CHAMP

Clubs for Health-enhancement, Activation, Modernisation and Participation

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Intellectual Output No 1: Definitions and Background Research

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1. Introduction

> "How can knowledge and understanding about modernisation and innovative practices within and outside of the traditional sports movement attract Europeans to become more physically active? These questions will be raised through ENGSO's new Erasmus+ financed project, CHAMP (Clubs for Health-enhancement, Activation, Modernisation and Participation)."
>
> (ENGSO's announcement of the CHAMP Project, 19 May, 2019)

CHAMP aims to give the organised sport movement innovative tools and education for modernisation, offering insights of current trends and solutions for increasing physical activity, thus membership. CHAMP will target this goal by carrying out an evidence-based research on the benefits of modernisation within the sport sector and by collecting innovative practices within and outside the sport sector. Aiming at raising the physical activity levels of Europeans through increasing membership in traditional sport clubs can have weighty benefits. Increased membership would potentially lead to more sociable and healthier Europeans, with longer life-expectancy. These are admirable intentions, and the presumed causal link between innovation to sports clubs to increased physical activity seems convincing. However, as anyone who works in sport and physical activity promotion knows, things are a little more complicated than that!

One difficulty is that the terms used in this area are not always clear or consistently applied. Policy documents often conflate physical activity, sport, physical education and exercise and other terms (Bailey, 2006), and this has resulted in the weakening of the case for each of these concepts. A related problem is that there is a danger that certain aspects of this discussion become overshadowed or marginalised. The most obvious example of this is the "disqualification of 'sport' as a medium of health promotion" (Michelini & Thiel, 2013, p. 336), where mention of sport as a possible source of health-enhancing physical activity has become increasingly rare and problematic.

Another difficulty is that there is a gap between evidence and practice in the application of sports strategies. A great deal of research has been carried out on levels of participation, as well as characteristics of effective practices, but these are often overlooked at the level of delivery (Mair, 2006). The result can be that projects 'reinvent the wheel' (they waste a great deal of time, money, or effort in creating something that already exists), invest a lot of time without fully understanding the background to the work. Interestingly, one of the effective methods for bridging this gap has turned out to be through the use of case studies (Halperin, 2018), which will be central to the delivery of the CHAMP Project.

More generally, it is always useful to be clear about the terms we use, and lack of clarity can be the cause of unnecessary misunderstanding and delay. And it is valuable to understand something of the previous research that has been undertaken in the area we are about to explore. The first Intellectual Output, therefore, aims to provide this background as a starting point for the CHAMP Project and its subsequent activities.

2. Definitions

2.1. Sport

Defining 'sport' has proved to be notoriously difficult over the years. Proposals have tended to take one of two approaches: overly inclusive or overly exclusive. An example of the overly exclusive approach is the definition from SportAccord (2010), which was and is now again the General Association of International Sports Federations:

> "The sport proposed should have an element of competition.
>
> The sport proposed should in no way be harmful to any living creatures.
>
> The sport should not rely on equipment that is provided by a single supplier.
>
> The sport should not rely on any "luck" element specifically designed into the sport."

This is a strange definition as it seems to exclude activities that would normally be counted as 'sport', such as boxing (harm), cricket (luck), and 'extreme sports' (no competition, harm, luck), and could be interpreted as including chess, sudoku, and general knowledge quizzes!

A different kind of definition comes from the Council of Europe's European Sports Charter (CoE, 2001):

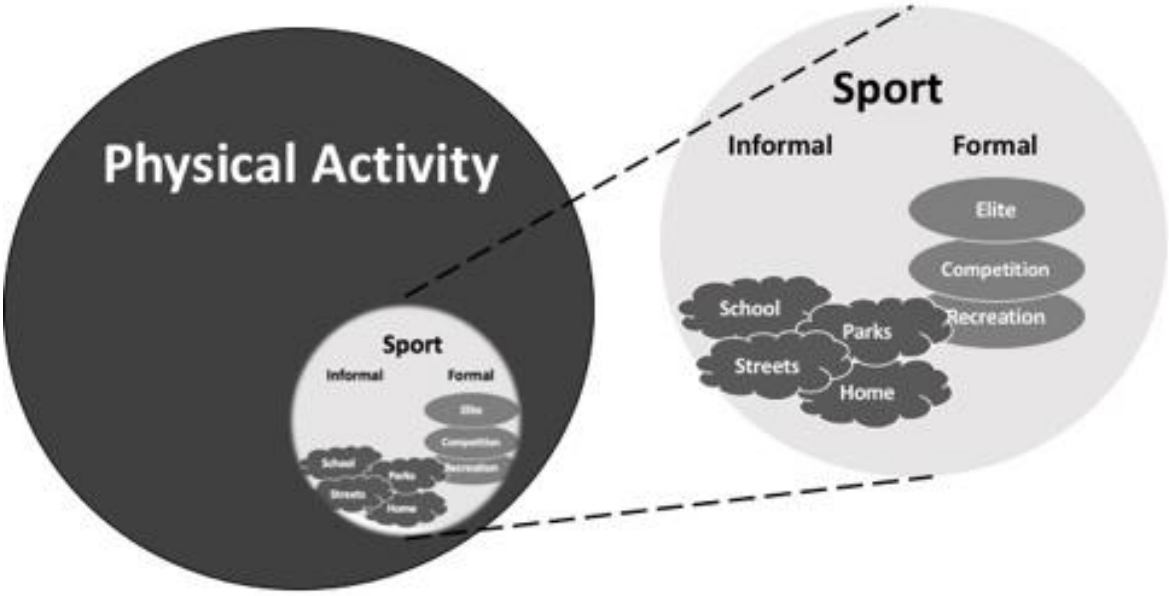
> "Sport means all forms of physical activity which, through casual or organised participation, aim at expressing or improving physical fitness and mental well-being, forming relationships or obtaining results in competitions at all levels." (Article 2)

