policy. Flanders and Wallonia both have a minister in charge of sport, and all organisations and Federations for sports are split up into two wings, namely an independent Flemish and Walloon Federation. Belgian sports Federations still exist, but usually merely function as a national umbrella to represent the country in international sports organisations and competitions (Scheerder et al., 2011; Vanreusel et al., 1999).
- Sports in *Germany* is also a matter that is dealt with by the federal states on regional level. In contrast to the national level, the legislature at regional level plays a significant role for sports policy, in that sports policy issues are regularly discussed at that level. National government is dedicated to promoting top-level sports and sports for the disabled, mainly through financial support (Bergsgard et al., 2007).
- In *Spain*, the functions and competencies for the promotion and development of sports primarily lie with the regions, officially referred to as Autonomous Communities. The national government does not have any legal responsibilities with regard to the clubs. However, this does not mean that the national government does not have sports organs and responsibilities. The Sports Act 10/1990 specifies that the national government's actions in matters regarding sports directly correspond to the High Council for Sport (Lera and Lizalde, 2013).
- In *Switzerland*, about half of all cantons have a “Cantonal sports concept”. In addition, nearly half of the 26 cantons have a law regarding sport and/or the promotion of physical activity, and the majority of the cantons have sport-specific laws. . According to cantonal sports concepts, cantons are responsible for the development, construction and maintenance of a cantonal sport-related infrastructure. Furthermore, the cantons

are responsible for the implementation of Youth and Sports programmes. However, Youth and Sports is a national programme, and there is also national sports legislation.

In *unitary countries / states*, the national government is responsible for legislation regarding sports, for the development of sports for all as well as elite sports and for state support to the national sports organisations (Norway, Denmark, England, the Netherlands, Hungary and Poland). But in several of these countries, there is no direct link (economic support etc.) to the sports clubs, and the implementation of legislation is left up to the local governments (municipalities). We find that in Denmark, Norway and England.

## **Centralization versus decentralization**

The countries also differ from each other as to the degree of decentralization, which is also reflected in the sports policy.

In most of the countries, the political / public governance and support for sports clubs is left up to the local political level (municipalities etc.). As a result, there is no direct relationship (political or economic) between the government at national level and the community sports clubs. The sports Federations and the municipalities or local sports administrations serve as mediating partners between the government and the sports clubs. In the countries that cater to the conservative / corporatist welfare typology, this decentralization of sports policy is based on the principle of subsidiarity (Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands and Switzerland). It is an organising principle that states that matters ought to be handled by the lowest possible political and administrative level, and as close to the citizens as possible (Scheerder & Vermeersch 2007; Petry & Hallmann 2013; Bergsgard et al. 2007).

However, there is no clear connection between conservative / corporatist welfare states, based on subsidiarity, and a decentralized sports policy. This decentralization of sports policy can also be found in Norway, Denmark and England, where the local government (municipality) is responsible for public support for sports clubs, construction of sports facilities etc. However, in Denmark local authorities are obliged by law to support sports clubs, which is not the case in Norway and England.

Unlike the other countries, sports policy is more centralized in Hungary and Poland. The organisation and structure of sport in the public sector in Spain is complex due to the existing political structure which is decentralised and operates at three levels (national, regional, and local authorities). The different administrative levels in Spain have their own powers and resources. The distribution of competences and responsibilities is complex as some aspects of public policy are more decentralised than in traditional federal states, while others remain of federal competence.

## **Governance form**

Between the ten countries, there are significant differences in the political governance of sports. One can distinguish between two different forms of governance.

In the first, a kind of public body is responsible for the implementation and administration of the politically decided policy and programmes, and for the funding. This can be found in England (Sport England), Hungary (State-secretary of sports), Spain (High Council of Sports), Switzerland (Federal Office of Sport) and Poland (Ministry of Sport and Tourism). An example of this governance model is Poland, where sports policy on the central level is described in a governmental document called “Sports development programme 2020” (MS 2015). The document specifies the direction of activities and how aims and tasks related to sport should be carried out by adjusting them to high European standards (taking into account Polish traditions, conditions, needs, and capabilities).

The second form of governance has more the character of corporatism in the sense that all significant political decisions concerning sport are carried out in close dialogue with the key sports organisations, and at the local level in cooperation with local organisations representing sports clubs. Within this model, the implementation of major programmes and policies is largely entrusted to the sports organisations. This is the dominant model in Norway, Denmark, the Netherlands and Germany.

Between countries, there are also differences in the significance of specific legislation for sports policy. In several countries, there are special laws / acts for the national (or Federal) sports policy, which governs the relationship to and support for sports organisations and sports clubs and the obligations of the local governments (municipalities) regarding sport (Hungary, Poland, Spain).

In other countries, sports clubs and sports organisations are being supported and governed under general rules and regulations, which also apply to other voluntary organisations (Denmark (‘Leisure Act’), the Netherlands, Switzerland (Federal constitution)). In the Netherlands, the Social Welfare Act of 1994 states that municipalities are responsible for all the executive work, such as improving and maintaining local sports and recreation infrastructures.

Finally, there are countries with no specific legislation for sport (Norway). In Norway, the sports policies are made explicit in white papers that express ideas about how the state wants the sport clubs to operate and function.

Overall, the analysis in this section shows that there are significant differences between the ten countries in terms of the degree of centralization / decentralization and in the way sport is governed. In the following section, we look at the impact on the way the public sector and the sports organisations support sports clubs.



## 5. Sports club policies

Now the analysis shifts focus in order to examine the countries' general policies in relation to sports clubs (in this chapter), and the policies with a specific focus on social inclusion and volunteering (in the next chapter). This chapter provides, firstly, a brief description of the overall sports policies in the different countries; secondly, an analysis of sports club policies at national level; thirdly, an analysis of sports club policies at local level, and, finally; an analysis of the role of national and regional sports organisations in relation to sports clubs.

### Overall sports policies

Across most of the ten countries, 'sport for all' or 'recreational sports' is the priority in sports policies, but the support and promotion of elite sport also constitutes an essential part of the countries' sports policies (in this paper, we do not elaborate on this part of the sports policy). However, there are great differences in how real the weighting of recreational sport is. For example, in Hungary where it is stated in the Act on Sports from 2011 that *'all men shall have the right to sport and this right is guaranteed by the state, regardless of whether it be competitive sport, leisure, student and college-university sport, sport for the disabled or the preservation of health'*. The plan was initiated by adapting new programmes and projects to trigger central areas in sport, such as providing direct funding to athletes, coaches, and grass-roots sports centres. In 2007, the Sports and Tourism Committee of the Hungarian Parliament adopted a target of doubling the sports participation rate within six years. But these goals have not been followed up by increased funding to recreational sport.

Something else that characterizes sports policies – across countries – is that they are primarily aimed at club sport, but several countries also support the development of sport outside of clubs (e.g. Denmark, Germany and Norway).

The aim of the policies regarding sport is typically to achieve a large number of goals through sport in general and sports clubs in particular, such as improved public health, integration of immigrants, social inclusion of physically disabled people, education, etc. Sport is recognized as being an important tool for improving the common wealth. This is also an essential justification for funding sports with public money, and sport clubs are supposed to play a pivotal role in achieving these goals.

Another important dimension of sports policy in all the countries is the provision of facilities for sport, where we find large differences between countries. We will further elaborate on these differences later in this chapter.

## The national governmental level

The state (parliament and ministries) at either national or Federal level has different roles in relation to the local sports clubs<sup>1</sup>:

1. *The first role is to define the requirements for an organisation to qualify for public funding, obtain tax benefits etc.*

This applies to most of the ten countries, but not all. Several countries have ensured that citizens have the right to form associations in the constitution. In other countries, there are acts specifying the requirements that voluntary, non-profit organisations (of all kinds) must meet to be treated in a special way with regard to taxation, funding etc. (Germany, the Netherlands (Civil Code and Civil right of association) and Switzerland). In some countries, the specific requirements are laid down in an act on sport or an act on public economic support to voluntary organisations (Hungary and Denmark)

2. *In a few countries, the national parliament has adopted legislation which defines the role of the local authorities in relation to sports clubs.*

In Flanders, a new decree concerning local sports policy or Sport for All policy at local level emphasizes that the support and subsidizing of voluntary sports clubs is mainly under the competence of local governments (i.e. municipalities). The Danish parliament has adopted “The Act on the Allocation of Financial Support to Non-formal Adult Education and Youth Activities”, which determines how the municipalities are obliged to support sports clubs (further elaborated on in the section dealing with the local governmental level). In Poland, local government is obliged by law to provide for professional and public sports, in cooperation with non-governmental organisations.

3. *In some countries, the state has an indirect role in supporting sports organisations and/or the regional or local governmental level with financial resources earmarked for sport. In turn, the regional and local governmental levels support sports clubs.*

In Germany, the national government supports community sports clubs only indirectly and mainly by granting tax benefits. The Federal states support sports clubs through the provision of financial support to municipalities for the construction of sports facilities, the payment of salaries of trainers and coaches, etc. In Norway approx. 10 percent of the state support for The Norwegian Olympic and Paralympic Committee and Confederation of Sports (NIF) must be transferred to the local, municipal level, where the Local Sports Council is responsible for the distribution of these resources.

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<sup>1</sup> Due to the differences between the size of the countries and the differences between Federal countries and unitary countries it is difficult to compare the regional levels especially - for example, between Germany and Denmark. In Germany, the regional level comprises the 16 ‘Länder’, several of which have more inhabitants than Denmark in total and a much greater political autonomy than the five ‘regions’ in Denmark, which does not play any role in sports policy.

4. *In some countries, the state (unitary or Federal) – or the federal level - has a more direct role by funding activities in sports clubs, running programmes etc.*

In Flanders, sport clubs can receive financial resources from the Flemish government but via local authorities and only if the municipalities co-finance. In the Netherlands, the clubs can periodically apply for money for specific purposes from specific programmes (e.g. sports and physical activity in the neighbourhood, local programmes to promote local initiatives and co-operations between several local organisations and different public sectors). In Poland, the ministry launched a new programme ‘Club’ in April 2016, which directly supports sports clubs, and in general the Polish government runs a series of activities, the beneficiaries of which are most often sports clubs, and sport clubs obtain resources from national funds in cases when the clubs’ activities match the priorities of the programmes. The clubs can apply for funding in open tender contests (among other things, a programme for popularisation of sport among various social groups and a programme for the development of sport among children, youth and disabled persons has been launched).

In Spain, the national government does not have any legal responsibilities with regard to the clubs. The functions and competencies for the promotion and development of the sports practice correspond to the regions, officially referred to as Autonomous Communities. The autonomous communities included the functions and competencies in sports matters in their respective Statutes of Autonomy and in other legal norms established by each of them. They recognize and watch over the territorial Federations and clubs; fund sports clubs and Federations; construct facilities; and carry out qualifications of trainers etc. The Autonomous Communities have annual calls for proposals where the sports clubs and autonomic sport Federations can present their projects to obtain a grant. But the Autonomous Communities differ in the way they develop their functions.

In Switzerland, the national government has no direct legal obligations to sports clubs and vice versa, apart from the national Youth and Sports programme. About two-thirds of the Swiss population aged between 10 and 20 years take part in the Youth and Sports programme, which is provided through clubs, and for which clubs receive a payment per participant.

## **Local government level**

In all ten countries, it is mainly the local level of the political administration and policy that influence sports clubs. The local level includes local authorities, local governments, municipalities and the like). In the following sections, we will use ‘local authorities’ as the common term.

In Flanders, it is estimated that the local authorities are responsible for the allocation of about 75 percent of the regular public funding for sports in Flanders. In Denmark, the corresponding figure is more than 80 percent.

Most countries have, in principle, no (or a weak) direct link between the state and the individual local sports clubs (Flanders, Denmark, England, Germany, Norway and Switzerland). In several countries, there is no legislation or similar written agreement, which obliges the

local authorities to support sports clubs (England, Germany, the Netherlands and Norway). In these countries, the initiative to offer organised sport is left up to sports clubs, or other private organisations or institutions, but the activities of sports clubs are in most of the countries being supported by the local authorities.

In some countries, the state has, however, provided a framework for local government support in the form of legislation, decrees etc. (Flanders, Denmark, Hungary and Poland). However, it is almost entirely left up to each local authority to decide on the scope and nature of the local support in accordance with their own (sports) policy views (Flanders and Denmark). This has resulted in large differences between the municipalities concerning how much and in what manner clubs are supported (Flanders, Denmark, Poland, Hungary, Norway and Switzerland).

In some countries, however, the state (parliament / ministry) has adopted specific rules on how much the local authorities should spend on support for sports clubs (e.g. Flanders where local authorities until 2015 received a certain amount per capita from the Federal government for this purpose, but since 2016 the Flemish subsidies for several policy domains - including sports - are integrated in the overall dotation which Flemish municipalities receive from the Flemish government (Gemeentefonds)) and/or how the local authorities are obligated to support the clubs (e.g. Denmark where it is a requirement that the clubs have access to municipal sports facilities – free of charge or with a minor utilization fee – for activities for children and youth).

In several countries, the clubs also have the opportunity to apply for funding from government programmes, but it has much less importance than the support from the local authorities (see above section).

Generally, the local authorities support sports clubs in two ways: Access to sports facilities and direct economic support to the clubs or activities in the clubs. But there are significant differences between the ten countries in the extent and nature of support within each of these forms of support.

### **Access to sports facilities**

The first and most important type of (indirect) support for sports clubs from the local authorities is access to publicly owned sports facilities. In most of the ten countries, the sports facilities are predominantly owned by the local authorities that are responsible for the maintenance and administration of the facilities. In Switzerland, about three-quarters of all sport clubs exclusively or partially rely on public sports facilities (Stamm et al. 2015). However, there are major differences between the countries regarding the conditions for the use of the publicly owned and administered sports facilities.

In several countries, the sports clubs (mostly) have access to the municipal facilities for free or for a low fee (Denmark, Germany, Hungary, Norway and Poland). It is, however, only in Denmark that the municipalities are obliged to provide voluntary access for sports clubs and other leisure associations to indoor and outdoor facilities owned by municipalities free of charge or to receive reimbursement of two thirds of the cost to rent privately owned facilities, when the club's members are aged 25 or under. In Poland, many sports clubs are formed at educational institutions and local sports centres, which guarantee access to facilities and material resources of these institutions.

In other countries, the clubs must pay a reduced price for the use of publicly owned sports facilities or pay the full price (the Netherlands, Switzerland, England, Spain).. In England, 38% of the clubs hire or lease facilities from the local government, and this may be at a concessionary rate (SARA, 2013). If clubs own the facilities they use, and 21% of them do, they are required to pay rates to local government. However, if they are a charity, or have status as a ‘Community Amateur Sports Club’ (CASC), which gives similar benefits to being a charity but is easier to obtain, the club will automatically receive a concession of 80% on its rates. Local government can use its discretion to allow 100% rates relief, and can use this irrespective of the club being a charity or a CASC. 6,715 clubs (out of the approximately 85,000 in England) have CASC status. In Spain, the payment for the use of sport facilities by sport clubs is not implanted in the same manner in the different regions. In Catalonia, for example, it’s very common, as well as in the big cities. But there are big differences among them with regard to the discounts and payment systems.

### **Economic subsidies**

The other type of support from local authorities to sports clubs is (direct) economic support. One can distinguish between three principally different types of economic support or cooperation:

The first type is basic grants without specific requirements for the use of the money, no specific success criteria, and a low degree of external control etc. (Denmark, Norway and Germany). In Denmark, the municipalities are obliged to support sports clubs and other leisure associations that provide activities for children and youth, typically a given amount for each member aged 25 or under, and so the support depends on the number of members. In Switzerland, the local authorities often pay some form of lump sum to local sport clubs. In Germany almost everything is possible in terms of subsidies from the local governments due to our federal system. Traditionally and still in use are basic grants without specific requirements for the use of the money, no specific success criteria, and a low degree of external control etc. even though the municipalities are not obliged to support sports clubs by law. But with new social challenges targeted subsidies have been launched to promote social integration, preventing violence, health promotion etc.

The second type is ‘targeted subsidy’, which is economic support for specific purposes, target groups etc., prioritised by the local authorities, for which the sports clubs can apply for money (Flanders, Germany and Hungary). In Germany, the sports clubs often need to explain the general project, which should be funded, as well as justify the rationale for this support. This is due to the fact that community sports clubs are expected to deliver a service in return when receiving public funds. Moreover, some municipalities have implemented targeted subsidies for building or renovation of sport clubs’ facilities. Besides, sports clubs mostly get a basic subsidy, sometimes depending on the number of children and youth. In Hungary, the local authorities may give support to clubs; however, this support is not automatic and mostly follows an elite sport success logic. Most clubs are not included in the supported cycle. The use of funding is closely monitored. In Poland, the clubs can apply for financial resources in tender contests. When a sports club applies for financing through a contest, it is compelled to provide its own contribution and/or the participation of volunteers in its activity. In Valencia in Spain, the city carries out two annual open and competitive calls for proposals to subsidize

the activity of the sport clubs and the top-tier clubs of the city. In Switzerland, the sports clubs also receive financial support for special programmes that promote sports-related integration of immigrants.

Among the countries, we find two kinds of ‘targeted subsidy’. The first one is support for activities for special purposes or target groups, such as sports for disabled people, sports for ethnic minorities, elite athletes etc. (Flanders, the Netherlands and Germany). The second type is support for the development of the sports clubs (Flanders and the Netherlands) in the form of courses for trainers and volunteers, advice to boards from local sports service centres (the Netherlands) etc. In several countries, however, the sports organisations are responsible for this part (e.g. in Germany, Norway and Denmark)

The third type of support is connected to cooperation (co-production or co-creation) with local public institutions (schools, kindergartens etc.). Several countries are now attempting to strengthen such cooperation (Germany, Denmark, Hungary and the Netherlands), which is often associated with payment to the sports club or (free) access to facilities and materials at the institution.

There are – as far as we can deduce from available information – significant differences between the ten countries on the level of financial support from local authorities to sports clubs (directly and indirectly), and the relative importance the support has for the clubs. There is reliable information about this in a few countries, but it is difficult to compare the figures. The available information leaves the impression that the economic value of the support from the local authorities is relatively low in England and relatively high in Flanders, Germany, Denmark, Norway and Switzerland. In several countries, the financial support has been declining over the past decade (e.g. the Netherlands).

There are also differences between the countries regarding the responsibility for the distribution of the municipal support. In several countries, it is an administrative unit of the local authority in the form of, for example, a sports service centre (e.g. Poland (Social Communication Centre) and Spain). In Spain the administrative unit of the local authorities for the distribution of the municipal support may take different forms and names, for example: Municipal Sports Patronage, Municipal Sports Department, Municipal Sports Institute, Municipal Sports Foundation and Council Delegate of Sports.

In Denmark and Norway, the sports clubs are involved in – and partly responsible for – the decisions regarding the distribution of the resources (including the clubs’ access to sports facilities) in a kind of corporative institution. In Denmark, most municipalities have established a committee for distributing municipal subsidies to voluntary sports clubs, leisure associations and associations for non-formal education. The committee decides, in principle, how to support sports clubs and other leisure associations within the realm of the ‘Leisure Act’. The committee has members from the municipal board as well as representatives from sports and leisure associations. In Norway, there is a specific institution responsible for the relationship between local sport clubs and their municipalities, the Sport Council. It consists (in principle) of the sports clubs in a municipality, which is intended to provide good relations between clubs and political institutions locally. The councils are also important in distributing funding from the central level (Norwegian Confederation of Sports) to the local level.



## **Relations with and support from national and regional governing bodies for sport**

The most dominant organisational form at the national level is ‘The Confederation of Sports’, which is a democratic, non-profit umbrella organisation that represents all (or almost all) Federations for the various sports and in several cases also other organisations for sports (multi sports federations, school sports, etc. (Germany)). This organisation handles the sporting interests in relation to the government, public authorities and other interests; distributes government economic support to member Federations; is responsible for the relations to the international sports world (including IOC); and acts in many ways as a semi-public institution. This type of organisation for (almost) all the sports is found in Belgium (Flanders), Germany, The Netherlands, Norway and Switzerland.