This is an inclusive definition, which might explain its political popularity. However, it is also problematic as this is not how most people understand sport, and it seems to allow many activities - jogging, gardening, folk dance, indoor exercise to a You Tube clip - that would intuitively fall outside of the boundary of the concept of sport. Moreover, if such a broad conception of sport is used, what is the need for the concept of 'physical activity'? If we follow the Council of Europe definition, both terms would refer to the same thing.

An account of the traditional idea of sport comes from the US-American sociologist Coakley (2001), namely organised and competitive physical activities. Specifically, Coakley identifies four attributes of sport that are characteristic of sport: physical activity; competition; institutionalisation; and the desired outcome. A desired outcome may be anything from enjoyment or friendship to health, fitness or other beneficial values. This seems a step forward as it reflects the ways in which the term is actually used in both, the academic literature (especially when drawing a distinction with other concepts) and everyday talk. It also adds two important qualifications for an activity to count as a sport: some sort of organisation, whether it is informally led by the players, themselves (such as in street games), or formally organised (such as at sports clubs). Sports encompasses a range of activities, including individual, partner and team forms, contact and non-contact, placing different emphases on strategy, chance and physical skills. People can play sport for a wide variety of reasons, and the inclusion of competition as a defining element does not at all mean that competition is the primary reason players play (Collins, Bailey, Ford, et al, 2012), although competition seems to be a necessary aspect in some form.

One of the reasons why it is important to be clear about our understanding of the meaning of sport in this project is that the subject is a surprisingly controversial one (Bailey, 2018). In particular, the relationship between sport and health-enhancing physical activity has been questioned by many writers and organisations (Michelini & Thiel, 2013). Some point to the fact that, by its nature, sport involves physical activity, and that it is often very popular, especially among children and young people (e.g., Sport for Development and Peace International Working Group, 2008), others claim that the competitive and potentially exclusionary character of sport makes it unsuitable as health promotion (Waddington, 2000). The result of this debate have been conflicting messages. For example, many international and national governments produce enthusiastic statements celebrating sport's potential contribution to health (e.g., UK Chief Medical Officers, 2019); at the same time, almost all of these same governments' policy documents for health either omit or marginalise sport. The World Health Organisation (2016), in particular, has kept a cautious distance from sport in its guidance for physical activity (Michelini & Thiel, 2013).

The figure below suggests one way of thinking about the relationships between physical activity, sport and exercise (Bailey, 2018).



On the basis of this knowledge and inspired by Coakley's (2001) definition, the CHAMP Partnership generated its own working definition of sport to work with within this project, as:

Organised and competitive physical activities

And it also identified three attributes that are characteristic of sport:

Physical activity:	It involves movements that raise the heart rate;
Competition:	It has a competitive element, although participants might not actually take part in competition with themselves;
Institutionalisation:	It is organised by someone (such as a participant, coach, committee, or organisation), at a base (such as a club or venue), and has some desired outcome (such as health, competitive success, or social inclusion).

Therefore, content and material development for the CHAMP project will base upon these definitions.

2.2. Modernisation / Innovation

Organisations face increasingly competitive environments as they try to attract resources and growth. In response to this, they need to adapt and change in order to differentiate themselves from competitors and other distractions on people's time. And one way of doing this is to implement new services, products, and systems (Damanpour, 1991). The CHAMP Project initially spoke about these changes in terms of 'modernisation', and there is a wide scale acceptance among agencies and researchers in this area that sports organisations and sports clubs need to become more "modern" in order to operate successfully (Ratten & Ferreira, 2016; Wemmer & Koenigstorfer, 2016; Winand, et al, 2013). Unfortunately, the word 'modernisation' has been adopted in a rather wide range of contexts, and is often now associated with issues of governance and policymaking in sport, rather than the main concerns in this project, namely club development (Tacon & Walters, 2016). For this reason, it was decided by the CHAMP Project partners to supplement the use of the word modernisation with the word 'innovation'. The idea was to highlight the importance of creative and effective ways of managing sports clubs as necessary steps on the way to them becoming more modern (Frankelius, 2009). Innovation implies newness: new products; new services; opening new markets; and new ways of organising (Winand & Anagnostopoulos, 2017). Within the context of sport, innovation suggests the introduction of new and effective ways of working. So, the addition of the label 'Innovation' is important, and evidence suggests that successful implementation of innovative practices can be a crucial source of organisational change, relying heavily on the attitudes and support of key individuals within that organisation. Leaders' attitudes to change is crucial for successfully implementing innovations (May, 2013). This can sometimes be a challenge for sports clubs, and other non-profit organisations, which often rely on the contributions of long-time volunteers and employees who sometimes lack experience, formal education in business and

management or regular training. Managers of sports clubs also face external control mechanisms (e.g. scrutiny of regulatory bodies), and internal mechanisms (e.g., accountability to members), which can restrict their strategic choice and decision making flexibility (Winand & Hoeber, 2016).