Hungary, Poland and Spain also have one single organisation for all sport, but this organisation can better be characterized as a quasi-civil organisation established by law and responsible for a number of public duties.

Two countries differ from the general picture. In Denmark there are three – mutually independent – umbrella organisations for sports with different aims, structures and ideologies. Most of the sports clubs that are members of at least one sports organisation are members of both ‘The National Olympic Committee and Sport Confederation of Denmark’ (DIF) and ‘The Danish Gymnastic and Sports Associations’ (DGI), while there is almost no overlap between ‘The Danish Federation of Company Sport’ (DFIF) and the other two organisations. One of these organisations, DIF, has the same structure as the confederations for sports in other countries and also works with the same tasks in the same way.

England also has a non-governmental umbrella organisation for sports, but many of the tasks that are handled by non-governmental and democratic organisations in other countries are handled by Sport England in England, a public / state institution. Sport England is responsible for the distribution of state support to the sports federations, among other things.

In several of the ten countries, the national organisation for sport is a result of legislation or enshrined in an act, where the organisation is attributed to specific (governmental) tasks, and thus acts as a quasi-civilian organisation (Belgium (Flanders) and Hungary) or a genuine governmental organization (Spain). In Spain the national organisation for sport (High Council for Sport) is an autonomous administrative body affiliated with the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports, which has a President with the rank of a Secretary of State and is nominated by the Council of Ministers. So the national government’s actions in sports matters directly correspond to the High Council for Sport. In other countries, the overall confederation of sports has the same role, but its existence and role is a result of a historic compromise and a kind of agreement between the state and sports (Germany and Norway). In most of the countries, the organisations themselves decide who can be a member of the organisation. This does not apply in Poland, where a sports Federation or organisation must obtain permission from the Minister of Sport and Tourism to be established (The Act on Sport 2010).

The national organisational systems for sports (sports federations and umbrella organisations) carry out a variety of tasks (in cooperation with the member Federations and regional organisations), including:



- The most important task for the Federations is to organise tournaments, competitions and events and to be responsible for national participation in international elite sports and for the development of elite sports in the specific sports fields.
- Representing the interests of the member sports Federations – and affiliated clubs – towards the government, public authorities and other stakeholders.
- Offering courses and educational programmes for coaches, managers and others.
- Provide support, advice and inspiration to Federations and sports clubs.
- Finally, several of the national organisations are responsible for programmes for the development of sport. In Germany, different initiatives and projects such as “Richtig fit ab 50“, “Deutsches Sportabzeichen“, “Integration durch Sport“, “Ehrenamt im Sport“ and “Trimmy“ are created and developed by the DOSB, aimed at fostering the role of sports in society (DOSB, 2015). The role of community sports clubs is to implement these projects and to make them “come alive”. In England, the NGB is responsible for increasing participation in sport in exchange for the economic support from Sport England. These levels of participation are measured through Sport England’s annual Active People Survey. This gives these NGBs a role in generally promoting their sport – rather than just representing their clubs. In Denmark, the development of sports clubs and increased participation in sport and physical activity has also been given a central role in national organisations for sports. In 2014, the organisations agreed about the vision ‘25-50-75’, to obtain a 50 percent rate of the Danish population active in a sports club and a 75 percent rate of the Danish population being physically active by 2025.

The individual local sports club is typically a member of a national sports Federation (e.g. football, fencing, cycling, etc.) and/or a regional organisation, which is a member of the national confederation for sport. However, this is usually not a requirement, so the clubs are not obliged to join if they do not think that they will benefit. An example of this could be sports clubs that do not want to compete in a national competitive structure and therefore do not need the competition structure provided by national confederations for sport. Formally, the sports clubs are separate and independent of the confederations, i.e. they are not local branches of a national organisation, and the confederations have no decision-making power in relation to the clubs.

As members of the sports Federation and / or the regional confederations, sports clubs pay a membership fee. The sports clubs’ expenses for being a member of a national organisation of sports are – in most countries – very low and almost symbolic. In some Federations, the sports clubs also pay a fee to the respective Federation when wanting to register a team to play in a competitive league.

As a rule, the national organisations for sports do not transfer money to member clubs. However, membership of an organisation provides a number of benefits, including the opportunity to participate in courses and activities that the clubs do not have to pay for (or can attend for a reduced price). Norway is an exception, with around 10 percent of the amount that

the NIF receives from the state being distributed to the municipalities, where the local sports council distributes the money to the sports clubs.

Occasionally, the member clubs can apply for financial support for activities within a programme, which the national organisation has developed (sometimes in cooperation with the government). In Germany, sports clubs can apply to the respective sports organisation to receive different funds. Often, projects are tendered publicly by the DOSB so that sports clubs can apply directly for funds to a specific project.

In summary, the analysis in this chapter shows that, across most of the ten countries, 'sports for all' or 'recreational sports' is the main priority in sports policy, but there are great differences in how real the practical support of recreational sport is. 'Sports for all' policies are almost entirely focussed on delivery through sports opportunities provided by voluntary clubs. In all countries, sports clubs receive support from the public sector – indirectly and directly – but there are significant differences in how much and how. The first and most important type of (indirect) support for sports clubs is in the form of access to publicly-owned sports facilities. In all the countries, sports clubs have the opportunity to get financial support from the public sector, but there are big differences in how clubs can obtain such financial support. The most common type of economic support is 'targeted subsidy'. In all ten countries, mainly the local level of the political, public-administrative governance and steering are important for sports clubs (local authorities, local government, municipalities and the like). In all the countries, the local sports clubs are typically members of a national sports federation / organisation and / or a regional organisation, which is a member of the national confederation of sports.

## 6. Policies regarding social inclusion and volunteering

In this section, we will more specifically shed light on how the ten countries seek to promote social inclusion and volunteering in sports clubs, which are the main focal points of this study. As noted above our analysis has used the concept of integration rather than inclusion to add precision.

### Social inclusion

In most countries, a political priority is to increase participation in sports for inactive groups, and to promote social inclusion and integration of socially disadvantaged groups. However, usually this target is expressed in very broad terms as a general goal to increase participation of under-represented groups. The weighting of this goal is associated in some countries with who has the parliamentary power in the country. Both in England and Spain, the conservative parties have put less emphasis on it in recent years than the previous socialist governments. In England, a policy of promoting 'social inclusion' was strongly promoted by the 'New Labour' government from 1997 onwards. This gradually lost prominence until it was abandoned by the Conservative / Liberal Democratic coalition government of 2010. Since that time, social inclusion through sports has had low priority on the political agenda, and the inclusion of immigrants is too politically sensitive to be a policy objective. The 2016 Sport England strategy includes a very general aim of aiming to grow participation 'especially in under-represented groups (Sport England, 2016, p 25). We do not find the same correlation between who has political power and the weighting of social inclusion in sport in the other countries.

In both Norway and Denmark (two universalistic welfare states), where 'sports for all' is the primary objective of sports policy, equal participation in sports for all groups of society is an important goal. On the governmental level in Denmark, it is explicitly stated that sports organisations are expected to work for the inclusion of different target groups. In many municipalities, we find the same formulation. But in the actual policy and with regard to the distribution of public funds, the priority of social inclusion in sports and sports clubs is relatively low. There is no specific requirement from either the state or the municipalities for the national sports organisations and the local sports clubs to use a certain proportion of the subsidies to increase participation among ethnic minorities, the disabled, disadvantaged children, etc. Similarly, there are no specific success criteria, and there are no real plans on how to achieve the political desire for equality in sports participation. A modest share of the public support for sports has – with intervals of several years – been earmarked for target groups, such as the disabled, the elderly and refugees. The umbrella organisations for sports have specific programmes for sports for particular groups, such as sports in disadvantaged residential areas, sports for refugees and sports for war veterans. Often the state and foundations support these projects with special grants (for example DIFs project 'Get2Sport'). But it plays a small role in the overall picture. Sports organisations are expected to work for the inclusion of target groups, but with no precise political goals. Their dependency on public funding ensures that

they take initiatives in line with policy goals, at least to some degree.

In general, the policies regarding social inclusion are characterized by most of the ten countries having goals aimed at increasing sports participation in various target groups and promoting social inclusion through sports. Concrete, binding policies and plans are almost absent, however. In Spain, social inclusion is also included in the goals for the Strategic Sport Plan, the elaboration of which was headed by the High Council for Sport in coordination with the Autonomous Communities a few years ago. The Strategic Sport Plan was designed to be rolled out in the 2010-2020 period. Two of the four main objectives were a) to promote sports as a tool for social inclusion and b) to make progress in the true equality between men and women. It was the first time a policy document had been elaborated that granted such a degree of importance to the objectives of social inclusion. In fact, of the 15 programmes proposed in the Strategic Sports Plan, 4 of them were explicitly related to aspects of social inclusion with special focus on the handicapped, the elderly and equality between men and women. As the majority of the competencies in sports matters lies with the autonomous communities, the actions mentioned in the Strategic Sports Plan are proposed so that the autonomous communities can align themselves with these objectives and pursue them in their sports policies.

Across countries, the ‘programme model’ is the dominant way that countries seek to promote sports participation in various target groups. This means that the state creates a special programme for a given period, under which sports organisations, local authorities and sports clubs can apply for money to finance a ‘project’ (Denmark, Norway, England and the Netherlands). The policy in the Netherlands is an example of this. In most cases, the Ministry of Public Health, Welfare and Sport supports various programmes to stimulate sports participation and physical activities within the target groups, and indirect sports club membership. These programmes usually focus on groups like a) youth (‘Youth in Motion’, ‘Sport is Cool’, ‘Participating all youth through sports’, ‘Neighbourhood, Education and Sport’ and ‘Sport Impulse’), b) women (‘Sports, even I do it’), c) handicapped people (‘Special Heroes’), d) migrant groups (‘Sport is Cool’, ‘Participating all migrant youth through sports’) and e) the elderly.

Similarly, Switzerland has tried to promote sports participation for specific groups by specially designed programmes. Some examples of concepts and programmes from cantons and communities pertaining to social inclusion (and volunteering) are as follows:

- Financial grants to support access to public sports facilities for people with low income (among others, the disabled and immigrants).
- Development of coaches and players in the handling of integration and conflicts in football clubs and Federations.
- Dissemination of expert knowledge: Handbooks, videos, leaflets (‘‘Sport integrates’’), flyers in various languages (‘‘Movement’’) for sports clubs, families etc.
- Programmes for specific target groups, among other ‘‘MidnightSports’’ which is a Swiss-wide, weekly sport event, organised and created by voluntary adolescents and young adults for their peers; ‘‘Sport-verein-t’’ which is a project with focus on meas-

ures for strengthening the organisation of clubs, support volunteering and improving the integration of people of different origins and the disabled; and “Coloured kicks well, which is a transcultural street soccer league Switzerland” with the aim to support the integration of young immigrants (10-21 year olds) through low-threshold, free of charge and optional exercise.

It is, however, important to point out that all the initiatives and programmes described above have a minor role compared to the national programme ‘Youth and sports’. Most of the initiatives mentioned are promoted by cantons, municipalities, specific organisations.

In England, there are programmes with the aim to increase the number of disabled young people and adults regularly playing sport, and with the aim to get more inactive people to start playing sport once a week and achieve a reduction in health inequalities. Many grants are relatively small, but they help clubs to develop facilities or increase participation of specific groups. Bigger grants tend to be awarded to schools, national governing bodies and local authorities. Each programme is normally subject to an independent evaluation.

A more guiding policy in this area only exists in a few countries (in the form of legislation, decrees etc.). The Swiss Federal “Law of Equal Opportunities for the Disabled” and the “Aliens Act” obliges the Federations, cantons and communities to set conditions that facilitate participation, integration and equal opportunities in social life (in other words, access to sport) for disabled people and immigrants. We undoubtedly find the same in other countries, such as the acts that apply when a country has joined “the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities”.

Flanders seems to be more targeted to social inclusion than the other countries. By means of a special decree (in 2008), the Flemish Government seeks to promote an increase in the participation of people from different social strata in cultural activities, sports etc. The inclusion of disadvantaged groups is the key idea involved. Five target groups are explicitly mentioned as groups that receive specific attention, i.e. people living in poverty, detainees, people with disabilities and people with a migration background. To support and stimulate participation of these target groups, a structural and a project-based approach are implemented simultaneously. Once a year, the Flemish Government launches one or more calls with a focus on a specific themes or target groups. From 2003 to 2004, the policy focused on people with a migration background, from 2006 to 2008 on people with disabilities, from 2009 to 2012 on people 55 years or over and from 2013 until today on healthy sports participation of youth in sports clubs (Flemish Government 2008a; 2008b; Scheerder & Vandermeerschen 2014). Sports clubs have the opportunity to participate in the programme, but in practice, the social inclusion policy appears to be mainly implemented outside of sports clubs. Analyses show that a relatively low number of sports federations sign up for this facultative assignment - something which indicates that there is a gap between the intentions and objectives of government and their realization in practice.

A second decree, which is of significance to sports organisations (sports federations and clubs) and related to the theme of social inclusion, is the decree on healthy and ethical sports (Flemish Government, 2014). The recognized sports federations in Flanders are required to take action for healthy and ethical sports practice. The Flemish Government prioritises six main themes: a) the rights of children in sport, b) inclusion, c) fair play, d) the physical and

psychological integrity of the individual, e) respect for diversity and f) solidarity. The federations are required to work on one of the themes and to deliver concrete actions, which are visible in the selected field, both at club level as well as at participant level.

As a consequence of the decree on local sports policy (Flemish Government, 2012), the inclusion of target groups in sport is also a topic on the policy agenda of the local sports authorities. This means that the local sports authorities have the opportunity to embrace social inclusion in their policy on subsidies towards sports clubs, by pursuing conditional policy. However, recent research shows that the social inclusion goals of local sports authorities and the distribution of funds to the local sports clubs are only interrelated to a limited extent. Local sports authorities aim to attain social goals mainly through offering their own sports activities, rather than by pursuing policy goals with regard to social inclusion through sports clubs. The policy towards sports clubs is often independent of the policy on social inclusion, and vice versa (van Poppel et al., 2016). Initiatives to reach social goals through cooperation between the local sports authorities and sports clubs are being undertaken. The projects are still in their infancy.

One of the Sport for All policy pillars in the Flemish Sports Confederation is linked to the inclusion of target groups and accessible sport clubs. The Flemish Sports Confederation (VSF) decided to include four target groups in the target group policy: a) people living in poverty, b) ethnic cultural minority groups, c) people with disabilities, and d) elderly people. Sports federations and clubs can get in touch with VSF for questions on target groups policy or for individual guidance. In cooperation with the federations, the VSF developed an online guide for sport clubs with lower participation thresholds.

## **Volunteering**

It seems to be a general trend, and a discourse, in Europe, that governments are aiming to strengthen volunteering and civil society in general, along with cooperation between the public and the voluntary sector. In England, civil society and volunteering was part of an ideological commitment to reduce the role of the state and promote active citizenship in what was called a ‘Big Society’ under the 2010 - 2015 coalition government. This has since lost prominence as a policy although volunteer led groups are still attempting to compensate for cuts in public expenditure, for example, by taking on management of some small leisure facilities that were formally run by local government (Nichols et al 2015).

In Denmark, the importance of, and expectations towards, civil society (associations and volunteers) has been mentioned by the past three governments in the so-called ‘Government Platform’. The previous government (2010) wanted to increase the proportion of volunteers in the population from 35 percent to 50 percent, and almost all the municipalities have objectives to strengthen cooperation with associations and volunteers.

In the Netherlands, the shift from national welfare services to more civil-based social services has been labelled by the government as the need for a “doing-democracy” (Kabinet der Nederlanden - Rutten II 2013). The government considers social initiative and social entrepreneurship to be a powerful development and aims to promote and support this. However, the government must actively contribute to “doing-democracy” by supporting the



development of civil initiatives. Over the last decade, there has been increasing attention on volunteering as a way to actively involve citizens in society (Boss, et al. 2011). Volunteering is considered a way for immigrants to get acquainted with the community, or as a way to get people out of their isolation and lead them back to the labour market, by social activation and reintegration. The changing governmental volunteering policy is the result of a reconsideration of the role and task of the national government and the restructuring of the welfare state. In the new legislation on social welfare, youth and social care, health care, employment and participation, tasks and responsibilities have been shifted from the central government to municipalities. At the same time the budget for these tasks has been reduced because the idea is that these can be executed more efficiently on a local level, Municipalities have to do more with a smaller budget. The decentralizations therefore require a new way of involving citizens and organisations in their neighbourhood. It can no longer be expected that the government provides care or services which are indispensable. Responsibilities and duties are shifted to the citizens. Preparatory surveys show that a part of the voluntary organisations is willing to engage in the new local partnerships and social services. This holds true also for sports clubs, which report that they are prepared to find voluntary jobs for unemployed people. By doing so, they may also strengthen their own capacities, and this could have a positive effect on their public image.

In Flanders, the increased focus on volunteering has brought about new legislation. In the aftermath of the UN International Year of Volunteering in 2001, Flanders, in 2005, established a legal framework on volunteering that applies to all kinds of volunteering throughout Flanders. This legislation grants a clear status to the volunteer and a form of legal security to both voluntary organisations and volunteers themselves that has lowered the barriers to engage in voluntary work (VSF, 2015). This law, regulated on a national level, has a certain impact on the organisation of the community sports clubs at the local level. Through the 'Act on Volunteers', it is decided that it is the responsibility of the organisation, for which the volunteer works, to take out civil liability insurance for the volunteer. It is not mandatory for organisations to have insurance for physical injuries, but most organisations do provide this insurance for their volunteers as well.

In an effort to promote a more 'civil-based social service', the Netherlands has tried to minimize restrictive rules for civil initiatives and voluntarism. With the transfer of responsibilities to municipalities in the context of decentralization, the government aims at reduced pressure from regulations. During the preparatory phase of legislation and regulation, the effects for voluntary and civil society initiatives will therefore have to be explored beforehand (Plasterk & Rijn, 2014). The same was attempted in Denmark several years ago.

In several countries, volunteers can receive tax-free remuneration (Flanders, Denmark, the Netherlands and Germany). In Flanders, volunteers can receive a maximum of € 30 per day and € 1.200 per year on top of the reimbursement of their expenses. However, the payment of remuneration to volunteers is not mandatory for organisations. In Germany, volunteers working for the clubs as coaches, instructors or caretakers are able to earn some amount of money, a lump sum of € 2,400 per year, tax free. Volunteers working at board level are able to receive a lump sum of € 720 per year without being taxed. However, the same person is not able to receive both types of lump sum. In the Netherlands, a duty-free reimbursement for volunteers has been embedded (max. 4.5 euros/hour; 1,500 euros yearly). In Denmark,



legislation permits people who do voluntary work to receive around € 650 per year to cover expenses without being taxed and without evidence of the expenditure.

At national organisational level, the sports organisations and federations seek to strengthen voluntary work by helping sports clubs with various different tasks:

- *Volunteer recruitment* (e.g. Flanders, Denmark and Switzerland). E.g. by providing an online volunteer database, where organisations and candidate volunteers can offer and/or ask for volunteer work.
- *Management of volunteers* (e.g. Flanders and Denmark). Sports organisations arrange seminars for board members of clubs to learn how to deal successfully with their volunteers, how to keep them motivated, how to reward them etc. In Flanders, sports clubs are also assisted in administrative tasks in order to get their volunteer policy organised in a legally correct way.
- *Recognition of volunteers* (e.g. Flanders and Denmark). In Flanders, the election of a ‘Volunteer of the Year’ or ‘Coach of the Year’, etc. are ways to reward volunteers. These elections are organised by the full range of local authorities, regions, sports services, sports federations, etc. and even foundations, financial and corporate companies. The yearly ‘Week of the Volunteer’ with numerous activities also helps to promote volunteering, and is regarded as a way to recognize volunteers.
- *Courses and non-formal educations for voluntary leaders* (board members, treasurers etc.) (e.g. Flanders and Denmark). In the Netherlands, national government had been involved in the education of voluntary coaches, sports instructors and referees for decades (1950-2010). The Ministry of Health, Wellbeing and Sports judged the educational programmes, subsidized approved courses and supervised exams. These tasks have now been shifted to NOC\*NSF.
- *Support and advice to sports clubs regarding volunteering* (directly and indirectly via web based support) (e.g. Flanders, England and Denmark). Among other things, sports organisations provide support regarding statutory and legal matters, tax and VAT, volunteer management, insurances, funding, general administration etc. This is provided in a wide variety of learning facilities (information on the website, booklets, leaflets, seminars, online assistance, helpdesk, individual guidance and many more) as well as through the providence of management tools (Flanders), workshops, mentoring, club improvement plan, club review tool and an accreditation scheme for community sports clubs (England). Attainment of Sport England’s Clubmark accreditation requires volunteers in the club to hold coaching awards. For example, the first level of Football coaching courses involves 32 hours of training and costs between £100 and £140. This has to be paid for by the volunteer or the club.
- *Club development programmes* with a focus on volunteer work (e.g. Denmark).

In Poland, the government (different ministries) implements a policy concerning the promotion of voluntary work, which the national sports organisations are responsible for in most of the other countries. The government provides a knowledge portal concerning sports voluntary services, where e-learning materials for this subject area are published; it organises a series of social studies, conferences, meetings and training sessions within the area of voluntary service; it supports voluntary service, e.g. by legal and tax alleviations; it implements a 'Social Capital Development Strategy 2020', where one priority is the development and strengthening of organised forms of civic activity.

In summary, the analysis in this chapter shows that it is a political priority in most of the ten countries to increase participation in sport for inactive groups and to promote social inclusion and integration of socially disadvantaged groups. But usually, this is expressed in very broad terms - as a general goal to increase participation of under-represented groups. However, concrete, binding policies and plans are almost absent. Across the countries, the 'programme model' is the dominant way that the countries seek to promote sports participation in various target groups. It seems to be a general trend, a discourse, in Europe that governments aim to strengthen volunteering and civil society in general along with cooperation between the public and the voluntary sector. The countries strive to promote this objective through legislation which regulates the legal status of volunteers and voluntary organisations, through minimizing restrictive rules for civil initiatives and voluntarism, by offering tax-free remuneration and through programmes and activities within national and regional organisations for sport, which aim to facilitate the recruitment, qualification and retention of volunteers.

## 7. Conclusions and explanations

The comparisons of sports club policies within ten European countries examined in this report with a particular focus on social inclusion and volunteering show both significant similarities and significant differences. Below, we have attempted to summarize the main results from the analysis in eight conclusions. After this, we will discuss – in context of the theories presented earlier – how the differences and similarities between the countries can be explained.

### Conclusions

1. **Across most of the ten countries ‘sports for all’ or ‘recreational sports’ is the main priority in sports policy, but there are great differences in how strong the practical support for recreational sport is.** The sports policy across countries is also characterized in that it is primarily aimed at club organised sports, but there are some differences on how much the respective countries give priority to this.
2. **Sports opportunities provided by volunteers almost has a monopoly position within the ‘sports for all’ policies (especially in terms of public support) in both the universalist welfare states (Norway and Denmark) and the conservative/corporatist welfare states (Germany, Switzerland, the Netherlands and Belgium/Flanders).** This is the case even though these countries also have complementary support for club based sports through other policy initiatives aimed specifically at getting more people to be physically active. In England (a liberal welfare state) club based sports also ranks high in ideological significance, but not to the same extent as in the other countries associated with great (economic) support from the public sector. Spain, Hungary and Poland have seen a significant transformation of their respective sports policies over recent decades, since these countries have undergone transformation from authoritarian regimes to democratic countries, and also as a result of the subsequent membership in the EU. The membership in the EU may help explain why there seems to have been a diffusion of ideas, forms of governance and specific policies and programmes for sports from the Central and Western European countries to these countries. But sports policies in these countries are still being influenced by the policies and governance structures, which were built at a time when they were authoritarian regimes, where government control and professionalism played a big role.
3. **In all countries, sports clubs receive support from the public sector – indirectly and directly, but there are significant differences as to how much and how it is provided.** The first and most important type of (indirect) support for sports clubs is in the form of access to publicly owned sports facilities. In most of the ten countries, sports facilities are predominantly owned by the local authorities that are responsible for the maintenance and administration of the facilities. In almost all countries (except perhaps in England), the local authorities are the ones which primarily own most of the sports facilities. In some

countries, sports clubs predominantly use the sports facilities for free, while clubs in other countries have to pay for using the facilities, but often the price is lower than what the actual market price would be. This also means that the facility coverage is of great importance for the existence of a sports club.

- 4. In all the countries, sports clubs have the opportunity to get financial support from the public sector, but there are big differences as to how clubs can obtain such financial support. The most common type of economic support is ‘targeted subsidy’.** That means that the economic support is targeted at specific purposes, target groups etc., which the local authorities have prioritized, and for which sports clubs can apply for money. Less common are ‘basic grants’ without specific (or few and very general) requirements, which we find in Denmark, Norway and Switzerland. A new kind of relationship between sports clubs and the public sector has developed over the last decades within some of the countries in the form of co-production between sports clubs and local public institutions. Most often, co-production is associated with payment to the sports club or (free) access to facilities and materials at public institutions. The information available leaves the impression that the economic value of the support from the local authorities to sports clubs is relatively low in England and relatively high in Flanders, Germany, Denmark, Norway and Switzerland. In several countries, financial support has been declining over the past decade.
- 5. In all ten countries, the local level of political administration policies (local authorities, local government, municipalities and the like) have the greatest influence on sports clubs.** Most countries – in principle – have no (or a weak) direct link between the state and the local sports clubs (Flanders, Denmark, England, Germany, Norway and Switzerland), and in several countries, there is no legislation or similar measure that obligates local authorities to support sports clubs (England, Germany, the Netherlands and Norway). In these countries, the initiative to offer organised sports is left up to sports clubs or other private organisations or institutions, but the activities are supported by the local authorities. In some countries, however, the state has provided a framework for local government support in the form of legislation, decrees, etc. (Flanders, Denmark, Hungary and Poland). However, it is almost entirely left up to each local authority to decide on the scope and nature of local support in accordance with their own (sports) policy views (Flanders and Denmark). This has resulted in large differences between the municipalities as to how much and how clubs are being supported (Flanders, Denmark, Poland, Hungary, Norway and Switzerland). In some countries, however, the state (parliament / ministry) has adopted specific rules on how much the local authorities should spend on sports clubs and / or how the local authorities must support the clubs (e.g. in Denmark where it is a requirement that the clubs have access to municipally owned sports facilities – free of charge or against payment of a minor utilization fee – for activities for children and youth).
- 6. In all the countries, local sports clubs are typically members of a national sports federation/organisation and/or a regional organisation, which is a member of the national confederation of sports.** However, it is usually not a requirement for sports clubs

to become members, if they do not think they will benefit from it – for example, if they do not want to compete within a national competitive structure. Formally, the sports clubs are separate and independent of the confederations. As members of the sports Federation and / or regional confederation, sports clubs pay a fee for this membership. The expenses for being a member of a national organisation of sports are very low, however, and almost symbolic in most countries. As a rule, the national organisations for sports do not transfer money directly to member clubs. Norway is an exception, with around 10 percent of the amount that the NIF receives from the state being distributed among the municipalities, where the local sports councils distributes the money between local sports clubs. Occasionally, member clubs can apply for financial support for activities within a programme, which the national organisation has developed.

- 7. In most of the ten countries, it is a political priority to increase participation in sports for inactive groups and to promote social inclusion and integration of socially disadvantaged groups. But, usually, this is expressed in very broad terms – as a general goal to increase participation of under-represented groups.** It is characteristic for the policies regarding social inclusion that most of the ten countries have goals aimed at increasing sports participation in various target groups and at promoting social inclusion through sport. Concrete, binding policies and plans are almost absent, however. Across the countries, the ‘programme model’ is the dominant way that the countries seek to promote sports participation in various target groups. This means that the state creates a special programme for a given period, which sports organisations, local authorities and sports clubs can apply through for money to finance a ‘project’. A more guiding policy in this area only exists in a few countries (in the form of legislation, decrees etc.).
- 8. It seems to be a general trend, a discourse, in Europe that governments aim to strengthen volunteering and civil society in general, along with cooperation between the public and the voluntary sector. However, practical support for this varies.** The countries strive to promote this objective in various ways:
- a) Through legislation which regulates the legal status of volunteers and voluntary organisations with the aim to lower the barriers to engage in voluntary work.
  - b) Through minimizing restrictive rules for civil initiatives and voluntarism.
  - c) By offering tax-free remuneration.
  - d) Through programmes and activities in national and regional organisations for sports, which aim to facilitate the recruitment, qualification and retention of volunteers.

## **What can explain the similarities and differences in sports club policies?**

We will now return to the theories presented earlier in this report as possible explanations for the differences and similarities between countries regarding sports clubs policies. As mentioned earlier, the research group has been inspired by three theoretical approaches, which

we describe below. In turn, we then discuss how well the theories explain similarities and differences within the sports club policies in the ten countries.

The analysis has brought about useful knowledge about similarities and differences between sports club policies in ten European countries. In the following section, we try to explain similarities and differences through the use of theory. It is important, however, to underline that we cannot ‘prove’ with this study that similarities and differences between sports club policies can be explained by a certain theory or scientific approach. Studies that are much more comprehensive than this one would be needed to provide such robust conclusions. With this limitation in mind, we suggest, nevertheless, that the similarities and differences observed must be explained historically – at least partly – through differences in welfare state principles and governance and the degree of economic inequality in the specific countries.

### **Social origins theory**

The first approach, known as ‘social origins theory’ or ‘path dependence theory’, argues that the characteristics of the organisational system must be explained historically (Stinchcombe 1965; Salamon & Anheir 1998; Pierson & Skocpol 2002; Anheir and Salamon 2006). The organisational pattern, which was formed several decades ago, has a tendency to endure, although the social conditions that led to the formation of the organisational system have changed in many cases. According to this approach, the organisational and political system largely reflects past ideological trends as well as social conflicts and groupings. Over the years, a number of institutional frameworks have been created, and the organisational system is viewed as more or less ‘protected’ against new and competing forms of organisation and policy. This ‘protection’ – among other things – is caused by legislation, and the way the public sector supports, cooperates and exchanges relations with the environment, which has created a mutual dependency. Thus, the basic assumption of this theoretical approach is that the situation relative to a historic time,  $t_1$ , exerts influence on the situation at a later point in time,  $t_2$ .

In most of the ten countries, sports policies and the role of sports clubs can be traced back to the formation of the sports system in the country during the period after World War 2. This applies to both the organisational system and the relationship between the public sector on the one side and sports organisations and clubs on the other. In three countries – Spain, Hungary and Poland – the sports system seems to be the result of a combination of the structures established under the authoritarian regimes after World War 2 and a change of organisational structures and policy governance – under the influence of the sports systems and sports policies in other EU countries – in the years following a shift to democracy.

Within this historical perspective, it is useful to consider that societies can be placed on a continuum of ‘statism’, understood as the extent to which the state or civil society is the principal locus of public life. Anglo-Saxon countries are at the low end of the ‘statism’ scale. This scale has been used to explain the ‘mosaic of local civic institutions that developed in nineteenth-century Britain’ (Schofer & Fourcade-Gourinchas, 2001, p. 812), but also to explain why ‘*voluntary action in Anglo-Saxon countries is still cast in a powerful liberal ideology that continues to celebrate voluntarism as autonomous and jealously defends its arm’s length relationship from government*’.



### **The political opportunity structure**

The second theoretical approach seeks to explain the organisational system and policies from the aspects of the current societal context with a particular focus on the limitations and possibilities that the political system and the public sector in general provide (Micheletti, 1994). These societal structures and cultures largely define the ‘space’, or the ‘political opportunity structure’, both practical and ideological, within which different organisational forms must act:

- The societal role and ideological status of certain forms of organisation (e.g. associations’ and voluntary organisations’ role and legitimacy in relation to the public sector and the commercial sector.
- The degree and character of public regulation and control linked to the various organisational forms and institutionalised forms of support.
- The public sector’s financial support for sports clubs (directly and indirectly) (see e.g. resource dependence theory (Pfeffer & Salancik, 1978).
- The culture, ideals and principles in the public sector (for example, subsidiarity as principle and the degree of decentralisation) (Micheletti 1995; Eisinger 1973; Kriesi 1995).

The analysis indicates that a significant correlation exists between the welfare state typology and sports club policies. The relatively low public support and political steering of the voluntary organised sports in England is linked to characteristics of ‘the liberal welfare state’. The universalistic features of sports policy in Norway and Denmark coincide with ‘the universalist welfare state’. The subsidiarity principle as a guiding principle for public support for sports clubs is found in countries that can best be characterized as ‘conservative / corporatist welfare states’ (Germany, Flanders, the Netherlands and Switzerland). But the coincidence between the welfare state typology and sports club policy is not so clear. For example, the strong decentralization policies in Norway and Denmark resemble the principle of subsidiarity, but without using that term. Furthermore, we also find in Denmark and especially Norway the strong corporatist element in sports policy that we especially would expect to find in the corporatist welfare states.

### **Interaction of economic equality and other characteristics**

The third theoretical inspiration builds on the insights offered by Wilkinson and Pickett (2009) on the relationship between economic inequality and a set of other variables to propose a holistic understanding of societies. Wilkinson and Pickett (2009) have shown a strong correlation between income inequality and a set of indicators of well-being which includes: generalised trust, life-expectancy, infant mortality, obesity, mental illness, educational performance, and health and social problems. In each case income inequality was associated with negative social indicators. This is consistent with Putnam’s analysis of the relationship between social capital and economic equality in the United States (2000, 2015).

Tony Veal (2016) has extended the analysis to sports participation and volunteering by using the recent Eurobarometer surveys to include leisure activities, and the analysis shows similar relationships. Across Europe inequality is associated with lower levels of sports participation, leisure time and generalised trust. Further analysis by Nichols and Veal (2013; in



review) has shown that there is also a strong relationship across Europe between income inequality and low levels of volunteering. In relation to this study, Denmark, the Netherlands and Germany have higher levels of volunteering, sports volunteering, and sports participation, and greater equality. Poland and Spain have low levels for all of these, and greater inequality. The United Kingdom also has greater inequality – but higher sports participation and volunteering levels than Spain and Poland. This can be partly interpreted as a historical legacy, reflecting the conditions under which sports participation and the sporting infrastructure developed in the first country to industrialize and develop the modern forms of sport. Thus, we see that countries with high levels of income equality tend to have higher levels of sports participation, volunteering and generalised trust.

Veal (2016) suggests three main explanations for these findings, two of which are of particular interest in relation to this study. Firstly, more equal societies tend to have stronger welfare policies. Direct transfer payments and higher public expenditure ensure that the poor have greater access to facilities and opportunities which the rich can afford to buy for themselves, although the rich can, and do, take advantage of publicly provided/subsidised leisure services. Secondly, culture and values play a strong determining role. A criticism of Wilkinson and Pickett's work is that, if the four Scandinavian countries are excluded, some of the statistical relationships between income inequality and the well-being indicators disappear. This could be attributable to their distinctive culture.

Thus, we conclude that rather than any one variable; such as levels of income equality; being a sole, or main, determining variable explaining differences, we have to understand the characteristics of society as interacting, and this interaction provides a holistic description of different societies. Earlier work examining trust (Delhey and Newton, 2005) came to similar conclusions, which can be related to associational life and volunteering.

*'This set of factors forms a single, theoretically and empirically cohesive syndrome of variables associated with trust: Protestantism, the accumulation of wealth, an absence of corruption, and equality go together; income equality and ethnic homogeneity are linked; democracy, the absence of corruption, and income equality are also associated with one another; democracy and public institutions to promote economic well-being and a common sense of citizenship are mutually supportive. In turn, generalized social trust is easily linked in theoretical terms to each of these variables, either as a cause or an effect, or both. Trust is strongest where all these conditions are found in the purest combinations - the Nordic countries.'* (Delhey & Newton, 2005, p.324).

This is an important theoretical point because rather than seeking one dominant determinant variable, we understand a type of society as being represented holistically by a set of variables which interact. To contrast two countries in our study: Denmark is characterised by higher equality. It has high levels of generalised trust, volunteering, sports participation and leisure time. It has stronger social welfare policies – for example, sports clubs enjoy free use of municipally owned facilities. Compare this with England. Here, income inequality is higher, there are lower levels of generalised trust, volunteering, sports participation and leisure time, and welfare policies are less supportive: for example, sports clubs have to rent municipal facilities.

We would expect a high level of generalised trust to permeate all social relations, such as between sports clubs and municipalities, and national sports Federations and government. A high level of generalised trust may encourage sports clubs to welcome and foster new members who are 'different'.

Of course, as noted earlier, 'social origins theory' can explain the historical influences affecting any one 'type' of society, as described above, but also why a country deviates from its specific type. The history and culture is superimposed onto the present. Understanding why countries are 'different' helps us understand which practices – in terms of supporting sports clubs and volunteering – may transfer from one to the other, and which ones may not. An implication of this holistic view is that no one variable can be considered in isolation as determining other characteristics of society.

## 8. Inspiration for further research

We end this report with a number of assumptions – or expectations – for research into the links between the macro-level (historical, socio-structural, economic and cultural conditions), the meso-level (Federations and sports clubs) and the micro-level (members and volunteers). We will seek to illuminate some of these in future analysis in this research project, but it does not apply to all of them. We hope that they function as ‘inspiration for thinking ‘and’ guidelines for future research”.

1. There is a correlation between the key characteristics of the different welfare state typologies and key characteristics of sports policy.
2. In a society with higher levels of generalised trust – the relationship between clubs, Federations and government will be based more on a shared set of goals and values; rather than being conditional on specifically measured performance indicators.
3. In a more equal society
  - 3.1. the higher levels of generalised trust will be reflected in sports clubs who will therefore be more trusting and open to new members - they will have a broader subjective definition of ‘one of us’ – the subjective definition of ‘bonding’ social capital.
  - 3.2. club members will be more likely to regard the clubs as an expression of a shared set of interests and feel a moral obligation to volunteer; while in more unequal societies, club members may regard membership as more like a market transaction – with no moral obligations.
  - 3.3. with higher levels of generalised trust, clubs are more likely to share objectives of making sports participation accessible to all people, irrespective of gender, age, ability, ethnicity etc.
4. Clubs can contribute to generalised trust at the level of society as well as reflecting it. If the level of trust is higher in a club than in society, there will be the possibility of relations in the club contributing to an increase in generalised trust in society, although this may not necessarily occur.
5. Expectations of volunteering to create organisations independent of the state reflect historical traditions and circumstances. In countries which have experienced a centralisation of state control, there will not be the same tradition of volunteering to create an organisation reflecting shared enthusiasms, independent of the state, as in countries with a long tradition of that.
6. The more sports clubs and national federations depend on the state, the stronger the relationships between them and government are, and so the easier it is for government to influence clubs and federations to promote government objectives.

7. The more clubs are dependent on national federations, the more clubs can be influenced indirectly to support national government policies promoted through the federations.
8. The strongest relationship between government policy and the work of sports clubs is at municipality level, because this is the level at which clubs operate and where government can be most sensitive to local needs.
9. The relationship between sports clubs and municipalities will be strongest where government follows the principle of subsidiarity, with as much decision-making as possible devolved to the lowest possible level of administration.
10. Sports clubs are more likely to share government aims of sports being generally good for individuals and society, than they are to share the idea of sports being used as a means to an end, such as promotion of health or social inclusion.

## 9. Country summaries

As described earlier, the analysis presented above builds on descriptions of sports club policies in the ten countries included in this project. In this section, we present brief summaries of these descriptions from each country. By reading these, you as the reader will have the opportunity to grasp the context in which the policies are placed that are mentioned in the analysis. This can provide you with a more complete picture of sports club policies in each country.