There are many models of how innovation actually happens (Wisdom, et al, 2014). Adoption usually starts with the recognition that a need exists and moves to searching for solutions, then to the initial decision to attempt the adoption of a solution and finally to the actual decision to attempt to proceed with the implementation of the solution (Damanpour & Schneider, 2006). One useful approach is to distinguish between different phases: pre-adoption (e.g., awareness of innovation), peri-adoption (e.g., continuous access to innovation information), and established adoption (e.g., adopters' commitment to the adoption decision) (Greenhalgh, et al, 2004). Even more simply, the process of adoption of innovation/modernisation can be the decision to begin the new idea, and the acceptance by those who are going to implement it, and this is important as it highlights the fact that great ideas might be implemented, or they might be rejected by managers or staff.

The literature on innovation/modernisation is very large, so only a summary of its findings is possible (more information is available in the references cited above).

Level	**Issues**
Socio-political and external influence	Positive external influences: National and local government policies; qualifications and accreditation standards; financial incentives for innovation; community support. Negative influences; primarily lack of positive external influences [which suggests that external support is extremely useful].
Organisational characteristics	Relationship between organisation and local community is very important. Leadership support and experience, research, additional resources to support adoption are all valuable to promote successful adoption of innovations.
Innovation characteristics	Innovations are most likely to be adopted positively if: they are easy to use; they are an improvement on current practices; there are observable benefits; they are cost-effective; they are adaptable to the organisation; they are evidence-based; they are consistent with the organisations values; relevant; and they are low risk. Negative experiences of innovation generate resistance from management and staff; "surprises", such as innovations of which staff are unaware, and practices for which there is no evidence reduce adoption or undermine confidence in delivery.

	Organisations that assess these characteristics, monitor their fit within the organisation, and address barriers, are most likely to succeed.
Staff/individual characteristics	Positive attitudes of managers and staff significantly affect the likelihood of successful adoption; recognition of the need for change is important for successful adoption; opportunities for feedback can be very useful. Some managers and staff are more suited for innovation. Individual characteristics associated with positive attitudes include tolerance for ambiguity, propensity towards risk-taking, and general innovativeness. Unsure job status and lack of skills undermine adoption of new ideas. However, education and more secure job tenure can address these issues.
Member characteristics	Members are most likely to except innovations when they recognise the need, and know that it is going to happen.

(Sources: Wisdom, et al, 2015; Damanpour & Schneider, 2006; Greenhalgh, et al, 2004)

Innovation has been defined in numerous ways in these and other studies. At the organisational or club level, innovation is usually defined in general terms, such as the adoption of an idea or behaviour that is new to that organisation (Ratten & Ferreira, 2016). In other words, activities or processes adopted by a club for the first time, and consequently, the result of some sort of creative development.

These sorts of explanations are useful, but they do not give enough guidance for roll-out of the CHAMP Project, especially when having to judge between a potentially long list of identified practices. So, once again, the project partners developed a more specific definition that meets the needs of the different elements of the CHAMP Project.

Modernisation means new, innovative and effective ways of managing organisations.

There are three key attributes of modernisation:

New:	it is a method which is novel for the sports club;
Innovative:	it introduces something *creative*;
Effective:	it contributes to the goal set by the organisation, such as attracting new members and engaging new groups.

2.3. Clubs

People do not need clubs to play sport (Szymanski, 2008). As we know from the activities of children, games can be planned, set-up, and played quite easily. Even games at a relatively high level can be self-organised, or prepared for competitions. One of the perennial challenges facing those seeking to make National and European assessments of sports participation is the simple fact that many people play independently of sports clubs (European Commission, 2018). Another is that sports clubs reflect the national and local backgrounds from which they emerged, and there is considerable variation in the ways clubs are understood, funded, and implemented in different regions of Europe. So, it is important to remember that discussions of sports clubs in, for example, Estonia, Sweden, and Ireland, are referring to organisations that differ in important ways. At the same time, analysis of the organisation and administration of European clubs shows that they do also share similar roots and ambitions at the general level (Hoekman, et al, 2015). Therefore, it is useful to develop a working definition for this project so that the different members, coming from their distinct social and cultural backgrounds, are able to refer to a shared understanding, even if only at the most general levels. In doing this, it is important to recognise that modern organisations have used the term 'club' to cover a variety of groups that have formed to promote participation in sport, including a single competitive team, a session in a sports centre led by a coach, and a group of friends who have a regular booking in a sports area (Allison, 2001).

The definitions of "sport" and "modernisation" that have informed the CHAMP Project relied on a two-phase process: creation of a draft definition, followed by critical feedback from Partners to ensure a Europe-relevant account. This has been called a "constructed type" (Vamplew, 2013, p. 1571), because it relies upon the most commonly found characteristics of the phenomena. Since there is no coherent body of organisations and shared functions and structures for sports clubs, a different way needed to be found. In this instance, a useful way forward was to identify an "ideal type" model of the sports club which can be used for comparison purposes with the different types of sports clubs reported in the CHAMP Project. Based on the ideas of the German sociologist Weber (1904/1968), an ideal type is derived from simplifications of different points of view, into which phenomena are arranged into meaningful abstract constructs. Ideal types do not necessarily represent an attempt to define, for example, 'health', but merely to provide a practical framework – a point of reference – for making sense of the different ways in which that term is understood, applied, and presented.

The historian of sport, Vanplew (2013) usefully recommends the International Classification of Nonprofit Organisations (Salamon & Anheier, 1996) as a starting point for the creation of an ideal type of sports clubs.