### **Belgium (Flanders)**

*Jeroen Scheerder, Elien Claes & Hanne Vandermeerschen*

#### **The influence of national government organisations and legislation**

The *2005 Law on Volunteering* defined ‘volunteering’ and regulates: (i) volunteering carried out by persons with a public allowance (pensions, subsidies, etc.), (ii) reimbursement of expenses incurred by volunteers, (iii) liability of volunteers, (iv) insurance obligations and (v) obligation on behalf of the organisation to provide information. This legislation defines a legal status for the volunteer and clear legal obligations and rights for voluntary organisations and volunteers themselves. Insurance for physical injuries is not mandatory, but most organisations will provide this for their volunteers as well. In Belgium, volunteers can receive a tax-free remuneration up to a maximum of € 30 per day and € 1,200 per year on top of the reimbursement of their expenses. However, the payment of a remuneration to volunteers is not mandatory for organisations. The implementation of a clear system of expenses and a significant limitation of liability of volunteers has lowered the barriers to engage in voluntary work. This national law has had an impact on the organisation of community sports clubs.

Since the constitutional revision in Belgium in 1970, no national governmental administration or policy on sport exists. Due to the application of the principle of subsidiarity, ensuring that matters are handled at the lowest possible political and administrative level, and as close to the citizens as possible, there is no direct relationship (political or economic) between the government at national level and the community sports clubs in Belgium. Political power and institutions are separated between the federal government level, the three community governments (Flemish Community, French Community and German-speaking Community), and the three regional governments (Flemish Region, Walloon Region, and Brussels Capital Region).

As a part of the cultural sphere, governmental competences with regard to sports, such as the organisation of sport (e.g. the qualification of persons responsible for managing sports and the coordination of elite sports), sports policy planning and subsidising of sports federations, are the exclusive responsibility of the three communities. The regional and local level has the main responsibility for sports. At national level, there are some overarching responsibilities for sports, e.g. security at football matches.

#### **The influence of regional government organisations and legislation**

The division of Belgium into three administrative regions implies that the rest of this description only concerns Flanders, the Northern part of Belgium.

In Flanders, there is no direct relationship between the regional government and community sports clubs. The sports Federations and the local sports administrations serve as mediating partners between the Flemish government and the community sport clubs.

The Flemish government wants to tackle barriers for participation. Five target groups can be identified, i.e. people living in poverty, prisoners, people with disabilities, people with a migration background and families with young children. To support and stimulate participation of these disadvantaged groups, a structural and a project-based approach is implemented simultaneously. One example is subsidizing an association which provides sports programmes in prisons. Once a year, the Flemish government launches one or more project calls, with a focus on a specific theme or target group. Sports clubs have the opportunity to respond to these, but in practice social inclusion policies appear to be mainly implemented outside sports clubs.

### **The influence of municipal (local) government organisations and legislation**

As a consequence of the subsidiarity principle, the specific interpretation and implementation of Sports for All initiatives is handled by the local authorities. This was emphasized in 2012 by issuing a new decree concerning local sports policy or Sports for All policy at the local level. The decentralization of sports policy actions, as well as the reinforced role of local sports departments as regulators of grassroots sport policies are the core principles of the legislation. The support and subsidizing of voluntary sports clubs is mainly the role of local governments (i.e. municipalities).

The decree on local sports policy (Flemish government, 2012) includes four policy priorities: (i) to support the qualitative development of sports clubs through a targeted subsidy, (ii) to stimulate sports clubs to professionalise their organisation with a special emphasis on the quality of youth sports, (iii) to conduct an activation policy striving for lifelong sports participation through alternative organisation of sport and accessibility of sport and (iv) to focus on transversal cooperation in order to support the inclusion of specific target groups in sport. The municipalities can choose how to meet these guidelines, in accordance with their own (sports) policy. Local governments develop their sporting goals, covering a period of five years. This results in large differences between the sports policies of the 308 Flemish municipalities.

Municipalities in Flanders receive funds from the central Flemish government to develop Sports for All policies (i.e., an annual financial support of about 14 million euros for a six year period). Municipalities are responsible for the allocation of about 75 percent of the regular public funding for sports in Flanders. If local municipalities address the four policy priorities, they receive € 2.4 per inhabitant from the Flemish government. For each inhabitant, the local municipality adds a minimum of 30 percent from its own resources. At least 60% of the above total of € 3.2 per inhabitant must be assigned directly to the sports clubs according to a Flemish grant regulation.

Municipalities support the development of sports clubs through a targeted subsidy in order to professionalise their organisation. Special emphasis is on the quality of youth sports and supporting the inclusion of specific target groups in sport. The inclusion of target groups in sport is a policy of the local sports authorities. This means that the local sports authorities can incorporate working towards social inclusion objectives as a condition of their subsidy to

sports clubs. However, recent research shows that the latter only occurs to a limited extent. Local sports departments aim to attain social goals mainly through the sports activities they provide directly, rather than through their policies towards sports clubs. Nevertheless, this differs between municipalities. For example, certain Flemish municipalities recently engaged in a new participation project, called 'UiTPAS'. This is an integrated system to provide sports opportunities for everyone, and especially for people living in poverty, in a non-stigmatising way and at a lower price. This involves activities provided by the municipality itself, as well as by the civic and private sector.

However, in January 2016, the legislation for local sports policy was changed again. The Flemish subsidies for several policy domains such as culture, sport, youth, development aid, etc. were integrated into the overall subsidies which Flemish cities and municipalities already receive from the Flemish government in order to offer more autonomy and less administration for the local governments (*Gemeentefonds*). With this integration, the conditions to receive subsidies and the earmarks of the subsidies disappeared. It is too soon to identify the effects of this adjustment. Questions arise as to whether the local sports sector will be strong enough to adapt to this change and to at least acquire the same resources as before.

### **The role of national governing bodies of sports / sports federations**

While most of the sports federations have a national level structure, the regional level is the more important level. Thus, there is a Flemish level sports confederation, and Flemish level sports federations. In 2016, Flanders included 38 sports federations that represent and administer one particular sport each, 27 recreational sports federations representing one or more sports, and four organisations for sports-related leisure. These federations are financed by the Flemish government. In addition, another 23 sports federations are recognized but not financed.

The umbrella sports federation in Flanders is the *Vlaamse Sportfederatie* (VSF - Flemish Sports Confederation). The Flemish Sports Confederation represents the member sports federations (up to 90) before the government and supports their members at legal, administrative, organisational and policy levels. The 'Dynamo Project' of the Flemish Sports Confederation guides and supports board members of sports clubs in domains such as statutory and legal matters, tax and VAT, volunteer management, insurance, funding, general administration and many other areas. Support to the sports club's voluntary board members is provided through a wide variety of learning facilities (information on the website, booklets, leaflets, group seminars, online assistance, helpdesk, individual guidance and many more) as well as through the provision of management tools (bookkeeping, website hosting, etc.). In this way, sustainable, efficient and effective management of sports clubs is being promoted and facilitated although no measurable objectives are defined. Support from the Flemish Sports Confederation pays special attention to increasing social inclusion, as described below, and volunteering.

VSF includes four target groups in its policy: (i) people living in poverty, (ii) ethnic minority groups, (iii) people with disabilities and (iv) elderly people. Sports federations and clubs can contact the VSF for guidance on working with these groups, although they have no obligation to be involved in such programmes. VSF developed, in cooperation with the federations, an online guide for sport clubs to reduce the barriers to participation. We have no information to what extent this reached the clubs. It remains unclear whether it has an impact



on the field.

The sports federations have to meet basic criteria in order to receive subsidies from the Flemish government. These basic criteria are related to the organisation of competitive and/or recreational sport, the organisation of training courses, guidance of sports clubs, and the promotion of their own sport(s). For most federations, governmental subsidies are the main funding source. An average Flemish sports federation depends on public subsidies for 50 to 60 percent of their resources. In addition, the sports federations can sign up for a programme of action to promote a particular policy objective – in return for more funds. One of the (facultative) options is the promotion of sports participation by a ‘priority target group’. The priority group changes each policy term. From 2003 to 2004, the policy focused on people with a migration background, from 2006 to 2008 on people with disabilities, from 2009 to 2012 on people above 55 years of age and from 2013 until today on healthy sports participation of juveniles in sports clubs. A relatively low number of federations have agreed to take part in these programmes.

A second decree related to the theme of social inclusion is the decree on healthy and ethical sports. The recognized sports federations in Flanders are required to take action for healthy and ethical sports practice. The Flemish government prioritizes six main themes: (i) the rights of children in sports, (ii) inclusion, (iii) fair play, (iv) physical and psychological integrity of the individual, (v) respect for diversity and (vi) solidarity. Each ethical theme includes three concrete guidelines. The federations are required to work on at least one of the themes and to incorporate two guidelines into their policy in order to deliver actions which are visible in the field, both at club level as well as at participant level. Doing this is a condition of funding. Flemish youth clubs consider healthy and ethical sports to be an important task of youth sports clubs. The fair play theme is popular with the clubs, while inclusion and solidarity are less popular. Flemish youth clubs mainly lack knowledge and expertise for the application of the different ethical issues, with the exception of fair play. Flemish youth clubs that have established a policy or that have a responsible person for healthy and ethical sports, score significantly better.

Sports clubs in Flanders are supported in their recruitment, coaching and retaining of volunteers. Help on recruitment is provided via a volunteer online database, organisations and candidate volunteers can offer/ask for volunteer work. A website ([www.vrijwilligerswerk.be](http://www.vrijwilligerswerk.be)) to facilitate this is not confined to sports clubs. Many sports federations also support their clubs with regard to the recruitment of volunteers via their website. The Dynamo Project, outlined above, provides seminars for board members of clubs to learn how to motivate and reward volunteers. Sports clubs are also assisted in ensuring that the administration of volunteers complies with the legislation. The Dynamo Project provides model volunteer contracts and volunteer registration forms.

The Dynamo Project also organises seminars on the retention of volunteers. The election of a ‘Volunteer of the Year’ or ‘Coach of the Year’, etc. are ways to reward volunteers. These elections are organised by the full range of municipalities, regions, sports services, sports federations, etc. and even foundations, financial and corporate companies. The annual ‘Week of the Volunteer’ with numerous activities in this framework also provides a lot of promotion of and appreciation to the volunteers. Moreover, there are very specific training opportunities for volunteering in sports, particularly in the Flemish School for Trainers and Coaches

(Vlaamse Trainers School – VTS). The VTS provides educational programmes to obtain a trainer certificate or degree. VTS is a department of the agency, Sports Flanders. The VTS also organises educational trainings for volunteers. However, this is not a large programme and the sessions are also short (+/- 3 hours).

Because there is no direct link between the government at regional level and the community sports clubs at local level, the sports federations function as intermediate actors between both levels. The relationships between sports federations and sports clubs mainly concentrate on management aspects, rather than on financial matters. Sports federations are expected to contribute to certain policy goals in return for public funding. The federations involve their sports clubs in achieving these policy goals, in return for the organisational and managerial support for the clubs.

### **Historical influences**

The divisions of policy-making bodies and the principles of subsidiarity reflect the political composition of Belgium. Belgium has a long tradition of developing and organising sports at grassroots level. As a result, a relatively dense network of sports clubs already existed at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Initially, rationalization and quantification (e.g. standardization of rules, assessing performance and tracking of records) were important characteristics of sports, and soon, there appeared to be a need for an administrative and organisational framework. Consequently, at the time, many of these sports clubs, among which gymnastics clubs, cycling clubs, rowing clubs, track and field clubs, football clubs, tennis clubs etc., had organised themselves into national sports federations, already before the Second and even before the First World War. Flemish sports federations emerged during the thirties and forties of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

In some sports, especially with regard to gymnastics, a structural segmentation between clubs and federations based on ideological differences (Catholic, liberal and socialist) was used and would mainly persist until the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. From the beginning, sports clubs and federations pursued an autonomous organisation, without too much outside interference and attached great importance to a strong degree of government independence and self-regulation. One of the basic principles on which the club-organised sport is built is the idea that sport and government are separate whenever possible. This strong urge for autonomy largely explains the relatively long run-up to the development of a public administration responsible for sports.

Until the mid-twentieth century, sports clubs and federations were the only actors who gave direction and shape to the sports practice, focusing heavily on competitive sports. In this respect, we could speak of *corporatisation* and *particularisation* of sport, with the principle of self-regulation at the core. Before World War 2, there was hardly any government intervention related to sport in Belgium. Thus, sports clubs and sports associations received no structural subsidies for their operation. The clubs have a strong tradition of being volunteer-led.

After World War 2, an active and conditional public sports policy gradually developed. The fact that the government would continue to engage more in sports in the second half of the last century implied that various levels of government created a sports administration. This *governmentalization process* initially focused on investment in sports infrastructure. Though, inspired by the Sports for All idea, from the seventies, the focus increasingly

switched to encouraging active participation in sports.

During the sixties and seventies of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, sport transformed into a right for everyone. State aid and support was no longer only legitimized, but also desired. In the mid-seventies, the young Flemish sports policy became anchored by a decree. Henceforth, national organisations (i.e. sports federations) and local authorities would be increasingly involved in sports policy as full partners.

The arrival of successive public sports administrations that increasingly developed their own sports activities, and commercial enterprises who *commercialized* sports and fitness as lucrative products, shattered the ancient monopoly of sports clubs and sports federations. It turned out that the latter are no longer the only providers of organised sports. Both public and private actors, profit and non-profit players, as well as new providers and new forms of organisations are now shaping the sports landscape.

Following the market mechanisms of demand and supply, commercial sports organisations such as fitness centres are rapidly increasing in popularity. So-called light communities also entered the sports scene, giving people the opportunity to perform their favourite sport without a ‘strong’ club membership. These provide an alternative way of practicing sports, outside a regular setting like a sports club, for example, with a group of friends, with little commitment.

Based on legislation, the Flemish government involves the sports federations (which, in turn, involve their clubs) in achieving certain sports policy goals in return for financial support. In recent years, sports policy has been increasingly focused on solidarity and inclusion goals and clubs and federations are stimulated to pursue these goals. Research indicates that the social element is considered to be very important in sports clubs, but mainly among the current members and not necessarily for specific target groups. The club management pays special attention to organising events for members to promote social cohesion in the club, but that does not mean that these events are also open and accessible to target groups.

Today, voluntary organised sports clubs are fairly independent of the state. On average, clubs generate 41 percent of their income from membership fees. Sponsorship covers thirteen percent of the income, while cash operations, funding from the municipalities and surplus from the canteen each cover eleven percent of revenues. Figures indicate that over three quarters of the revenues are generated by the clubs themselves, while the remaining quarter comes from funding and sponsorships. Nevertheless, clubs are heavily supported by the government in an indirect way, mainly through the free or low-priced use of sports infrastructure.

## Denmark

*Bjarne Ibsen & Karsten Elmoose-Østerlund*

### **The influence of national government organisations and legislation**

There is a legal right in the Danish constitution permitting free voluntary association. Thus, establishment of such associations is easy. *The Act on the Allocation of Financial Support to Non-formal Adult Education and Youth Activities* – the ‘Leisure Act’ – obliges municipalities to give voluntary sports clubs and leisure associations access to indoor and outdoor facilities owned by municipalities free of charge or against payment of a minor fee, or to receive reim-

bursament of two thirds of the cost of renting privately owned facilities when the club members are aged 25 or under. The same act provides economic funding from local government to clubs and associations (typically an amount for each member aged 25 or under).

While sport is supported with reference to its health promotion and social integration functions in the political rhetoric, the political aims and objectives for sports in Denmark are general and vague. The 'Leisure Act' states that the aim of the law is, '*... to promote an understanding of democracy and active citizenship (...) [and to] strengthen the members' ability and desire to take responsibility for their own lives and to participate in society' actively and in a committed manner.* Thus, there is a general aim of promoting a pluralist society in which citizens' active participation is promoted. Since 1972, this has been expressed in the general goal of 'sports for all'. However, this has not been associated with specific measurable targets for participation by disadvantaged groups; such as the disabled, the elderly, refugees, etc. Sports organisations and clubs are expected to work for the inclusion of these target groups in sports, but with no precise political goals. Similarly, there are no specific aims stated for volunteering within the field of sports.

The lack of precise targets associated with government objectives reflects the relationship between government and voluntary associations, which is based on a respect for autonomy, but also on trust that associations will act in the spirit of including all members of society.

In common with most countries, Denmark has a national lottery. *The Act on Distribution of Profits from Lotteries and Horse and Dog Betting* states that 70% of the lottery gambling revenues must be distributed to the national sports organisations via the Ministry of Culture. These are the *National Olympic Committee and Sports Confederation of Denmark* (DIF), the *Danish Gymnastics and Sports Association* (DGI) and the *Danish Association for Company Sports* (DFIF). The national sports organisations receive a percentage of the total revenues of the lottery each year.

There is almost no direct – or indirect – financial support from the state for local sports clubs – the main support comes from municipalities (local government), although enshrined in national legislation. Clubs benefit indirectly if they take part in activities of national sports organisations, which have been funded by central government. Local sports clubs can apply for money from a government fund to promote specific purposes, but this is insignificant overall.

Another legislation area affecting clubs permits people who do voluntary work to receive around €650 per year to cover expenses without being taxed. This represents a subsidy of organisations supported by volunteers.

Under the *Procuring of a Child Certificate in Connection with Employment of Personnel Act*, clubs must procure certificates for people who perform voluntary or paid work as a coach, instructor or teacher for children under the age of 15, provided that the employment is planned to be for a longer period (more than three months) from the beginning.

### **The influence of regional government organisations and legislation**

In Denmark, there is no significant relationship between a regional level of government and sports clubs. Neither is there a regional level of governing body administration for sports.

**The influence of municipal (local) government organisations and legislation**

As noted above, this is the most important link by far between government and sports clubs, and it is enacted through national legislation. The 98 municipalities in Denmark manage publicly owned sports facilities and cover most of the costs for private non-profit facilities, which constitute a large part of the sports facilities in Denmark. The latest count in 2013 in a Danish context showed the presence of 1494 multifunctional sports halls of more than 800 m<sup>2</sup>, 5128 soccer pitches, 1934 tennis courts and 259 swimming pools along with many other types of facilities scattered across the country. The free use of these facilities and the reimbursement of two thirds of the cost of renting the privately owned ones for club members aged 25 or under, accounted for 83% of the total public funding for sports in 2012.

Municipalities also provide economic funding to clubs and associations in the form of a fee for each member aged 25 or under. In the municipalities that pay the lowest fee per member, clubs receive 3-4 euros per member, while in the municipalities that pay the most, the clubs receive 10-15 euros. The municipalities can also choose to financially support sports activities for adults, and in most municipalities, all members of sports clubs can use the municipally owned facilities free of charge. It has been estimated that the free use of facilities and the funding based on membership numbers amount to about half of the income of clubs.

Similarly to national government, the aims of municipalities in subsidizing sports are general. To be eligible for subsidized use of facilities, clubs must: be democratically organised; have a purpose in accordance with the 'Leisure Act' (but it is not clarified what is meant by this); and must provide annual accounts. As at the national level, almost none of the municipalities have indicated how they will promote the objectives they state. Specific goals in some municipalities apply almost entirely to the integration of disabled people.

Most municipalities have a committee for distributing municipal subsidies to voluntary sports clubs, leisure associations and associations for non-formal education in the so called 'evening schools'. The committee has members from the municipal board and representatives from sports and leisure associations. This committee decides, in principle, how to support sports clubs and other leisure associations within the realm of the 'Leisure Act'.

**The role of national governing bodies of sports / sports federations**

In Denmark, the three national sports organisations are directly supported by national government, through the national lottery proceeds. Thus, the amount of funding is contingent on lottery revenues.

The National Olympic Committee and Sports Confederation of Denmark (DIF) is an umbrella organisation for 61 national sports federations, with, in 2015, approximately 9,000 local clubs and 1,900,000 members. DIF governs both 'sports for all' and 'elite sports' and at the national level, the organisation is responsible for issues of common interest of the different sports federations. At a regional level, the sports federations are divided into district federations.

The Danish Gymnastics and Sports Associations (DGI) is the umbrella organisation for fifteen regional associations (decentralized units of DGI) which focus on 'sports for all' and not on elite sports. DGI has approximately 6,000 clubs and 1,500,000 members in 2015.

*The Danish Federation of Company Sports* (DFIF) has 80 local company sports associations with approximately 370,000 members. DFIF was founded in 1946, and it paved the way



for the development of a particular Danish tradition of merging the personal and professional sphere by engaging in sporting activities with colleagues.

Most of the sports clubs that are members of at least one sports organisation are members of both DIF and DGI (60 percent), while there is almost no overlap between DFIF and the other two organisations. The cost of club affiliation is extremely low, and therefore represents a very small proportion of the national sports organisations' income. All three organisations coordinate sport in Denmark and represent and advise clubs and federations in their dealings with the state and the public sector. They all organise tournaments, competitions and festivals, they devote considerable resources to courses for members and they provide support, advice and inspiration to sports clubs.

Every four years, funding from the Ministry of Culture to the three individual sports organisations is negotiated. The organisations formulate performance goals, which contribute to the realization of political objectives. Discussions result in a general agreement containing objectives and performance goals for the sports organisations. It is up to each of the sports organisations to decide which initiatives have to be launched to reach the goals in the agreement. The agreement is more a clarification of a social consensus on the role of sport in Danish society, rather than setting measurable targets.

### **Historical influences**

In 1849, the absolute monarch gave in to pressure from the people, and the new constitution, 'The Danish Constitutional Act', was enacted. It ensured the people's right to form associations and organisations, which prepared the ground for an expansion in civil engagement. The period towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century saw the rise of substantial popular movements from which the values and traditions of many associations are derived. For the development of the Danish welfare state, popular movements had an enormous political significance as democratic partners and opponents. The popular movements included the gymnastics and rifle shooting movement, the sports movement, and the creation of work-based sports clubs.

The formation of the welfare state led to a drastic increase in government support for sport, from 1945 to 1970, combined with relatively little political involvement in the field. The creation of a monopoly on national football pools in 1948 (including the lottery in 1989) and the enactment of the 'Leisure act' in 1969 remain vital to the economic and political autonomy of national sports organisations and local sports clubs respectively.

It characterizes voluntary organised sport in Denmark, where for more than 100 years there has been a competition between sports clubs internally, but also between sports clubs and other providers of sport and physical training. This includes adult education classes and, more recently, private sector fitness and sports centres.

Voluntary organised sport in Denmark is characterized on the one hand by a great independence from the state, but on the other hand is an integral part of the Danish welfare model. The different funding sources for the national sports federations and the clubs mean that there is a strong relationship between national government and the federations, and between municipal government and the clubs. But the relationship between national and local level organisations is weak.



## England

*Geoff Nichols*

### **The influence of national government organisations and legislation**

The Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) is responsible for sports policy and its 2015 strategy has also set targets for increasing the numbers and diversity of volunteers in sport. The DCMS funds Sport England which is a 'non-departmental public body' responsible for promoting sports participation. Sport England distributes approximately 20% of the National Lottery proceeds. In the year to December 2014, over £228m was distributed by Sport England in grants, many of these small and to sports clubs directly.

Thus central government policy is defined by the DCMS and implemented largely through Sport England. A policy of promoting 'social inclusion' was promoted by the 'New Labour' government from 1997, although the meaning of this was not clearly defined. This was replaced by the Conservative / Liberal Democrat coalition government of 2010 with an aspiration to increase volunteering as part of reducing the role of the state and promoting active citizenship in what was called a 'Big Society'. The present Conservative government, from May 2015, published a new strategy for sport through the DCMS in December 2015. The aims of this are: promoting health, individual, social and community development, and economic development. It aims to increase participation. It has not set targets for increasing the diversity of sports participants, but it has for those volunteering in sport. Sport England has responded to the DCMS strategy by producing its own (2016) in which it aspires to increase the number of sports participants and volunteers, and make both more representative of society; however with no specific targets.

Limiting immigration is a strongly debated political issue. Thus there are no government policies to increase the inclusion of immigrants through sport. In political opinion, the threats of uncontrolled immigration were, however unjustifiably, associated with membership of the EU, and was a factor in the referendum on EU membership being called in 2016 and its result. In contrast to national government approaches to immigrants, Sport England has strongly promoted increased participation for women, ethnic minorities and the disabled. The main policy to have an impact on sport since 2010 is economic, the considerable reduction in the budgets of local government, which restricts its ability to support participation through facility provision.

Sport England web resources for supporting volunteering and clubs were redesigned in 2015 and combined with those supporting clubs under 'club-matters':

<http://www.sportengland.org/sport-you/club-matters/>

This has drawn all the support for clubs together in one place and is accessible by any club. The Sport England website has links to the volunteering section of the websites of all the NGBs, and so a prospective volunteer can find opportunities in any particular sport in this way.

Sport England will be providing a total of almost £500m between 2013 and 2017 for 46 NGBs, within 'Whole Sport Plans'. In exchange, NGBs agree to raise participation by specific levels in their sport over a set time period. These levels of participation are being measured through Sport England's annual Active People Survey. If these targets are not met, funding has then been cut.

There is no legislation permitting free association in organisations such as sports clubs – such a right is assumed. The *Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006* required volunteers working with children [under the age of 18] and vulnerable adults to have their criminal records checked in order to assess if they were unsuitable for working with these groups. This check is now conducted by the Disclosure and Barring Service. This normally costs £44. The fee is waived for volunteers, although they still need to have a check made for each organisation they volunteer with.

### **The influence of regional government organisations and legislation**

In England there is not a significant relationship between a regional level of government and sports clubs. Sport England funds 45 County Sport Partnerships. The CSPs are mainly funded by Sport England and promote Sport England policies of increasing sports participation and activity. They are independent in the sense that each one has a membership of local stakeholders, such as local authorities, universities, members of the business community, NGBs and local sports clubs.

### **The influence of municipal (local) government organisations and legislation**

There is no legislation governing the relationship between local government and community sports clubs that obliges local government to give specific support. However, 38% of clubs hire or lease facilities from local government and these may be at a concessionary rate.

If clubs own their own facilities, and 21% do, they are required to pay rates to local government. However, if they are a charity, or have status as a ‘Community Amateur Sports Club’ [which gives similar benefits to being a charity but is easier to obtain], the club will automatically receive a concession of 80% on its rates. Local government can use its discretion to allow 100% rates relief, and can use this irrespective of the club being a charity or a CASC. 6,715 clubs have CASC status (out of the approximately 85,000 in England).

The major cuts in local government budgets, enacted by national government since 2010, have led to a more market-led approach to facility provision, such as sports clubs having to compete for facility use. The survey of clubs in this research project shows that access to facilities is the most significant threat to clubs’ existence.

Thus, despite national governments having sports strategies, the greatest immediate impact on sports clubs is not legislation, but the degree of support offered by local government, mainly through access to facilities. The economic policies of central government have an indirect impact on influencing the level of this support. More generally, England has an unequal income distribution compared to other European countries. This is associated with lower levels of sports participation, leisure time, volunteering and a set of (negative) health-related indicators. Central government economic and social policies influence this through permitting inequalities to grow and fostering a climate of competition between individuals. A system of governance through top-down, imposed measures of performance, such as those imposed on Sport England in the DCMS 2015 Sport Strategy and those imposed by Sport England on NGBs and county sport partnerships, reflects an attempt to ensure accountability for public funding. It could also be seen to reflect a lack of trust and consensus on objectives; in contrast to the Danish sports system.

### **The role of national governing bodies of sport / sports federations**

National governing bodies of sport provide support to clubs through professional development officers who are based regionally, regional volunteers and through web-based support. However, the level of support varies greatly between the richest four NGBs and the rest. Volunteers may take roles in the NGB structure right up to national level. NGBs may also provide insurance which covers members for third party claims. In return clubs pay an affiliation fee. In some sports, significant numbers of clubs do not affiliate to an NGB – normally where the clubs do not require a competitive structure, such as walking clubs.

The Sport and Recreation Alliance (SARA) (formerly The Central Council for Physical Recreation) campaigns for the interests of NGBs and sport in general. SARA has conducted sports club surveys in 2009, 2011 and 2013. SARA is funded by Sport England but, consistent with the independence of NGBs, stresses its independence from government.

### **Historical influences**

The infrastructure of approximately 85,000 sports clubs, mainly providing a single sport and with an average of 82 playing members (although this varies considerably), reflects the development of clubs from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. This followed the codification of much of modern sport through the establishment of NGBs in England. Clubs reflected a free association of individuals around a shared interest, but also a local identity as populations became rapidly urbanized. The almost complete reliance on volunteers to run the clubs initially reflected the amateur traditions of the early NGBs. It has been argued that the proliferation of clubs from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century reflected a society where there was room for civic associations to flourish.

A consequence of this development is that 21% of clubs in the survey for this research were founded before 1930, and 49% before 1975. Not only do they feel a strong independence from government, but they also have a perspective that they pre-date most governments and government policies. They do not regard themselves as a policy instrument and this independence can give rise to tensions with the NGBs, if the latter are responding to the conditions of Sport England funding. The small size of clubs, combined with an ethos of equality and antipathy to distinctions of power embodied in a formal management structure, means the same volunteers will take roles of governance and delivery. Social values supporting sport for the sake of its benefits to the individual and society carry over from the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Thus, local government takes a generally positive view towards volunteer-led sports clubs, despite a more recent market-oriented approach to providing local government services arising from the reduced budgets.

## **Germany**

*Christoph Breuer, Svenja Feiler & Jannik Disch*

### **The influence of national government organisations and legislation**

National government funding to community clubs is on the basis of subsidiarity; enshrined in *Article 30* of the German Constitution. This means as much decision making as possible is devolved to the 16 federal states. While the national government does not directly support

the community sports clubs, it directly funds elite level sport, e.g. Olympic training centres. Moreover, national sport federations receive financial support from national government particularly for training and scouting activities. In 2014, funding from national government amounted to a total of € 55 million for 31 Olympic sport federations (€ 52.6 million), and 23 non-Olympic sport federations (€ 2.4 million). This funding is generally based on two broad categories: basic funding and project funding. While basic funding is predominantly based on sporting success in the previous years, project funding is based on target agreements between the German Olympic Sports Confederation (DOSB) and its member federations. Additionally, national government support is given for participation in international championships and other domestic or international sporting competitions, as well as sports events of national interest and maintaining international sport relations.

Although there is no direct budget which is allocated from the state to the 16 federal states for sports, money from lottery revenue is either allocated to the federal states for sports or directly to the federal sport confederations. Beyond that, the Federal Ministry of the Interior supports social integration programmes of sports clubs with € 11 million per year for “Integration through sport”, which focuses on migrants and refugees. The federal states and municipalities can act relatively autonomously, depending on what sports policies they have decided. Apart from this general money for sports (e.g. for the building and renovation of sports facilities), the federal states and municipalities can respond to applications for funds from clubs and promote projects that clubs can apply to support. The federal states also fund sports federations.

National tax law confers several benefits to clubs. Revenue from membership is tax free; from asset management, tax is paid at 7%, and commercial activities are paid at the normal rate of 19%. Volunteers working for the clubs as coaches, instructors or caretakers are able to earn a lump sum of € 2,400 per year tax free. Volunteers working on the board level are able to receive a lump sum of € 720 per year tax free (the same person is not able to receive both types of lump sum). The volunteer hours for community sports clubs amounted to 24.1 million hours in Germany in 2012. To the extent that volunteers are paid by the clubs, this indirect subsidy is considerable.

### **The influence of regional government organisations and legislation**

As noted above, in Germany the greatest influence on sports clubs is from the 16 federal states who meet once a year to coordinate sports policy. This is largely independent of national government. The federal states give financial support to communities for the construction of sports facilities, for the payment of salaries of trainers and coaches, to fund the sports organisations at federal level, to meet the running costs of the associations of youth education and the education and training of sports teachers, and to fund sports research at universities. The priority of the federal states is the promotion of recreational sports inside and outside of sports organisations, although they also support elite sports.

The federal states provide direct subsidies to clubs and through municipalities (local government). In 2012, subsidies from local municipalities amounted to € 1,700 per club per year. In total, public funds from the local level for the 91,000 German sports clubs amounted to approximately € 156.6 million nationwide. Moreover, the federal states subsidized community sports clubs with approximately € 45.8 million (averaging € 500 per club).

### **The influence of municipal (local) government organisations and legislation**

At municipal level, sports programmes offered by community sports clubs are crucial to culture, education, youth, children, social matters, health, and the integration of migrants.

Local government is attempting to achieve these goals by giving direct subsidies to the sports organisations and indirect subsidies through the usage of sports facilities either for free or for a low fee, fiscal privileges and tax advantages. The overall expenditure for sports facilities, their modernization and maintenance in 2008 amounted to € 22.6 billion. More than 70% of investment and maintenance costs of public sports facilities were paid by the municipalities. The volunteer hours for community sports clubs amounted to 24.1 million hours in 2012, equating to a monetary value of € 4.3 billion.

Furthermore, local government is attempting to increase the collaboration of community sports clubs with schools, other sports clubs, kindergartens, or statutory health insurance, in the hope of providing easy access to a wide variety of sports and through this, to enhance the orientation of clubs towards public welfare. These elements illustrate the great importance of indirect financing in this sector, which the functioning of sports clubs greatly depends on.

### **The role of national governing bodies of sport / sports federations**

The German Olympic Sports Confederation (DOSB) represents the interests of its 98 member organisations. The member organisations of the DOSB unite 16 regional sports confederations (“Landessportbünde”), 62 national sports federations (“Spitzenverbände”) and 20 sports federations with special tasks. All member organisations are financially and organisationally independent from the DOSB, as are all community sports clubs.

Community sports clubs are firstly organised at the level of multiple sports into sports confederations (municipal, local and regional sports confederations), regardless of the disciplines/sports involved. Secondly, they are organised, at the level of specific disciplines/sports, into corresponding governing bodies (local, regional and national sports federations). Regional sports confederations have responsibilities similar to those of the DOSB, at the level of the federal state. They discuss the general direction of sports development, e.g. including task forces and workshops on regional, district and municipal level. Moreover, they coordinate the distribution of public subsidies from the regional governments for the education of coaches, trainers and managers, and of subsidies for the general development of a sport.

Regional sports confederations have policies in different areas, such as education, qualification, and integration. Also, the support of voluntary engagement and integration through sports programmes are the responsibility of the sports confederations. Each regional level also has a ‘Youth Sports department’ (“Sportjugend”). Through this, regional sports confederations provide support to youth sports in the clubs. For example, the Sportjugend deploys specialists for youth sports, educates young club members and partially funds leisure time activities. The Sportjugend also supports projects such as “Safe Sport”, a research project which aims to protect children and adolescents from sexual violence.

The national sports federations support sport-specific federations at the regional level to fulfil strategic and operational management tasks for their sport. The same applies to sport-specific federations on the regional level, which represent the sport federations at lower levels, i.e. the districts and municipalities. In particular, their tasks include the recruitment, selection and support of young talented sports players, as well as the education and devel-



opment of coaches. Sports clubs pay a membership fee to the respective federation and also when registering a team to play in a competitive league.

Community sports clubs can apply to the sports federations for funds associated with specific projects initiated by the federations, or to the DOSB for projects initiated by the DOSB.

For example, the DOSB is supporting a project which aims to build sustainable structures for the recruitment of volunteers. The measures for participating clubs include an analysis of the executive management, allocation of tasks and duties, job descriptions, development of an acknowledgment culture, etc. Another programme of the DOSB is “Integration through Sport” (see also above). The DOSB assists clubs in their integration work conceptually and organisationally. A further example is “Die Sterne des Sports” (stars of sport) which is a project of the DOSB that aims to honour the innovative ideas and engagement of sports clubs. In 2016, a club in the federal state of Hesse won the prize of € 10,000 for welcoming and integrating refugees through offering them free membership. Clubs can also apply for funds for projects that they have initiated themselves. If the DOSB of the regional federations perceives the project as reasonable and value adding, it will be approved and financially supported (for an example see above, “Sterne des Sport”). In 2010, subsidies from sports organisations amounted to approximately € 110 million, resulting in an average of about € 1,200 per club.

The DOSB leadership academy (“DOSB Führungs-Akademie”) provides training in management for club officials. Examples are workshops in the area of strategy and project development, as well as management, development of leadership guidelines, workflows and organisational charts, and job descriptions. Moreover, clubs can learn how to receive financial support from federations, how to deal with accounting standards, and how to run their own workshops and conferences.

### **Historical influences**

About a third of the German population is a member of one of the 91,000 sports clubs. These clubs provide multiple sports, and also develop young and talented athletes to participate at elite level. Clubs provide a feeling of community, conviviality, social inclusion and common purpose in a different way from commercial providers such as fitness centres. German clubs initially developed from gymnastics clubs in the 19th century. Following the 1848 revolution, these also had a political function. After the First World War, British sports were incorporated, leading to multi-sports clubs, although some clubs were founded for individual sports. Under the National-Socialist regime, sports administration was centralised as sport became a vehicle for national status and prestige.

Following 1945 there was a strong post-war reaction against the centralisation of sports and a desire to re-establish sports as part of civil society. As a consequence, the role of national government is limited, and Germany does not have an individual ministry of sports (responsibility for sport is part of the Federal Ministry of the Interior). Instead, federal states and municipalities develop policies relatively autonomously and have the greatest influence on sports in their respective region. This explains the source of financial support for clubs: 3.3 % coming from national government, 17.1 % from regional government and 79.6 % from local government. Thus, the local government level is by far the most important for the provision of facilities and the delivery of sports services.



The German Olympic Sports Confederation (DOSB) was formed in 2006 from the merger of the National Olympic Committee for Germany (NOC) and the German Sports Association, DSB). These two organisations were themselves founded in 1949 after the establishment of the Federal Republic of Germany. The DSB was created to represent gymnastics and sports clubs, rather than to direct them, again as a contrast to the centralisation under National-Socialism. The merger of the DOSB and NOC represents the integration of mass participation and elite-level sport. Thus, the German sports club system lays the foundation for top-level Olympic sports.

## Hungary

*Szilvia Perényi*

### **The influence of national government organisations and legislation**

The national government organisations and legislation have to be understood within the rapid transition from state socialism to a free-market economy, which began in 1998/9. The relationship between national government and sport changed from being centrally controlled and funded. The transition has involved six different governments since 1989 and therefore there has been a discontinuity in sports policy and the governance of sport. It has also involved redefining the relationship between the state and civil society.

In 2010, sport was declared to be one of the strategic branches of Hungarian society and economy by the newly elected government. The Act on Sport (2011) strengthened sports participation as a right; *“all men shall have the right to sport and this right is guaranteed by the state, regardless of whether it be competitive sport, leisure, student and college-university sport, sport for the disabled or the preservation of health”*. Within the strategic restructuring of sports organisations, new funding procedures, projects tackling grass-roots sports and the renewal of sports infrastructures are being implemented.

In Hungary, national government responsibility for sport is administered by the state secretariat of sports, which operates under the Ministry of Human Capacities. The state secretariat coordinates sports affairs within the Hungarian government, for the civil sphere of sport, and on national and international forums. It prepares and coordinates legal regulations and national and international grant procedures. It negotiates government funding for sports and distributes it to the civil sphere. It oversees two state-funded, but independently-operating organisations as well: the National Sports Institute and the National Sports Centres (restructured under the 2011 Act on Sport).

In the Hungarian sports sector, civil organisations, non-profit private organisations and profit-oriented enterprises can operate and provide sport services. The 2004 Act on Sport defined sports clubs and sports enterprises as the two basic organisational forms in the sport subsystem. Within this framework, sports enterprises can choose from several legal forms based on a complicated regulation, logic. Limited companies and shareholder groups are allowed in competition sports, while in leisure sport, independent sole-traders and forms of joint companies are also permitted, besides the classical and traditional form of sports clubs. Sports clubs and sports foundations represent the non-profit sector in sport, but non-profit limited companies can also be found within sport.