This is a useful way forward as it already includes sports organisations and their clubs in its classification. For the sake of brevity, the following characteristics were identified. Sports clubs are:

- Institutionalised;
- Private;
- Self-governing;
- Voluntary; and
- Not commercially oriented.

The claim that sports clubs should be 'institutionalised' means that there needs to be a degree of internal organisational structure, with consistent goals and activities, as well as some way of telling the difference between members and non-members. It should be 'private' in the sense of being separate from government agencies. This does not mean that it cannot receive government support or funding, but it does not represent government authority. It should be 'self-governing' and be in a position to control its own activities to a significant extent. It should have its own internal governance procedures and enjoy a meaningful degree of autonomy in issues of decision-making. The International Classification assumes that sports clubs involve some meaningful degree of voluntary participation both in terms of engaging volunteers in its operations and management and in club membership being non-compulsory. Here, commercial sports clubs fit only the latter requirement, as, by definition, such clubs are profit-oriented and do not fit the following clause. Finally, a club must be non-profit-oriented. Generally, clubs should not be primarily guided by commercial goals or considerations and if surpluses are generated they should be put back into the basic mission of the institution and not distributed to owners or members.

Each of these points can be discussed and changed, as necessary. From the point of view of the CHAMP Project, however, it seems useful to articulate some of these principles in order to help maintain a focus on certain types of organisations, and not others. For example, one strand of the project (IO3) explicitly requires examination of alternative forms of clubs, against which traditional clubs can be compared. Most of the examples are currently included within this strand as for-profit organisations. Similarly, the project as a whole, is driven by the desire to modernise and innovate, and this might require fundamentally different strategies in organisations that are centrally controlled by government agencies. So, it might be appropriate during the duration of the CHAMP Project to change these standards, but it seems reasonable to suggest that at least some criteria for inclusion in the ideal type of sports clubs remain.

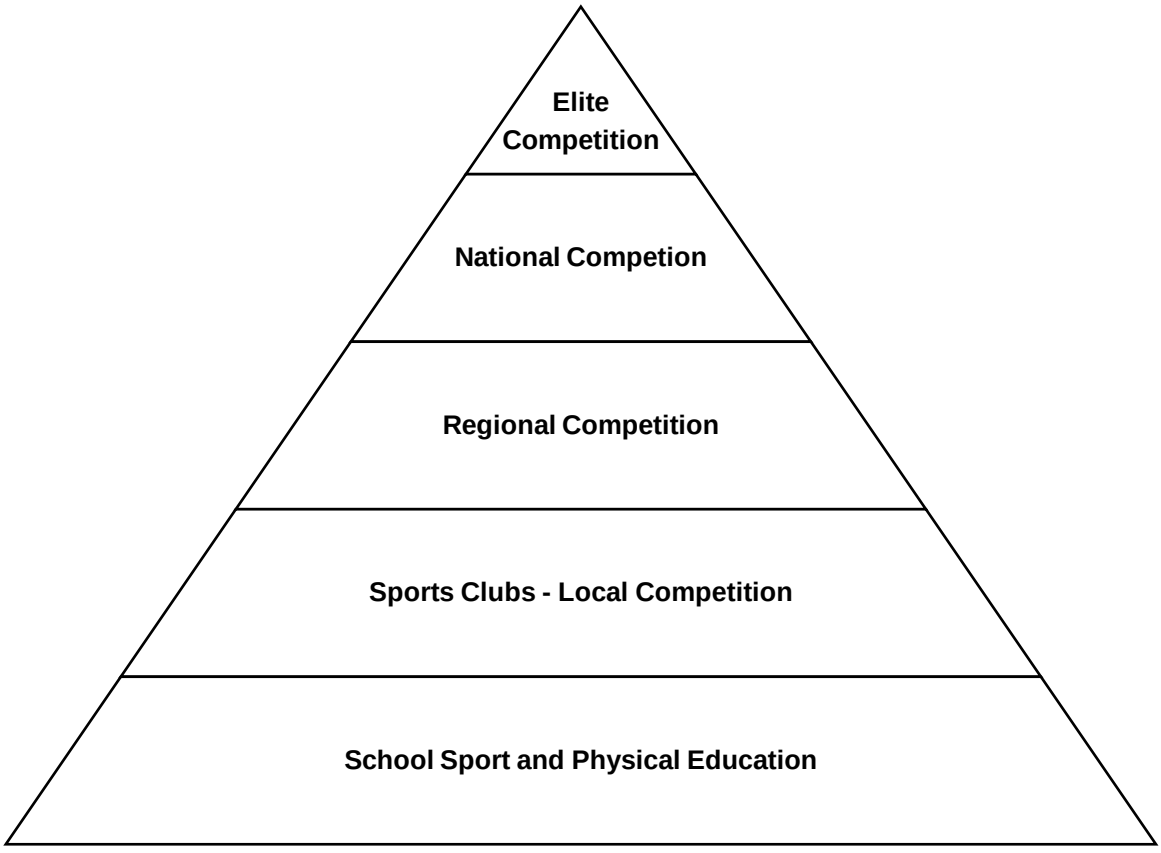
Clear definitions of the main terms used are the basis for an appropriate and reliable project as they give the basic information for the underlying research and for the following build-up of the content. Taking this into consideration, the CHAMP partnership decided on the above mentioned definitions, which will now be considered when talking about sport, clubs and modernisation and innovation throughout the whole project.

3. Clubs

3.1. Kinds of Sports Clubs

Sports clubs hold a central place in European sporting culture, although this place is more significant in some countries than in others (Brettschneider, 2001). Generally speaking, however, clubs aim to offer their members opportunities to practice sports and to pass leisure time actively. Many sports clubs also include a strong social aspect. A study from Switzerland made clear the diversity of the role of clubs (Nagel, 2008). Club goals range from achieving provision of opportunities to practice sport for the local population, to offering competitive sports opportunities, to increasing social opportunities. Of course, combinations of these three goals multiply the type of sports clubs in operation. Correspondence between the goals of the sports club and the interests of its members is decisive for the individual commitment to the club. Evidence suggests that the first goal, which could be labelled sport-for-all is the focus of most European sports clubs (Ibsen, et al, 2016).

The pyramid model of sports development:



Sports clubs play a foundational role (with schools) in almost all sport development models. It is fundamental to the hugely popular 'Pyramid Model of Sport Development' which operates as follows: a broad base of foundation skills participation, with increasingly higher levels of performance, engaged in by fewer and fewer people. The influence of this view can be

seen in numerous international sports participation models and that "the assumptions underpinning the pyramid model continue to have a powerful residual influence on thinking about junior sport participation and sport development in sport policy" (Tinning, Kirk & Evans, 1993, p. 2). It is also the basis of the European Commission's (1998) model of sport, and seems to be assumed elsewhere, despite serious criticisms about the model's suitability and implicit assumptions (Bailey & Collins, 2013).

Another way to think about the contribution of sports clubs to the wider community is in terms of the socially desirable goods or services they produce, such as sporting activity, civic engagement, and social inclusion. These sorts of goods or services can lead to a range of positive functions, such as:

1. An integrative function, for being inclusive of different groups within society;
2. A political function, as clubs contribute to welfare within social structures [e.g. through youth work];
3. A social function, through socialising members into democratic practices [e.g. participation];
4. An identity function, as they provide possibilities for self-realisation;
5. A status function, as they can create and reinforce different roles within and outside the club;
6. An economic function, as they offer opportunities for volunteering and employment;
7. A health function, through the provision of regular physical activity and training.

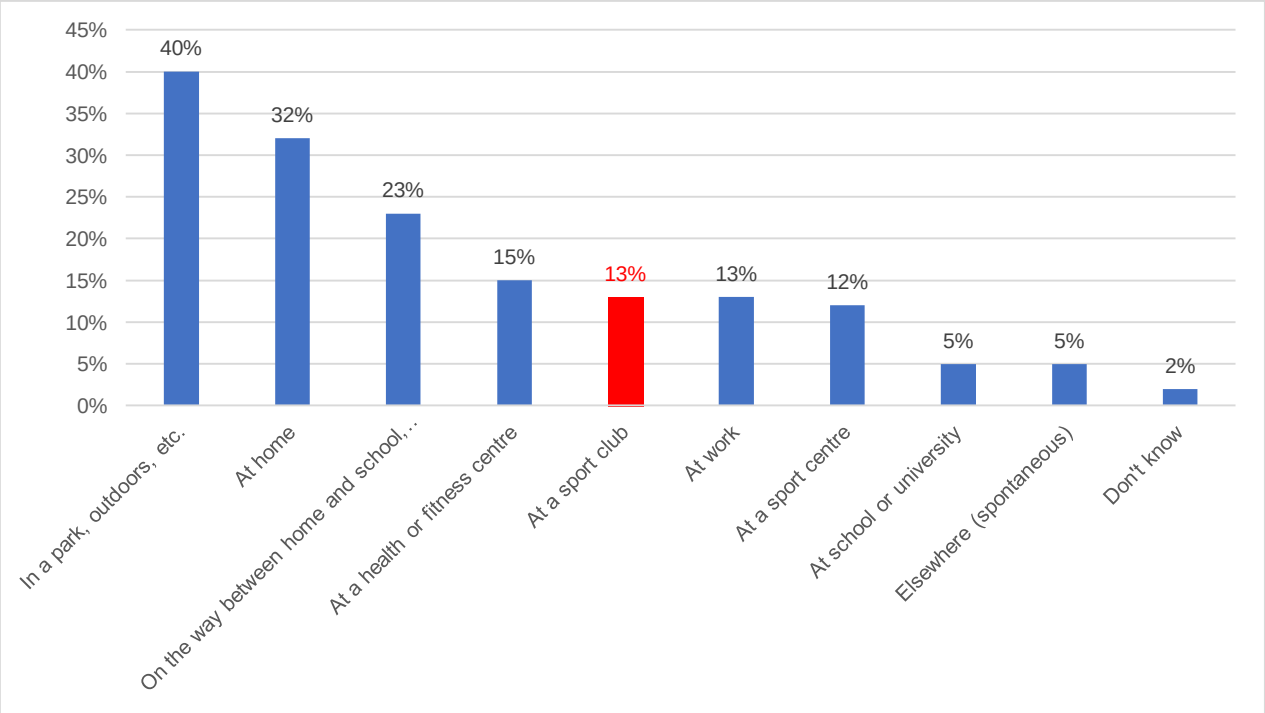
The activities of sports clubs, therefore, indirectly contribute to the production of a wide range of goods and services which are reliant on the reciprocity and relationships upon which sports clubs are based (Bailey, 2005; Breuer, et al, 2019; Heinemann & Horch, 1981).

3.2. Sports Clubs as Settings for Participation

Sports clubs as local, non-profit organisations exist in all European countries, and about 13% of EU citizens hold a sports club membership (European Commission, 2018). It is important to recognize, however, that membership rates vary considerably between countries, and sports clubs hold different positions in national sports structures, policies and cultures due to historic and socio-economic differences (Scheerder, et al, 2017).