However, sports clubs are the traditional and basic units of the Hungarian sports sector. They can be formed as civil initiatives by an association of ten individuals, according to its legal statutes, and must be registered in court (1989. II. Act, 2-3.§;6 -7.§, and the recently modified Civil Law, 2011). Clubs have their own bank accounts, and are subject to tax payments. Clubs must have an annual general meeting, where professional and financial reports of the past year and budgets for the following year are approved. In between these meetings, a voluntary board is responsible for daily operation. In general, boards are led by a president and board members. Most clubs attempt to appoint economically or politically influential individuals to their boards with the hope of additional support for their programmes.

The *Sports Act of 2004* allowed clubs to re-register as not-for-profit companies, and so the operation of the clubs became more business-like, using managerial methods adopted from the private sector. This process also introduced the use of paid management staff in the leadership of these “companies”, replacing the volunteer role of the club president. Paid managers are responsible for day-to-day management tasks and are involved in the strategic planning of the club. In these newly-formed, non-profit establishments, volunteer work in the strategic planning and in the daily operation is reduced. Volunteers are only involved with national, international or world events.

From 2011, the *Amendments of the 2004 Act on Sport 2011* created a structure in which tasks are grouped together and assigned to responsible institutions so as to eliminate overlapping responsibilities and create a transparent financing-support system with clear control. Under this act, the Hungarian Olympic Committee (HOC) was appointed as the non-governmental umbrella organisation, and became responsible for distributing all state funding for sport in five key areas: (i) Olympic sports, (ii) non-Olympic sports, (iii) student and university sports, (iv) leisure sports, and (v) disabled sports. All sports federations which represent the different sports were structured under their respective division within the HOC, and continued to organise their competition system, national teams, regional structure and club members as before.

Sports organisations receive funding from the state budget and from grants, and they have their own resources from donations, sponsorship, events, and memberships. The state budget is distributed by HOC through the above-mentioned five branches. The allocation follows the elite performance, international success and talent management logic, which provides the dominant proportion of funding to Olympic and Paralympic sports and a minority of resources to sport for all causes. Leisure sports received 1.9% of the total of sport-related funding, while student and university sport, disabled sport and non-Olympic sports shared 25% of total sports funding distributed by HOC in 2011.

In 2011, a funding method was introduced for so called “spectacle team sports” named as the new Financial Support Scheme (TAO). This allowed private companies to give support to clubs, federations, municipalities, non-profit companies, companies, foundations, or HOC in relation to five team sports (football, basketball, handball, ice hockey and water polo) and receive a 19% reduction on their tax liabilities. The supported sporting programmes were required to target sport for under-18-year-olds. Funding could be used for participation in competitions; wages, salaries and training of sport professionals; facility rental, reconstruction and construction; or sports equipment. National sports federations had a right of approval of the sport-related content of the sports programmes submitted under this funding method.

In the 2011/12 financial year 1,550 sports development programmes were submitted, valued at 900 million euros, 75% of which referred to club programmes and 25% to federation programmes. The overwhelming majority was in football (69.9%), in comparison to basketball (11.8%), handball (7.9%), ice hockey (6.3%) and water polo (3.2%). 744 bids were awarded. These sports experienced a 41% increase in participation between 2001 and 2014.

In addition, a new sports development funding programme was enacted to run from 2014-2020, which allocated new state-funding resources (approx. 3 million per year) to 16 traditionally successful Hungarian sports, e.g. fencing, kayak-canoe, swimming, gymnastics, judo and wrestling. This programme was broadened with lower levels of funding to 18 non-Olympic, mostly outdoor sports. The 'leisure sports' branch still lacks central funding solutions, which is associated with low sport participation rates in the country. Although participation in mass sporting events in running, cycling, and long-distance swimming have become more popular, citizens above the age of 18 prefer individual sports in their leisure time and practise sports outside of any organisational frame.

Funding from betting is channelled into sport as well. The 2011 Amendments on the 2004 I Act on Sport stipulated the distribution of 12% of tax revenues from lotteries, and 50% of tax revenues from sports betting, which is used to fund football, where funding is distributed to member clubs by the national federation of football.

Volunteer involvement is regulated by the 2005 LXXXVIII törvény on voluntary activities in the public interest. The act articulates volunteer involvement as an activity "with public aim" and carried out within a host organisation "without compensation" by "any person with legal capacity above the age of ten". Volunteers, as regulated by the act, may receive compensation in kind for their contribution in the form of travel cards, accommodation, uniforms, meals, and may also receive a monthly amount, which equals up to 20% of the minimum wage without being taxed. The 2011, CXC Act on National education also refers to volunteer involvement as being in accordance with section 4, §15. Before completing their final exams for middle level education (high school), all students must complete 50 hours community work with a partner organisation of their school.

### **The influence of regional government organisations and legislation**

In Hungary, there are 7 NUTS regions (Central Hungary; Central Transdanubia; Western Transdanubia; Southern Transdanubia; Northern Hungary; Northern Great Plain; Southern Great Plain), which consist of 20 municipalities. The 7 NUTS regions do not have any structure for sport. The regional structure of sport in Hungary follows only municipality logic, which is also according to government structure and functions.

Following the changes in 1989-90, the regional centres of the national sports structure were weakened. Up to then, each municipality had a Municipal Sport Directorate. These were eliminated. Today there are sports committees on the municipal and city council levels of administration. In some cases these committees are independent, but in most cases they are combined with other areas, such as education, culture, youth, and tourism (in these cases, "sport" is the last word in the name of the committee).

The Hungarian Olympic Committee does not have regional (municipality level) and local structures. However, through their national member federations, the five new divisions maintain a structure of regional and local federations and associations. On the regional and

local level, the sports committees of municipalities have responsibilities in relation to organising and funding regional and local sports (leisure/student/disability sports) and to financing sports facilities. The national sports federations maintain their regional and local structures, organise competitive sport, but in most cases, they are not involved in leisure sport activities. A separate regional structure exists to promote sport for all; mass participation.

Regional sports federations exist in sport with large competition systems, and with long traditions in Hungarian sport, such as football, athletics, basketball, handball, etc. New sports, such as floorball and billiards, do not have such structures. Regional sports federations (in 20 municipalities) have the task of operating the regional competition system, mainly at the amateur level. They distribute information to clubs, manage entries, arrange the availability of referees or judges, and book sporting facilities. Clubs register for regional competitions and pay a participation fee for entry to these competitions. They also contribute to the costs of referees and judges. Competitions are organised at all levels and for all ages. These federations act in coordination with national federations in designing the yearly competition schedule of a sport.

### **The influence of municipal (local) government organisations and legislation**

Due to the decentralisation process following the political changes, sport became a local, municipality responsibility. Therefore, the operation of sports clubs became largely dependent upon the support given by municipalities and local governments; they made decisions on the choice of the sports to be supported, along with the forms and amounts of financial resources provided. The 2011 CLXXXIX Act on Local Municipalities formalizes this task, as it named sport and leisure sport as one of the areas to be supported by local municipalities, districts of the capitol and the capitol. However, there are regulations governing the magnitude and the methods of supporting sport.

The 2011 CLXXII Amendments to the 2004 I. Act on Sport regulated in detail the role of local governments in relation to sport, and also stated that central financial resources shall be allocated to fund sport-related tasks in the form of grants. It also provided harmonisation with other budgetary regulations on sport and resulted in a more regulated legal environment around sport. However, the normative financial support to local governments was eliminated in the 2011 amendments; therefore, the support of municipalities to sports organisations is not legally defined.

Consequently, sport became dependent on the financial abilities of local municipalities to support it; in more developed regions, sport gained a more advantageous position, while regions with less economic strength had fewer resources to invest money in the support of sport. Also, the settlement composition level of central government funding of regions and municipalities had an influence, as the higher distribution of small settlements created more challenges for sports facility development, and the creation or maintenance of diversity in offering sporting practices, for example. The consideration of the local governments and their relationship to sport influences the allocated financial support provided. Accordingly, the attitude of municipality leaders towards sport is a critical factor in the funding and development of sports on the local level even today. In cities where the mayor likes and supports sport, both sports facilities and sports programmes became part of the city strategy and were also used in city marketing; thus their funding was more generous than in locations where the leadership

of the cities had no such devotion to sport.

With few exceptions, sporting facilities in general are not owned by sports clubs. The ownership of these facilities is attached to municipalities or the state. Their operation is managed by municipality-owned companies or by schools. Accordingly, sports clubs are obliged to pay rent when using school or municipality sports halls or fields. The sports facility problem was assisted by the TAO programme. In the first year of its introduction, more than a hundred artificial grass football fields were built, as well as arenas for basketball and handball, and ice rinks for ice hockey. Furthermore, swimming pools for water polo were constructed. The maintenance of these municipality facilities is assisted by TAO funds, as clubs may apply for support for facility rentals as well. The regulations require all newly-built sporting facilities to allocate 20% of operation capacity to public usage, specifically for sport for all purposes (Act on Sport 2004 modification).

The municipality fund distribution is, firstly, not automatic to clubs; secondly, it does not include all clubs; thirdly, it mostly supports elite success. Clubs with athletes representing sports with potential at national and international competition level may have greater chances of receiving funding, and this will be at higher levels. Most clubs do not receive this support. Those clubs supported may receive a portion of their yearly budget, of which a part would be spent on the use of municipality-owned sporting facilities. The use of funding money is closely monitored. In cases where the club is able to access additional income through providing public services, the funding of the following year may be lowered by the municipality.

### **The role of national governing bodies of sport / sports federations**

In the new sports structure enacted in 2012, the Hungarian Olympic Committee (HOC) became the central umbrella NGO organisation, under which all national federations belong. HOC allocates all state funding for sport to different areas and causes, by which it became a *quasi-civil* organisation, with a substantial expansion in size and mainly funded by the state. It operates five sub-branches (divisions), as previously mentioned (Olympic sports, non-Olympic sports, student and university sports, leisure sports, and disabled sports). The president of each division is appointed as a vice-president of HOC, and delegated to the President's Board. All sports federations (83 HOC-endorsed, national sports federations in 2014; 42 in Olympic sports and 41 in non-Olympic sports) are structured under their respective division within HOC, and organise their competition system, national teams, regional structure, and member clubs.

Non-Olympic sports, student and university sports, leisure sports, and disabled sports are represented by the following organisations:

- *Hungarian Sport-for-All Federation* (MSZSZ) is an official national partner organisation of the Hungarian Olympic Committee (HOC) and also of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) on issues of leisure sports. It has a regional organisational structure and has over 500 member organisations nationwide.
- *Hungarian Association for College and University Sports* (MEFS) oversees competition and leisure sports for higher education, maintains its competition system, and manages participation for Hungarian athletes enrolled at colleges and universities.
- *The Hungarian Student Sports Federation* (MDSZ) is the national umbrella organisa-



tion for student sports organisations. It has operated its national competition system, the so-called “Student Olympics”, in eighteen sports over the last 26 years, including more than 2,000 schools annually. It represents 424 legally registered, independent Student Sports Clubs and 2,908 Student Sports “Assemblies” (kör), which operate within schools. Participants are in the 7-18 years age range.

- *Hungarian Paralympic Committee* (HPC) is the national umbrella sport organisation responsible for developing a competition sports structure and classification system for athletes with disabilities that manages, organises and funds national teams. It has 24 member organisations; national sports federations that operate national teams for disabled athletes.

### **Historical influences**

In common with other European countries, sports clubs were initially developed in the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century by aristocrats to pursue traditional sports, such as fencing and rowing. The range of sports was widened, especially with the introduction of football, and clubs became more communal. From the 1920s there was a considerable growth in clubs, which became expressions of community and identity, although these identities might be ethnic, religious or occupational, and in this sense were exclusive to particular groups. They were male dominated. Thus, prior to World War 2, an independent sports club system had been established.

After World War 2, the independence of the clubs were perceived as a threat by the centralised state. Central state control used sport as a means of suppressing independent civil society. At the same time, elite sporting achievement was a means of expressing national identity and status. Success at this level coincided with a focus on a narrow range of sports, which is reflected in recent funding of the same “spectacle sports”. The withdrawal of central direction and funding with the change to a market economy in 1989/90 resulted in a weak and neglected club system, and the privatisation of state companies, even the sales of sports facilities, sports fields, and sport-related real-estate. Amended tax legislation disadvantaged sports clubs.

Similar to other Central-European countries, Hungary found it difficult to achieve the best balance between the public, private and civil spheres and maintained a prioritised role for elite sport as a symbol of national identity and political prestige. There has been a period of instability as civil society has tried to find its new role between state subsidy and autonomy. Due to extended state involvement up to 1998, sports organisations in the civil sphere are weak and underdeveloped. Volunteering in clubs is limited – for example, coaching is always done by professionals, although the pay for this is low, so it could be regarded as a degree of volunteering.

The public perception of ‘volunteering’ and ‘sports club’ is a product of these historical influences. If the clubs are again going to represent an independent civil society, volunteering must also be seen as a reflection of this, rather than as a duty to support the state. Young people with a more post-modern value orientation view volunteering as a way of gaining new experiences and connections with other people, and are mainly involved with sporting events.

The paradox in Hungarian sport, arising from the historical development, is that the success of elite athletes at world and continental events contrasts with the low sport participation



rates of the total population. With its eight gold medals at the 2012 London Olympics, Hungary was among the top ten nations, placing it among countries that are much bigger in size and that also represent greater economic strength. Parallel to that, the Special Eurobarometer on Sports (2009) reports that 23% of Hungarians take part in sports regularly or with some regularity, which is much below the EU mean (40%), and 53% of Hungarians are completely inactive.

During the different political periods with different approaches to sport, the number of sports clubs, their divisions, sports professionals, and registered club members has declined. New sporting trends are following the post-modern individualisation trends, with a preference for light sports activity with less regular commitment and no organised sport and club affiliation. Sports clubs providing opportunities for mass participation experienced a 30% growth in participation between the ages of 7-18, due to the new sports development strategy and new financial support scheme (TAO).

Clubs are open to include members from any segment of society – ethnicity, religion, occupation - but the measures of sports participation show social inequalities. Exclusion is noticeable on the basis of ‘ability’, as the majority of the clubs are seen predominantly as a place for elite and competitive athletes to develop – and so are not suitable to match the trend towards more individualistic and non-competitive sports. After the age of 18, club membership declines in clubs that focus on competition sport. Leisure sport organisations have limited ability and capacity to offer sporting services for citizens in older age groups. People participate rather more outside of organisational (club) affiliation.

## **The Netherlands**

*Harold van der Werff & Jo Lucassen*

### **The influence of national government organisations and legislation**

The Ministry of Public Health, Welfare and Sports (VWS) is responsible for the national policies on sports and regularly includes sports clubs in these policies. This ministry focuses on sport and health, sports participation for all and talent development. The budget spent on sports by the ministry amounts to 130 million Euros. The Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (OCW) determines the policies with regard to PE and sports at school. Similarly to Denmark, a ‘civil right of association’ is included in the national constitution of 1848. In the constitution, the government is also obliged to create conditions for inhabitants for civil and cultural development and leisure. Apart from this, there is no legal basis elaborated for a distinct sports policy by the national government.

Since the 1960s, sports clubs have increasingly been used to contribute to national and local government policies. On the national level, social inclusion is an important policy aim, e.g. the integration of ethnic minorities in society. Sports clubs have been attributed a distinct role in this policy. They are never subsidized directly by the national government, but through municipalities or national governing bodies for sport. Several target groups are under-represented in sports participation and in sports club membership, and the Ministry of Public Health, Welfare and Sports supports various programmes to stimulate sports participation and physical activities in the target groups, and indirectly to support sports club membership.

These programmes usually focus on groups like youth ('Youth in Motion', 'Sport is Cool', 'Participating all youth through sports', 'Neighbourhood, Education and Sport Impulse' and 'Sport Impulse'), women ('Sports, even I do it'), handicapped people ('Special Heroes'), migrant groups ('Sport is Cool', 'Participating all migrant youth through sports') and the elderly.

The current national programmes (e.g. sports and physical activity in the neighbourhood) aim at close cooperation between national and local governments, e.g. by linking funds. The local programmes demand cooperation between local organisations, such as schools, health care, welfare clubs, sports clubs, neighbourhood organisations, police and entrepreneurs. These programmes focus on sport as a means to achieve social objectives, such as increasing social participation in general, social integration, healthy lifestyles (e.g. reducing overweight, diabetes and cardiovascular diseases) and creating safe neighbourhoods. For some of these national programmes, local sports clubs can only participate and acquire subsidies if their national federation or their local municipality is participating. In other cases, all sports clubs can apply for a programme grant.

An example of a national programme instigated by the VWS and OCW is 'Impulse community schools, sports and culture', in which 'combination' officials were recruited to increase the supply of sports activities by stimulating the local cooperation between schools, sports clubs and other social organisations. The aim was to have 2,250 full-time jobs for combination officials in 2012. The first combination officials started in 2008. In 2012, the Minister of VWS decided to expand the number of combination officials to 2,900 full-time jobs by the end of 2016 and to broaden their tasks. In addition, the name combination official was changed to neighbourhood sports coaches. In January 2015, there were 2,607 full-time jobs for these neighbourhood sports coaches. Both ministries are still contributing.

Legislation allows volunteers of sports clubs to receive a remuneration for time committed and expenses of € 4.50 per hour (€ 2.50 per hour for people younger than 23 years old), with a maximum of € 1,500 per year, without paying tax. Almost half of the Dutch sports clubs have volunteers that benefit from this tax measure. Other legislative measures for sports clubs concern a VAT threshold for fundraising activities (max. 50,000 Euros, including canteen income), for courses for members and an adapted VAT rate for the provision of sports facilities. Of importance to sports clubs is also the legislation on lotteries, through which the Lotto, initiated by national sports federations, is protected. Part of the supportive activities from governing bodies for sports clubs depends on lotto grants.

Recent national legislation that affects sports clubs indirectly is the *Social Support Act 2015* (Wmo) and the *Participation Act 2015*. Both acts redistribute public tasks between the central and local government. The Social Support Act 2015 redesigned legislation introduced in 2007. This required the municipal delivery of social care, such as for the disabled, elderly or mentally ill, to incorporate volunteer caregivers. The 2015 Act reduced the budget for public social support by €140m. The Participation Act aims to help people find labour or paid work. Voluntary work is seen as a useful substitute and preparation. Though sport can contribute in realizing the policy goals, sport is not specifically mentioned in either act.

### **The influence of regional government organisations and legislation**

The twelve provinces in the Netherlands mainly support local development programmes and act as intermediaries between the local and national levels. The provinces finance provincial

sports councils to support sports organisations, such as sports clubs, and provide information, knowledge and advice to sports clubs. There are no legal relationships and no laws at the regional level. Support and policies at this level have become less important as fewer provinces have a distinct sports policy. The reason that sport is not a juridical matter at the regional level is that in the Netherlands any matter can only be regulated at two of three policy levels (national, regional or local).

### **The influence of municipal (local) government organisations and legislation**

Local government normally has a set of policies to increase sports participation and develop sports facilities. The provision of facilities by communities has increased in the sixties and seventies, alongside the development of the welfare state and the growing demand. The 393 municipalities in the Netherlands have a total annual budget for sports of 1.4 billion, most of which is for building and maintaining sports facilities. Local governments provide facilities with reduced fees to sports clubs, but are not legally obliged to do so. The allocation of local subsidies and reduced fees have for decades been connected to the degree of participation of youth in sports clubs, but over recent years this has been changing and a wider contribution to local society is demanded.

In 2012, two-third of the sports clubs reported decreasing subsidies from their local municipality in comparison to the year before. In 2013, 93% of the Dutch local municipalities had actually cut their sport budget, or were planning to do so in the near future. However, in other policy areas the economic cuts seem to be more severe.

As a result of recent cuts in municipal public sector budgets, voluntary organisations are encouraged to take a greater role in maintaining sports facilities or implementing new legislation, like the social support act and participation act. For example, sports clubs may provide volunteer roles for people who cannot find paid employment, e.g. in maintaining local sports facilities, such as swimming pools. Voluntary organisations may have a greater sensitivity to local needs. The situation is similar in England, where from 2010 national government's desire to shrink the state and expand volunteering as part of a 'Big Society' coincided with major cuts in local government budgets.

Local sports clubs are also invited to participate in national policy programmes in which national and local forces join in aiming to enhance active living, social cohesion, etc. Sports clubs can adapt activities for members and offer low threshold sports services for non-members in the neighbourhood or at schools to support these programmes.

Sports clubs that are unwilling or unable to provide these additional services may sometimes lose (a part of) their local subsidies, such as a discount on the rent of sports facilities or compensations for taxes. To participate in these programmes, clubs have to invest time and energy in new activities for people, of whom the majority would not become club members. For example, research has found that sports clubs that provided training and clinics for schools did not attract many new youth members. However, sports clubs continue to organise activities within these municipal programmes. The programmes make the club more visible in the community and may attract new members in the future.

Several regulatory responsibilities are decentralized and belong to the jurisdiction of municipalities. Each municipality has its own General Local Regulations (APV). The APV is the collection of municipal regulations in the field of public order and safety. Sports clubs have to

pay a property tax for sports facilities. In some municipalities, sports clubs receive a subsidy to compensate for this tax. Furthermore, clubs are charged for using public roads for events.

### **The role of national governing bodies of sports federations**

In the Netherlands, the sports federations are organised by sport. In some cases a federation represents two or more related sports, like swimming, water polo, diving and synchronized swimming. In 2015, 76 sports federations were affiliated to the Dutch Olympic Committee (NOC\*NSF), which is the national sports umbrella organisation for all federations. The sports federations organise competitions at all levels, from local to national and international tournaments. The federations provide training courses for coaches, referees, management and administrative staff. Many volunteers in sports clubs participate in these courses. Most of the federations also organise conferences to keep the clubs and their representatives informed on the latest developments in their field. Almost 5,000 volunteers on a national and regional level do a great deal of the governing work in the federations. Three quarters of the federations also have paid staff, amounting to 1,200 full-time jobs.

The concept of so-called open clubs, recently launched by NOC\*NSF, aims to increase the cooperation between sports clubs and other local organisations. These are clubs that not only focus on the needs of their own members, but also of (potential) sports participants and the community at large. Open clubs are able to transcend the interests of their own sport and work together with other sports suppliers and/or with other sectors (e.g. health care, community work, education). They participate in local activities like organising sports activities at schools and in the National Sports Week, but also participate in local networks. In 2013, research found that 32% of the sports clubs meet the criteria of an open club. However, they also found that 45% of the sports clubs in the Netherlands believe that sports clubs only exist to provide sports opportunities for their own members only. Only a quarter of the sports clubs felt they should play a larger role within the community and participate in government policy programmes. Policy makers should be aware of this.

### **Historical influences**

The right of association was installed in the constitution of the Netherlands in 1848. It gave civilians an opportunity to associate for all kinds of purposes. This opportunity was greedily used for many civil activities, and from the 1860s onwards, also to establish sports clubs, of which some 10,000 already existed before World War 2. Almost all sports clubs were dedicated to a separate branch of sport, and this is still the case. The diffusion of the association as a civil institution in the Netherlands has been strongly strengthened by the emancipation of religious minorities and of workers. The association principle was a vehicle for sovereignty in its own ranks and the rise of associations can be considered as central to the development of a strong civil society in the Netherlands.

After World War 2, many old associations were re-established and new ones were formed. A period of reconstruction was followed by decades of growing welfare and a widening of the functions of the national and local government, resulting in a welfare state. The formation of the welfare state led to a drastic increase in local government support for sport, from 1945 to 1970, combined with relatively little political involvement in the field of sports.

From the eighties onwards, the welfare state has come under debate and a gradual demoli-

tion can be observed in favour of a more private and business-oriented organisation of public services. Besides sports clubs, other providers of sports opportunities have become more important (fitness, informal groups, commercial sport centres). Nevertheless sports clubs are proving to be relatively stable institutions and for that reason are still important partners for government.

Voluntary organised sport in the Netherlands is characterized on the one hand by a great independence from the state. On the other hand, it is closely linked to the provision of public services in communities. The joint ambitions and financial links between the national sports federations, their clubs and local and national government resulted in a strong relationship and mutual dependence.

## **Norway**

*Ørnulf Seippel*

### **The influence of national government organisations and legislation**

The influence of government has to be understood as being the consequence of relationships between levels of government and levels of the organisation of sport. The Norwegian Olympic and Paralympic Committee and Confederation of Sports (NIF) is an umbrella organisation that organises all 54 national sports federations in Norway. The 54 federations organise and manage individual sports and represent 11,409 clubs. Some federations have regional levels of organisation at county level, while smaller federations may only have regional levels of organisation to cover larger areas of the country. In each of Norway's 19 counties, regional confederations serve as collective bodies for sports. At the municipal level, there are approximately 366 sports councils. The sports councils form part of NIF's organisational structure, and consist of all sports clubs in the municipalities that are members of NIF. Thus, there are two parallel structures of sport between the levels of the NIF and the clubs, the sports federations at national and regional level, and the county levels of confederations and municipal level of local sports councils. At the level of the club, some clubs own their facilities, some use facilities owned by municipalities, and some share ownership with other clubs, or with municipalities.

Less than half of state funding for sport is distributed through NIF. The rest is used for facilities. State funding is based on lottery money – 'Norsk Tipping' has organised the national lotteries since World War 2. This is being reviewed as foreign lotteries attempt to enter the Norwegian market.

At national government level, the Ministry of Culture is responsible for sport, through the Department of Sport and Policy (DSP). Half of the public funding from the DSP is spent on grants for facility construction. The rules for applying for financial support for sports facilities are outlined in the document "*On Grants for Facilities for Sports and Physical Activity 2006*". Sports clubs and municipalities can apply to the DSP for grants of a third of the cost of building sports facilities. It is expected that a third of the cost will come from the club and a third from the municipality. Facilities funded through this arrangement have to be open to the public for at least 40 years, and should not generate profits for the owners. A proposal from a sports club would need to be integrated into the plans of a municipality. The application



would go through a county level of sports organisation to the DSP. The rest of national public funding is spent on running the NIF. In the late 1990s, it was decided that 10% of national government funding would be distributed more directly to clubs through the local Sports Councils at the municipal level.

There is no national legislation in Norway specifically relating to sports clubs. A right of free association is assumed. The latest of a series of three white papers, in 2012, aims to strengthen voluntary sport, develop a sound relationship between the voluntary sector and public sector and promote 'sport for all'. Groups of special importance are youth, the disabled and those not active. Sports clubs play an important role in achieving these aims; however, a club's participation is entirely voluntary. Clubs may apply for funding to provide activities for the targeted groups. National government policies are also aimed at providing possibilities for those operating outside sports clubs.

### **The influence of regional government organisations and legislation**

As noted above, regional levels of both the 54 national sports federations and the 19 counties coordinate competition at this level and have an overview of grant applications. However, they do not have a major influence.

### **The influence of municipal (local) government organisations and legislation**

Most municipalities play an important role in providing sports facilities that clubs use. There are many municipalities (relative to the population) and there are significant differences in sports policies, because municipalities vary in size, wealth and the extent to which they are concerned with sport. For example; municipalities differ over whether clubs have to pay for the use of facilities, and if so, how much they pay. When clubs apply for funding for facilities from the state, through the NIF, they have to document that their plans are integrated with municipality plans for sport. This ensures that the club's activities are consistent with municipal level sports policies.

### **The role of national governing bodies of sports federations**

The NIF and the parallel structures of the national sports organisations and federations is described above.

### **Historical influences**

In Norway, a set of national sports representative organisations was established between 1861 and the 1920s. These represented traditional sports, such as shooting and skiing, as well as those imported from England, most notably football, and gymnastics from Germany and Sweden. In the 1920s, a separate set of workers' sports federations was established, as a reaction to the bourgeois profile of the existing federations. Thus, from 1924 to the end of World War 2, there were two sets of organisations with two sets of competitions (leagues). These merged after World War 2.

The historical development of the national sports organisations and the regional and local sport councils has led to tensions in sports policy between elite sport and mass participation. For example, the promotion of 'elite youth sport' is ambiguous because it is both implying elite levels of participation, but also developing the participation of young people as a policy



of social inclusion. Thus, the word ‘elite’ has negative social connotations for those wanting to increase youth sport generally.

Norway is one of the Nordic countries characterized by greater economic equality than the rest of Europe, higher levels of trust, volunteering and sports participation, and a strong welfare state. It has a strong tradition of sports participation, especially associated with outdoor activities. A considerable growth in club membership since the 1960s and 70s, and a broadening of membership to include more women and children, represents an economically prosperous nation, with greater equality. The growth in the number of clubs has been encouraged at the same time by the growth in sports facilities. The growth in the number of specific sports associations, from 24 in 1946, to 54 in 2014, reflects the survival of traditional sports, such as skiing, alongside the introduction of new sports.

While physical activity levels remain high, the largest percentage of those participating in sport and physical activity do so on their own – out of a club context – and this proportion is rising. At the same time, the percentage of adults participating in sports clubs is declining, and the percentage in fitness centres is increasing. These trends correspond to a slight reduction in the number of sports clubs since 1999. Exactly the same trends in participation and clubs are apparent in England, and can be attributed to a fragmentation of leisure time. In England, this is also reflected in a trend to ‘episodic’ [time-limited] volunteering.

Norwegian culture is reflected in the representatives of sports clubs viewing their clubs as generally contributing to the quality of social life – the ‘social good’ – rather than just offering an opportunity to play a particular sport. In this way, there is a natural overlap between the aims of the club and social policy objectives, which may not be so closely aligned in other countries. In both, sport is assumed to be generally ‘good’: the vision of NIF, public authorities and the voluntary sports organisations has been ‘sport for all’. However, this does not mean that it is easy for public authorities to persuade clubs to do other activities in addition to sport. For example, attempts to make sports clubs implement general health promotion policies have been unsuccessful.

## **Poland**

*Monika Piątkowska*

### **The influence of national government organisations and legislation**

Within national government, the Ministry of Sport and Tourism is responsible for developing competitive and recreational sport, supervising all the sports federations in Poland.

The Polish Government has not run a policy directly focused on sports clubs until 2016. Currently, the Ministry of Sport and Tourism has developed the ‘Sport Development Programme by 2020’, which focuses on the popularisation and development of sport. This programme redefines the role of sports clubs in Poland, from predominantly being identified with professional sport to a place whose primary purpose is to provide opportunities for the physical activity of its members, in particular children, youth, families, the elderly or people with disabilities. This strategy identifies the local centres of activity (most often sports clubs) as places created to develop sport in local communities.

In relation to sports clubs, the two most relevant aims in the national strategy are: to pro-

vide opportunities for physical activity at each stage of life and to use sport to build social capital. State policy at national level is focused on increasing sports opportunities for all, especially for children and youth.

The government commissions projects, which non-governmental organisations tender for. As a result of the new strategy in 2016, the Ministry of Sport and Tourism addressed actions directly targeted at sports clubs for the first time. The government has launched a programme “Club”, which directly aims at supporting the functioning of sports clubs in the promotion of sports activities among children and youth. It was created through direct consultations of the Ministry with local sports organisations. Obtained funds may be used to finance training work in the club (e.g. a coach, instructor), purchase sports equipment, and organise sports camps.

Examples of projects indirectly focusing on sports clubs include three programmes run by the Foundation for the Development of Physical Culture – a State Treasury foundation. These aim to enrich the attractiveness of recreation and sports activities, and improve the competence of people, including volunteers, who provide such activities. The Multisport programme is aimed at students in grades IV-VI at the age of 9-12. The main objective of the programme is to promote physical activity through participation in school and after-school sports activities. It is also important to identify sports talent and to ensure the effective transition from schools to sports clubs and participation in sports competitions. The project is realised in cooperation with local sports clubs, which run sports activities to meet the programme objectives.

The programme ‘My sports field – Orlik 2012’ is to construct modern, safe public sport that is free of charge and also recreation complexes in communes throughout Poland. After the construction of this infrastructure, a programme – ‘Our Orlik’ aims to encourage local societies to use these sports facilities. The programme also includes training for activity organisers, coaches and volunteers working at Orliks, as well as initiatives to use the sports fields as public spaces, thus strengthening social relations. Indirectly, sports clubs are the programme’s beneficiaries as 86% of people running sports classes at Orliks are coaches from local sports clubs.

A related programme is Animator’s Academy. This helps activity organisers and leaders of local sport (i.e. most often coaches from local sports clubs) to share knowledge and increase their skills in organising and managing local sport, especially obtaining funds for functioning.

The Ministry of Sport and Tourism also supports projects aimed at increasing the competence of teachers, coaches, instructors, activity organisers and leaders of children and youth sport, especially those functioning on the local level. The support is provided to non-governmental organisations.

Ministry of Sport and Tourism programmes are funded by a departmental budget, a Physical Culture Development Fund that has 25% of income funded from the national lottery, and a Physical Education for Schools Fund from 10% of the VAT tax base from entities advertising alcoholic drinks.

To bid for these and other funds, sports clubs must use volunteers in the club’s operations and pay a contribution of about 20% of the programme funding.

Other work by the Ministry of Sport and Tourism to promote volunteering and social

inclusion includes directly financing volunteers working on the organisation of large sport events, financing the work of voluntary activity organisers at Orlik and a knowledge portal concerning a sports voluntary service where e-learning materials are published. Within the Our Orlik programme, there are studies on groups excluded from local sport. The Ministry funds activity organisers to develop and implement projects of social inclusion. It organises a series of social studies, conferences, meetings and training concerning the area of voluntary service. The aim of these activities is the promotion of sports voluntary service. Participants at meetings, including members of non-governmental organisations, can take part in training and workshops concerning the financing of voluntary services and its management, in order to apply this knowledge to the activities of their respective organisations.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Policy promotes voluntary work with legal and tax concessions. The Polish Government developed the Social Capital Development Strategy 2020, one priority of which is the development and strengthening of organised forms of civic activity.

### **The influence of regional government organisations and legislation**

At regional levels, departments responsible for sport have been discontinued or severely limited. When this is the case, their authority and responsibilities have been transferred to lower levels.

### **The influence of municipal (local) government organisations and legislation**

Each municipality is obliged to satisfy the needs of its citizens, including needs related to the popularisation of physical culture and sport (*Art. 7 of the Act on Municipality Self-Government, Journal of Laws 1990 no. 16 item 95*). Local government is obliged by law to provide for professional and public sport, in cooperation with non-governmental organisations.

Local sports clubs for young people are financed mainly from a local budget once a year. Distribution of resources is discretionary and not legally regulated. In many cases, local sports clubs have free or discounted access to sports infrastructure – most sports clubs are formed at educational institutions and local sports centres, which guarantees access to the resources of these institutions.

### **The role of national governing bodies of sport / sports federations**

The Polish Olympic Committee (POC) carries out the aims and tasks of the Olympic Movement as well as activities related to the development of Polish sport, i.e. developing elite sport, promoting sport for everyone, supervising the participation of the Polish National Representation in the Olympic Games, combating doping, conducting education and promoting fair play. The Polish Paralympic Committee performs the same functions for people with disabilities.

The central level also involves interdisciplinary sports associations and Polish sports associations. Sports associations include:

- the *University Sports Association*, over 40,000 members and over 250 university clubs;
- the *Rural Sports Clubs Association* aims to popularise and develop sport, recreation, physical education, and tourism. It is based on Rural Sports Clubs, Rural Tourist Clubs, Rural Tourist Teams, and also, since 1994, Student Sports Clubs;

- the *School Sports Association* is based on competitive inter-school sports clubs. Recreational activities are provided by school sports associations and, since 1994, by Student Sports Clubs.

Polish sports associations are a special form of nation-wide sports associations that operate within one sport discipline and require permission from the Minister of Sport and Tourism to be established. There are currently 70 active Polish sports associations. Their main tasks are to issue sports licences for players and coaches of sports clubs in their disciplines, to train national team players and to organise the functioning of national teams, as well as to organise competitions at the national level. Sports clubs can affiliate to the Polish sports associations if they aim to take part in their competitions and leagues.

### **Historical influences**

Sports clubs have developed from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards. In a similar way to other areas of social life, sport in Poland is slowly undergoing transformation. Drawing from national and western traditions and dating back to 1867, the sports movement in Poland originated when students in Lviv established the Polish Gymnastic Society “Sokół”, the first bourgeois, intelligentsia association in the territory of Poland. The main aim of “Sokół” was to organise gymnastic exercises for its members. Offering cycling, shooting, fencing, rowing and other disciplines, most of these branches were similar to contemporary sports clubs. These branches had a broader role than sport and they also took part in cultural, educational, and social activities with strong patriotic aspects. Also playing an important role in Polish sports development was private gymnastics centres offering sports classes.

Polish sports clubs, originating at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, at first only included a football section. Later, track and field, tennis, and other disciplines were added. The origins of Polish sports clubs are strongly connected with the school environment. In 1903, “Lechia Lwów” was established as the first sports club by students and members of the Football Division at the Lviv “Sokół” Society. The “Sława” club (renamed later “Czarni Lwów”) was also established that year.

Before World War 1, “Pogoń” and “Czarni Lwów” became major, multi-discipline clubs, and Lviv became the largest centre of Polish sport within the subdivided territories. University and high school students established the oldest clubs in Kraków, “Cracovia” and “Wisła” in 1906. Attempts to organise a football association in Galicia were made during this time. The Austrian Football Association owned the “Cracovia”, “Pogoń”, and “Wisła” clubs between 1910 and 1911, and finally in 1911, the Polish Football Association in Galicia was created, belonging to the Austrian Football Association and thus to FIFA.

During the inter-war period, when Poland restored its sovereignty, there was a development of political, economic and social life. Sports participation and organisations were based on free social engagement, without any influences from the authorities of the newly formed state. In the second half of the 1920s, sports movements could count on national ideological and financial support. World War 2 shattered the achievements of the sports movement – there were losses in people as well as in sports infrastructure. During the post-war times, there was another outbreak of spontaneous activity in reconstructing sports clubs, which played a role in integrating social life. At that time, mainly working class, union and youth

clubs were reactivated. The next step was a substantial intervention of the state in the form of a central steering model. The authorities noticed in sport a possibility to disseminate communist ideas for propaganda aims. During that period, sports clubs were established mainly at national work places and were financed by trade unions (e.g. military or police clubs and clubs at manufacturing plants). The state did not expect any serious citizenship engagement in club activity.

After 1989, one sign of the forming democracy, institutionally revealed in sport, was the formation of religious organisations and clubs, especially Catholic ones having rich traditions from the pre-war period, which had faded out during the communist period. A transformation from a planned to a market economy created market conditions for new entities to function, including sports clubs. Sport in Poland rapidly became commercialised (especially in towns and cities), leaving little space for social engagement. Simultaneously, municipalities and regions were given much more autonomy by the *Act on Municipality Self-Government, Journal of Laws 1990 no. 16 item 95*. Since then, local government is obliged by law to provide for professional and public sport, in cooperation with non-governmental organisations.

Data on the number of sports clubs have been collected centrally since 1960. Since then, the number of sports clubs in Poland has been growing steadily. The highest growth in Poland was noted in the years 2002-2006 (from 8,800 to 13,000), while in the following years, this number was subject to slight fluctuations. In 2012, there were 14,307 active sports clubs in Poland (including 6,370 student sports clubs that operate in schools or under sport and recreation centres and 77 religious sports clubs), which is nine times more than over 50 years ago. Analysis of the participation of Poles in activities conducted at sports clubs shows that altogether there were 914.6 thousand registered members in sports clubs in 2012.