The impact of sports clubs on the European economy is substantial (Breuer, et al, 2019). German economists calculated that the total annual income generated by sports clubs comes to €3.33 billion, and with indirect economic contributions taken into account, that figure rises to €4.1 billion annually. This is likely to be a conservative figure, as there are numerous intangible effects of sports participation, such as mental health benefits, physical health benefits, and increases in social inclusion. All of which contribute to the welfare of European countries (Bailey, et al, 2013; Breuer, et al, 2014).

There are various settings for exercising or playing sport, as can be seen from the latest Eurobarometer (2018):



As can be seen, private health clubs have now overtaken sports clubs as the bases of organised physical activity. The most recent European Health & Fitness Market Report shows a 4.6 % increase in the number of clubs across all countries (there are now estimated to be 61,984 members in Europe), driving a total increase in members of 3.5 % to 62.2 million (Deloitte & EuropeActive, 2019). The largest markets, by far, are Germany (20% of the European market) and the United Kingdom (19% of the market). France (9%), Italy (8%), Estonia (8%), also represent a large part of the overall European market (this is the total European market, not just the EU). These figures, however, are based on the market share of private clubs, which gives the greatest emphasis to larger countries. The statistics change if they are analysed according the proportion of the population: Sweden (21.4%), Norway (20.9%), Netherlands (18.3%), Denmark (17%), and United Kingdom (14.8%).

Combining the data from the available European Health & Fitness Market Reports shows a gradual growth of income and membership until, as has been seen, the point in 2019 when more people go to private health clubs than sports clubs.

	2016	**2017**	**2018**
% of population engaging in physical activity	48%	48%	48%

% of population with fitness club membership	12.3	12.9	----
% of 15+ population with fitness club membership	14.1	14.9	----
Health and Fitness Club members	52.4 million	56.4 million	57.6 million
Number of clubs	8,684	8,988	9,276

Parks, homes, and active transport have always been settings for the promotion of physical activity, but the rising popularity of private health clubs introduces a new and significant threat to the continued existence of sports clubs. This suggests that these sports clubs urgently need to adapt to the changing market situation. In other words, they need to modernise.

Numerous studies have found that sports clubs can have a vital role in providing an opportunity for large numbers of people to be physically active (Jekauc, et al, 2013), and consequently, they might also act as a setting for country-wide public health initiatives (Kokko et al. 2009). A study comparing members of clubs or non-members found that membership was associated with significantly increased aerobic and resistance physical activity levels and more favourable cardiovascular health outcomes, compared to non-members (Schroeder, et al, 2017). Another project examining participation in sports clubs reported that adults involved in sports clubs are significantly more likely to achieve recommended levels of physical activity than those who are not (Eime, et al, 2010).

Even though sports clubs serve activities for people at all ages, most of the operations are targeted towards children and adolescents (Kokko, 2014). Brettschneider (2001) showed that young people's membership in sports clubs is associated with higher performance in speed, strength, endurance and coordination tests, and with higher ratings in self-concept and psycho-social health, when compared to those who are not a member of a sports club. Therefore, being physically active in sports clubs can be seen as one of the most important sources of physical activity in terms of quantity and quality (Jekauc, et al, 2013). So, sports clubs are uniquely well-placed to act as a centre for important health-related measures (Eime, et al, 2010; Kokko, 2014; Street, et al, 2007), because:

- Many clubs and national sport associations are financially subsidised by municipal and national governments. From this perspective, many sports associations and clubs have a semi-official status, and public administration can expect reciprocity;
- Many clubs are led and run by volunteers, and voluntary activity should contribute to the needs of its participants;
- Many clubs are integral, not external, parts of societies, and concerns of the community (health, social behaviour, etc.) are also the concerns of the coaches and clubs;

- Most clubs claim to have features beyond sports in their mission and values, such as healthy lifestyles, the promotion of appropriate values; a sense of community;
- Taken together, sports clubs have the potential to connect with large numbers of people, especially youth, thus their potential impact is considerable;
- Sports clubs provide a natural setting in which different messages can be combined (about sexual health, substance use, etc.) in an interesting and relevant way;
- Sports coaches are valued figures of authority for young people, but often also adults, and have a great potential as an advocate for health messages;
- Community sports clubs provide opportunities for social interaction through both structured (organised and competitive) and unstructured (social) participation in sport;
- Involvement in club sport may impact positively on social and mental well-being through enhanced social connectedness, social support, peer bonding, increased life satisfaction, and self-esteem.

So, sports clubs have the potential to act as important settings for the achievement of valued goals, including sports skills and competition, but also social and life skills, friendships, and healthy living. Increasing participation in sports in these settings is an important objective for any reasons - public health, education, social inclusion - and a useful way of achieving this objective is to provide easily accessible facilities where sports can be practised. While the term 'facilities' traditionally refers to indoor or outdoor public facilities for specific types of sports, often facilitating voluntary sports clubs, it currently refers to a wide spectrum of settings. Recently, several new opportunities to practice sports have emerged, and especially informal and flexible types of sports participation (also referred to as 'light' sports settings) have increased more rapidly than traditional organised club-based sports participation (or 'heavy' sports settings) (Deelen, et al, 2018).