## Spain

*Ramon Llopis-Goig*

### **The influence of national government organisations and legislation**

In Spain there are no relationships between the national government and community sports clubs. However, national government policy is promoted through the High Council for Sport, an autonomous administrative body affiliated with the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports. The *Sport Act 10/1990* defines the responsibilities of the High Council for Sport. These include approving the articles of association and operations of the Spanish sports federations and granting them financial aid, organising international competitions in Spain, organising the participation of the national teams and doping control. The High Council for Sport developed a national Strategic Plan for sports development during 2010-2020: the 'Integral A+D Plan'. Within this, the following objectives were included: 1) increase the level of sports participation of the population; 2) generalize sports in school-age children; 3) promote sports as a tool for social inclusion and 4) make progress in equality between men's and women's participation. The policy for school age children includes promoting physical education at school, promoting physical activity and the practice of sports in the educational system in general, and coordinating the work of stakeholders in the sports system.

Of the 15 programmes proposed in the Strategic Plan, four of them were explicitly relat-



ed to aspects of social inclusion: physical and sports activity for handicapped people (programme 4), physical and sports activity for the elderly (programme 6), physical and sports activity for social inclusion (programme 7) and true equality between men and women (programme 9). These policies have become less prominent since a centre-right party replaced a centre-left party in 2011, but they still provide guidance for the 17 autonomous communities, with whom the strategic plan was developed.

In Spain, the right to free association is permitted by Article 22 of the *Spanish Constitution of 1978*. Later, the *Organic Law 1/2002 of 22<sup>nd</sup> March* developed and clarified those aspects that were only mentioned in the 1978 law.

### **The influence of regional government organisations and legislation**

Article 148.1 of the *Spanish Constitution of 1978* allows the 17 Autonomous Communities of Spain to promote sport. While their autonomy makes it difficult to generalise between them, they manage their own support services for sport, provide regional funding to clubs and federations at the regional level, construct facilities, organise competitions, and support training and research. Thus, they have a wide range of functions. The Autonomous Communities make annual calls for proposals to which the sports clubs and sports federations can present their projects to obtain a grant. The awarding of a grant is not always guaranteed, and the amount depends on the economic resources of the regional government. The awarding of these grants legally obligates the recipients to fulfil the grant requirements.

For example, in 2014, the Government of the Autonomous Community of Navarra granted various types of grants to sports clubs in the region: firstly, a total of €140,695 for putting on sports shows and celebrations; secondly, €191,379 for participation in national and inter-regional official competitions of sports clubs, non-professional with individualized participation; and thirdly, €1,607,124 for participation in official competitions of sports clubs in national and inter-regional leagues.

In 2014, 67.41% of the income of the regional sports federations was generated by themselves and the rest came from public subsidy.

### **The influence of municipal (local) government organisations and legislation**

In Spain, a distinction is made between provincial and city councils [municipalities]. Provincial governing bodies generally coordinate and provide technical assistance to municipalities that make up the province.

Municipalities subsidise sports clubs in their territory. They have a decisive role in the construction and management of local sports facilities and the development of sports programmes for all ages. They also meet the running costs of local facilities. By law, town councils serving populations of more than 20,000 inhabitants have the obligation to provide sports services for their citizens (according to the Law regulating Local Tax Authorities 7/1985 of 2<sup>nd</sup> of April Chapter III article 26).

Municipalities typically make annual open and competitive calls for proposals to subsidize the activity of the sports clubs and the top-tier clubs of the city. The criteria for funding will vary – but could include the number of teams the club has, the promotion of women's sports, the participation in public interest campaigns etc. In this way, the municipality allocates funds to sports clubs which are contributing to its objectives. Such funding carries a



legal obligation to fulfil grant conditions. Clubs do not receive an automatic subsidy.

For example, the city of Valencia makes two annual open and competitive calls for proposals to subsidize the activities of the sports clubs and the top-tier clubs of the city. The former have an annual funding of €225,000 and the latter €625,000 (total amounts that are divided among the clubs that compete for the grant). The benchmarks used to evaluate the proposals are public. In the case of sports clubs for team sports, points are given for the number of teams the club has (up to 35 points), the category of the first team (up to 20 points), the number of licences (up to 20 points), the evaluation of the sports project (up to 120 points), the promotion of women's sports (up to 10 points), the participation in public interest campaigns (up to 30 points), the participation in Municipal Sport Training programmes (up to 10 points), and the percentage of the sports project's own resources and self-financing (up to 20 points).

The benchmarks are different in the calls for proposals for top-tier club grants. For example, for the case of team sports, the criteria taken into account are the classification obtained by the first team in the previous season in official national (up to 30 points) or international (up to 20 points) competition, the classification obtained by the first team in the current season in official national (up to 30 points) or international (up to 20 points) competition, the number of players with licences in the first team, who were born in the Valencian Community (up to 10 points), the number of players enlisted by any of the national teams (up to 10 points), the number of sports licences of the club (up to 30 points), the number of teams in inferior categories participating in official competitions (up to 15 points), the evaluation of the sports project (up to 120 points), the participation in public interest campaigns (up to 30 points), the participation in Municipal Sport Training programmes (up to 10 points), and the percentage of the project's own resources or self-financing (up to 20 points).

Thus, for both types of clubs the funding criteria are public and clear. In all cases, the clubs that are awarded grants must fulfil the obligations derived from the *General Law 38/2003 on Grants*, as well as the obligations described in the municipal norms that regulate grants.

Thus, in Spain the greatest government influence on sports clubs is at the local and regional level, because of the provision of facilities and awarding of grants, respectively.

### **The role of national governing bodies of sport / sports federations**

In Spain, there are 65 legally constituted national sports federations divided between 30 Olympic federations, 30 non-Olympic federations (that do not appear on the Olympic Programme) and 5 multi-sport federations, dedicated to the development and organisation of different sports and integrating athletes with physical, psychological and sensorial disadvantages. The federations also select the national teams of representative athletes in their sports. The role of the national sports federation is defined by the *1990 National Sports Act (Law 10/1990)*. The national sports federations are financed with grants provided by the High Sport Council, subject to agreements about their objectives, their sports programmes, their proposals and their organic structure, and the affiliation fees collected by the sports clubs belonging to them. The grants from the National Government – through the High Sport Council – made up 23.8% of the income of the national sports federations in 2014 (in 2007 they were 34.8%).

The regional (Autonomous Community) sports federations organise, manage and regulate sports competitions at the autonomous level. They do not usually provide economic resources to the regional sports clubs. The sports clubs are financed by the fees paid by members, the

income from the Sport Training programmes, and the economic resources they manage to obtain through grants from regional governments, provincial governing bodies and municipalities.

### **Historical influences**

In Spain, the first sports clubs were set up later than in other European countries, specifically, in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The creation of clubs was closely associated with foreign professionals and specialists who came to the country, and with young people who went to other European countries for their studies and later came back with new habits, including sports. Together, these factors brought English sport into Spanish society and introduced the idea of a democratically run, volunteer-based sports club. Initially, the process took place in the more highly industrialised areas of the country, namely Catalonia, the Basque Country and Madrid, but also in mining areas and in small centres of industrial activity in other regions of Spain.

When the Franco regime (1939-1975) took power at the end of the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939), radical change came to the conception of sport, which ceased being part of civil society and was assimilated into the structure of the state. The political authorities appropriated sport as part of one-party control over society. The new Francoist state understood that sports clubs had cultural, social and political significance.

Indeed, until 1964 the sports clubs were almost the only associations permitted beyond the network of bodies controlled by the Minister Secretary-General of the Movement during the first half of the dictatorship. As a result, sports clubs became the only places with a certain margin for freedom of association and, until the passage of the Law of Associations in 1964, they remained, to some extent, the last redoubt of opposition against the regime. Even so, the clubs' latitude of freedom was extremely limited. Sports organisations were forced to be under the control of a state body set up in 1938, the National Sports Delegation (later renamed into National Sports Council), which was overseen by the Falange Española y de las JONS. In this way, sports clubs and federations lost their private character, their autonomy and their democratic ethos. The National Sports Delegation took over the appointment of key executive figures in the national federations, and these figures, in turn, named regional delegates, who would later become the ones to endorse or block the appointment of club directors.

The subordination of sports clubs to the state apparatus led to the demise of their autonomy and the liberal democratic approach that had conceived the clubs as peer-based associations. Club officials were appointed by bodies ultimately responsible to the state. In the 1950s, the selections of the members' general assembly still had to be ratified by the pertinent sports federation, which reserved the right to appoint club officials directly. Similarly, under the Franco regime, the federations were turned into bodies reporting to the National Sports Delegation and charged with overseeing clubs' activities. In their statutes, clubs had to acknowledge their subordination to the provisions and authority of the National Sports Delegation. If they failed to do so, they were refused legal recognition and denied authorization to take part in sporting competitions.

During the transition to democracy, sport also began to undergo democratisation. Sport was introduced into the Spanish constitution (adopted in 1978) making it possible to include sport in the legal framework of the state. The first half of the 1980s saw a rapid development

of the construction of a sports infrastructure. Municipal governments began to promote *sport for all* and this led to a booming sports movement in Spanish society that some have dubbed the *municipalisation* of Spanish sport.

At the beginning of the 1990s, the enactment of a new Sports Law (*Law 10/1990 of 15 October*) once again regulated the responsibilities and functions of the state on the subject of sport, drawing a line between professional sport, top-tier sport and sport for everyone. Associative bodies in sport were defined as private associations formed by natural or legal persons, whose purpose was to promote one or more sports, encourage members to engage in one or more sports and foster their participation in sporting activities and competitions. As the Sports Law stipulated, the associative bodies were classified as elementary clubs, basic clubs, professional sports clubs and limited companies operating in the field of sport. Thus, a new legal framework was created where professional sports (the first and second divisions of Spanish football and the top-flight Liga ACB in basketball) were separated from non-professional sports. Professional clubs were turned into *Sociedades Anónimas Deportivas* (SADs), or sports-based public limited companies. This was a new legal form that brought with it a number of prerequisites and required the application of a series of controls by various state bodies.

Barcelona, hosting the Olympic Games in 1992, made sport a significant factor in the social and cultural life of the country. Since that time, sports clubs and associations have grown in importance and gained autonomy within the Spanish sports system, despite the unquestionable dominance that the state continued to exert as a supplier and financial supporter of numerous sporting activities. The state's role has recently been reduced in response to the economic crises and cuts in public budgets.

From the 1980s, the new democracy saw a rapid increase of sports legislation at the level of the autonomous communities. By the nineties, all seventeen of Spain's Autonomous Communities had adopted their own sports laws, with specific provisions on sports associations spelled out in decrees, ordinances, plans and programmes. Over time, these different legislative developments, as well as the historical and cultural differences among the various autonomous communities, have given rise to Spanish sport's territorial heterogeneity.

In addition to decentralisation, a second feature of the Spanish sports model is collaboration between the state and the sports clubs: the state provides resources to the clubs in exchange for the clubs' promotion of the practice of sport by the public. Moreover, the state is not merely an ancillary promoter of the clubs' activities, but it is also involved in the provision of a wide range of opportunities for the practice of sport. Thus, the model can be viewed as interventionist, because their collaboration with the state makes the clubs reliant on the state's financial help. A consequence of this is that sports clubs in some regions play a weak role in the provision of sport, which is left very much in the hands of municipalities and other bodies to which the promotion and development of sports activities is delegated.

## Switzerland

*Siegfried Nagel & Jenny Adler Zwahlen*

### **The influence of national government organisations and legislation**

The Federal constitution of Switzerland, *article 68*, lays down the promotion and development of sport. The “federal law for promotion of sport and exercise”, established in 2012, provides a legal framework to support private initiatives in sport, especially those of sports federations. Thus, the government can give funding to sports clubs, e.g. for the development of trainers and the organisation of youth sport groups. The agency responsible for the development of national sports policy is the Federal Office of Sport (FOSPO). This is done in partnership with Swiss sports federations. FOSPO is responsible for education of instructors / coaches. However, national government has no direct legal obligations to sports clubs and vice versa, apart from the national Youth and Sport programme (described below). This is the result of the traditional idea of subsidiarity and autonomy. Within this principle; tasks, actions and solutions to problems are undertaken, as far as possible, independently and autonomously. The implications are that public institutions only intervene in the market if there is significant market failure and action by public institutions is always at the most local level possible, for example at the level of the municipality rather than the canton.

At a national level, the Swiss Federal “*Law of Equal Opportunities for the Disabled*” (2004) and the “*Aliens Act*” (2008) obliges the federation, cantons and communities to set conditions that facilitate participation, integration and equal opportunities in social life (in other words access to sport) for disabled people and immigrants. However, there are no national programmes that support the participation of immigrants in sport. The main reason why the Swiss Confederation, its cantons and its municipalities publicly promote and subsidise sport is the positive social effects (such as social integration of specific target groups, accumulation of cultural and social capital, health promotion etc.). As these external effects are expected to be particularly significant in sports clubs, in Switzerland sports clubs and federations increasingly share the same aims for the use of sport to achieve social benefits.

At the national level, sports clubs are directly supported by public authorities through the national *Youth and Sport* programme (J+S), in which the Federal Office of Sport distributes over 80 million Swiss Francs (CHF) per year to clubs engaged in the promotion of youth sports. This programme is predominantly realized through volunteers in sports clubs. In 2010, approximately 700,000 children and young adults took part in one or more courses in 75 different kinds of sports offered by J+S. This corresponds to about two-thirds of the Swiss population aged between 10 and 20 years. Funding promotes courses, events, and camps for children and adolescents. Funding also pays for the development of coaches responsible for sport groups, for instructors responsible for the development of coaches, and for courses in sports clubs. Sports clubs are therefore directly subsidised for their courses in youth sport and indirectly through the development of their coaches. The only condition for getting funding from the Youth and Sport programme to support courses and camps for children and adolescents is that the coaches are qualified (“have a valid licence”). There are currently over 120,000 licensed J+S coaches and managers in Switzerland. Specialised courses include how to recruit and motivate volunteers in a sports club; and the integration of immigrants and disabled people.

Thus, sports clubs managed by volunteers play a major role in providing sports opportunities for young people as part of this government sponsored programme. The clubs get a fee per young person – apart from the coach education. However, only clubs with young people (aged between 5 and 20 years) participating in their sports clubs get funding.

Clubs may also take part in delivering the *Adults sport programme Switzerland* (ESA) for people over 20 years old, which is run in cooperation with cantons, sports federations and private sports providers. ESA aims to establish optimal conditions for physical activity in adulthood through the work of ESA coaches. ESA coaches may participate in the J+S-courses, “Preventive action: integration” and “Sport and handicap”. No financial grants for sports clubs are available for participation in this programme. So, if a club offers activities for adults within the ESA programme, it receives free training of its coaches who deliver this programme, but no other fee. Most of the coaches in ESA and J+S are volunteers and not paid for their work in the clubs, but they do not have to pay for their education courses.

Another important tool for sports promotion is the “National sports infrastructure promotion concept” (NASAK), which aims to coordinate sports infrastructure of national importance and improve infrastructure conditions for national sports federations and their member organisations (sports clubs). From 1998 to 2012, financial support of between CHF 14-70 million was granted for the construction of sports grounds.

### **The influence of regional government organisations and legislation**

About half of all Swiss cantons have a “Cantonal sports concept”, which forms the basis of a sports policy. In addition, nearly half of the 26 cantons have a law regarding sport and/or the promotion of physical activity, and the majority of the cantons have sport-specific laws. Cantons are responsible for the development, construction and maintenance of cantonal sport-related infrastructure and implementation of Youth and Sport programmes. Cantons support the construction and maintenance of sports facilities and also sports clubs in municipalities, using profits from lotteries. These fund training courses, sports equipment, regional, national and international sports events and support for young talent. This funding is mainly distributed to regional sports federations, but also directly to sports clubs.

### **The influence of municipal (local) government organisations and legislation**

Consistent with the principal of subsidiarity, there are no direct legal obligations from local government to sports clubs and vice versa. Municipalities may support clubs if they contribute to their social policies, which vary between municipalities. The most important way this is done is by municipalities providing sports facilities and making these available to sports clubs and individuals at concessional rates. According to a sports club survey in 2010, about three-quarters of all sports clubs (73%) rely exclusively or partially on public sports facilities. While a minority of municipalities actually have sports polices, those that do rely on clubs to deliver them.

Local municipalities often pay some form of lump sum to communal sports clubs through the communal sports offices. Depending on the financial resources of the community and the number of members, particularly children and adolescents, clubs receive about 5-20 CHF per member annually or a flat rate sum of 100 or 1,000 CHF. Sports clubs also receive financial support for special programmes that promote sport-related integration of immigrants.



However, there are large differences between municipalities when it comes to this kind of financial support for sports clubs.

### **The role of national governing bodies of sport / sports federations**

Swiss Olympic represents the interests of 85 sports federations with over 20,000 sports clubs. In total, there are currently about 2.7 million people in Switzerland belonging to one or more sports clubs, 2.2 million of which are classified as active members. According to the recent *Sport Switzerland 2014* survey, about three quarters of the Swiss population aged between 15 and 74 years (74%) participate in sports, and about a third of these people (25%) also hold a club membership [about 20% of the total population]. Sports clubs pay membership fees to their national sports federation, especially for their licensed competitions. There are huge differences in support, advice and resources provided to clubs between the various national sports federations. Swiss Paralympic supports Swiss disabled elite sport.

In each canton, there is a regional umbrella organisation that represents the regional sports federations. Sports clubs pay membership fees to their regional sports federation. In return, regional sports federations are responsible for the regional system of sports competitions, regional squads and talent development. Other support services are limited and variable.

Three specific sports organisations for disabled people (Procap Sport, PLUSSPORT, SPV) receive financial grants from the federal office of social insurance.

### **Historical influences**

From the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, clubs have been *voluntary organisations* with democratic structures that exist because members share a common goal, and are integrated by sport into sports associations. Sports clubs developed significantly in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. An umbrella organisation, now called Swiss Olympic, was established in 1922 with 9 sports associations, and today represents 84 – representing roughly 20,000 clubs.

Sports clubs have played a decisive role in the development of sport in Switzerland because the establishment and operation of clubs has always been simple and was seldom opposed by the authorities, as was, for example, the case in Germany. Swiss law only has two prerequisites for establishing a club: firstly, clubs are *voluntary organisations* of members sharing a common goal and must not be oriented towards making an economic profit, and secondly, they need to have written statutes stating their aims and organisational characteristics.

Clubs have always been regarded as a partial substitute for public initiatives. When sport and the first sports clubs emerged, there was not yet a central government that could play a role in shaping sports. In fact, in the absence of strong public authorities, early clubs – not only in sports, but also in areas such as science, education and politics – often assumed official functions. Sports clubs and other clubs are to some extent a private and officially encouraged alternative to public interventions and have become an important feature of Swiss civil society. Sports clubs and associations are the main promoters of leisure sport and top level sports in Switzerland, whereas public authorities are responsible for sport and physical activities at school.

Sports clubs are primarily reliant on voluntary work and the use of professional staff is not a viable alternative. There has been a tradition of voluntary work back to the start of clubs.

Most work in clubs is done by volunteers that earn less than CHF 2000 per year (about



€1350). The definition used in the sports clubs survey (and other surveys on volunteers) is that volunteers who get less than 2000 CHF are characterised as volunteers since this payment is more a symbolic compensation for their time as volunteers and for travel to training. An average club has 14 volunteers, but less than one person earning more than CHF 2000 per year. In total, Swiss sports clubs rely on about 285,000 volunteers and 17,500 paid people, only 3,500 of which have a paid workload of 50% or more. Yet, it is important to note that paid work has become more important since 1996, when it only accounted for about 10% of the total work effort in Swiss sports clubs. Since then, the number of paid workers has almost doubled, while the number of volunteers, as well as the total work done by them, has decreased substantially (by 19% and 13% respectively). Against this background, it is hardly surprising that finding volunteers and helpers is one of the most serious problems faced by many clubs.

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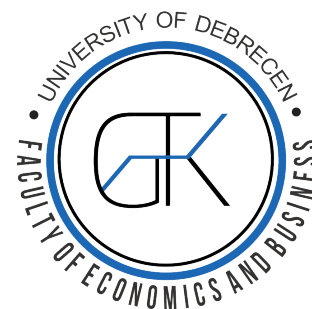
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