An additional change is that the sport sector is increasingly adopting health promotion principles through the establishment of strategies such as the development of healthy and welcoming environments (Eime, et al, 2008). The healthy and welcoming environments strategy incorporates social support principles and policies through a ''welcoming and inclusive environment'' component that focuses on engagement and maintenance of club participants. These principles are well-supported in the research literature because social support has been identified and endorsed as a determinant for physical activity engagement and maintenance (Street, et al, 2007).

3.3. Volunteers

The history of sport, in a 'modern sense', is inseparable from volunteers, and even today, many sports clubs are largely dependent on volunteers to perform governance, managerial and service delivery roles (Hoye, et al, 2008). These changes to volunteers' experience in sports clubs are important because many clubs would not be able operate at all without their support (Cuskelly, et al, 2006). Voluntarily managed and operated sports clubs are increasingly cited by European policy

makers as important partners in achieving both sporting and non-sports related goals (Nowy and Breuer, 2019). Volunteers are integral to the achievement of sport development outcomes (Cuskelly, et al, 2006). Their role has undergone significant and sustained change in recent years in many European countries, as the organisations for which they volunteer have been forced to modernise their management systems and structures (Slack, 1985), and it has been suggested that this shift has contributed to changing the nature of the volunteer experience within sports clubs, and subsequently the roles and expectations of volunteers have shifted. The result is that, in many clubs, there is a risk that volunteers' motives for giving up their time to the organisation will not align with the goals and management of the sports clubs anymore (Hoye, et al, 2008).

Definitions of volunteerism vary across cultures and within and between countries. The usage of the term "volunteerism" is broad when it comes to the denoting non-paid service (Cnaan, Handy, & Wadsworth, 1996), but also in terms of free choice when becoming a volunteer, structure of the organisation in which the volunteers are engaged and who will benefit from this engagement. For instance, some countries, such as Ireland have a practice of rewarding their volunteers for their efforts and time. In others, such as England, this would be viewed as the contradiction of terms as there is no such thing as the "paid volunteer".

Volunteering Australia (2014) has summarised some of the different ways in which the concept of the volunteer are understood around the world:

	Free choice	**Structure of the organisation**	**Beneficiaries**	**Remuneration**
Volunteering Australia	Free will	Non profit	Community and volunteer	None
Volunteering Canada	Free will	Any organisation	Community, individuals, volunteer	None
Volunteering England	Free will	Any organisation	Environment, individuals, family	None
Volunteering Ireland	Free will	Not specified	Community, individuals and causes	Out of pocket expenses
Portugal	Not specified	Within an organisation	Social and communitarian causes	Some compensation
Sweden	Free will	Any organisation	Organisation	None

The International Association for Volunteer Effort	Free will	Not specified	Others or the community	None
ILO[1]	Free will	Both through an organisation and directly with clients	Recipients outside your own household	None

So, volunteerism can be defined by taking into consideration variables that enable placing of the volunteering practices on a continuum (Cnaan, Handy, & Wadsworth, 1996). Rather than as a set of static characteristics this approach allows for more inclusive approach to volunteerism. Volunteers can be placed on a continuum of:

- Free choice (free will, relatively un-coerced, obligation to volunteer);
- Remuneration (none at all, none expected, expenses reimbursed, stipend/low pay);
- Structure (formal, informal);
- Intended beneficiaries (benefit/ help others/strangers, benefit/help friends or relatives, benefit/ help oneself).

There is limited information about the number of volunteers within the European Union. One of the main reasons for this is that the EU countries often do not keep the track of their volunteers. Even if they do, the definition of volunteerism varies extensively across countries, which makes the data collation and comparison difficult. In the survey by the European Parliament from 2011, 6,462 of the 26,825 Europeans aged over 15 said that they were either regularly or occasionally involved in voluntary work. This amounts to 24% of the respondents. The Commission's extensive survey also estimates that more than 100 million citizens across the EU over the age of 15 engage in voluntary work. When it comes to younger Europeans, one third of them participated in voluntary activities in the last 12 months (European Commission, 2018). For those who volunteered, their voluntary activities were most likely to be aimed at changing something in their local community (69%). Almost three in ten (29%) said the activities were aimed at changing their country, 10% said other European countries and 11% another part of the world. For the sport setting, the respondents were most likely to have been active in a sports club of all settings in the last 12 months (29%). Young men were more likely to have participated in at least one of these activities in the last 12 months compared to young women (58% vs 48%), and this is particularly the case for sports clubs (36% vs 23%).

So, volunteers are an important aspect of sports clubs. From the perspective of the CHAMP Project, this information is relevant because volunteers are very likely to be involved with the process of adoption of innovative practices, and as has been discussed above, the engagement of people working in clubs is vital for successful implementation.

[1] International Labour Organisation

3.4. Membership

According to the European Commission, voluntary, non-profit sports clubs are the main providers of sports participation opportunities in almost every European country (European Commission, 2018). This means that sports clubs have a unique value to European governments as settings for the provision of sports participation and social welfare, and this explains why they are subsidised directly and indirectly (Breuer, et al, 2019).

Variation between national participation rates is predictable, and partly reflects differences between parental and cultural expectations, as well as the role of sport within the educational systems. It also seems to reflect access to sport. In this respect, we have an interesting case study from Germany: Out of 91,000 existing sports clubs, 56,500 offer a range of activities in different types of sport for pre-schoolers, and 84,000 for schoolchildren and adolescents (Breuer and Wicker, 2009). This goes some way in explaining why 70% of 7- to 10-year-old German children are regularly involved in sports clubs. In contrast to Anglo-American regions, sports clubs are available in most parts of Germany, even in rural areas (Baur and Burrmann, 2000).

Membership in sports clubs is affordable for the majority of the German population, thus providing an opportunity for most Germans to be physically active. The proliferation of sports clubs in Germany goes back many years, but their potential to raise the general level of physical activity as part of nationwide health promotion interventions is shared by only a small number of other countries, such as Finland (Kokko, Kannas, & Villberg, 2009).

Brettschneider (2001) showed that adolescent's membership in these sports clubs is associated with higher performance in speed, strength, endurance and coordination tests and with higher ratings in self-concept and psycho-social health when compared to adolescents who are not a member of a sports club. Therefore, being physically active in sports clubs can be seen as one of the most important sources of children's and adolescent's physical activity in terms of quantity and quality. Brettschneider also emphasised important psychological and sociological roles of sports clubs, such as protecting young people against drugs and addiction, strengthening social networks, increasing self-confidence, and reducing violence and hostility, although he acknowledged the difficulty of separating causation and correlation (whether the association was because sport led to these benefits, or because of other factors, such as sport clubs attracting people less inclined to take drugs, with a wide social network, or hostile).

The majority of sports clubs in Europe are single-sports, especially in Belgium (85%), Sweden (85%), the Netherlands (81%), and Spain (70%) (Hoekman, et al, 2015). Comparative research in Europe supports this pattern, adding England to the list of countries in which single-sports clubs are most common (Breuer, et al, 2017). One reason suggested for the dominance of single-sport clubs is anxiety about sharing limited resources with other sports (Allison, 2001). Another possible factor is size, as smaller clubs tend towards simpler organisation (Nichols & James, 2008). Multi-sports clubs, in which more sports are offered and often unite more members, are most frequently found in Austria, Finland, and Germany (Hoekman, et al, 2015). In Germany, more than 40% of clubs are multi-sports clubs, whilst in Norway and Hungary, about 1/3 of all clubs offer more than one sport (Breuer, et al, 2017).

It is worthwhile to consider other forms of sports clubs, that could be called “niche clubs“, as they offer opportunities to practice sports for specific population groups. One example of niche clubs is those that focus on sport for migrants and refugees. A study of these clubs in Germany found that they tend to have been found relatively recently, had fewer members, and be characterised by a higher proportion of men and middle-aged members. They also tend to offer a smaller number of sports, with football being the most likely sport offered (Stahl, et al, 2011). In contrast, disability sports groups tend not to be organised in specific sports clubs, but to be organised as multi-sports clubs. The suggestion is that the greater capacity of these multi-sports clubs is better suited to meeting additional and specific needs of disability programmes (Wicker & Breuer, 2014).

3.5. Funding Sports Clubs

For-profit sports clubs, like any business, aim to maximize profits. In contrast, traditional, non-profit sports clubs are founded and directed by the shared interests and preferences of members. This suggests that measures of success are less ambiguous in sports clubs (Breuer, et al, 2019). For example, one study of Finnish sports clubs argued that their effectiveness depends on their ability to obtain resources, manage their use of resources and processes, regulate the general level of activity, and in an appropriate atmosphere within the club (Koski, 1995). These processes and activities are mediated by several club characteristics that are linked to effectiveness, including club size, organisational environment, and ideological orientation. Larger clubs, such as those found in Germany and Switzerland, seem to benefit in terms of both savings and effectiveness by their greater number of members. This might explain why larger clubs and multi-sports clubs tend to receive more public funds (Wicker & Breuer, 2013). Whether this can be balanced against the niche opportunities offered by smaller clubs is unclear.

One of the main driving forces behind the need for modernisation and innovation is the scarcity of resources. This appears to be a near-universal problem for sports clubs. This can be difficult to address especially in mini clubs, as generating financial resources is rarely a major organisational aim. One of the most common ways in which clubs address the problem of limited resources is by cooperating with other organisations. For example, it is common in many countries to hire facilities from other agencies. This can offer additional opportunities to provide sports participation to members, but has a consequence of moving control of provision away from the club itself (Taylor, et al, 2009). Another concern that is common to sports clubs relates to human resources, and specifically the recruitment and retention of volunteers (Burgham & Downward, 2005). Small clubs really have the capacity to compensate volunteers for their contributions. Larger clubs, in comparison, are better able to deal with reductions in volunteer contributions by increasing the number of short-term volunteers, and in the long run, by employing paid staff. The issue of recruiting and retaining volunteers in smaller clubs seems to be particularly difficult with women, both on the board of the organisation and in other roles, such as coaching (Wicker & Breuer, 2013).

4. Conclusion

This report, the first of the CHAMP Project, has tried to provide a background to the rest of the project, and its intellectual outcomes. It has done this by articulating some of the key terms and ideas, such as sport, sports club, innovation and modernisation, and volunteer. Our hope is that the collective wisdom of the CHAMP Partnership might actually help advance shared understanding of these key terms. This would be a significant advance, because there is currently a great deal of confusion about these words in policy documents and impractical settings, and it has been suggested here that such a confusion can only interfere with the dissemination of shared collective good practice. It has also gathered some of the relevant information about the nature, organisation, and number of sports clubs in Europe. The picture here is mixed. Europe has a strong tradition of sports clubs, with some countries still maintaining large levels of membership. However, there is clearly competition from other sectors, both inside of the physical activity movement (such as new and exciting health and fitness clubs) and outside of it (such as electronic recreation). So, it follows that traditional sports clubs need to adapt and to adopt new ways of thinking and an operating so that they are going to continue to be integral features of the European sporting landscape.

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