



ESOM

ENHANCING SPORT ORGANISATIONS
AND MANAGEMENT

ESOM Research Report: European University Sports at a Glance



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Foreword

It is with great pride and enthusiasm that I present to you 'European University Sports at a glance', a testament to our commitment to fostering the development and organization of sports within our academic institutions. This research was also done as part of the Enhancing Sport Organisations and Management project (ESOM). As the President of EUSA, I am delighted to share the highlights of this survey, which provides an invaluable overview of the current landscape of university sports in various European countries.

The primary objective of this survey was to gather detailed insights into the multifaceted reality of university sports, encompassing student participation, gender distribution, the roles of individuals involved, the variety of sports organized, and the funding mechanisms supporting these activities. By analyzing this data, we aim to empower stakeholders with the knowledge necessary to make informed, data-driven decisions that will enhance the quality and accessibility of university sports for all students.

Understanding student participation is crucial as it reflects the level of engagement and interest in sports within our national university sports associations. This survey sheds light on participation rates, helping us identify areas where we can encourage more students to get involved, promoting physical well-being and a balanced lifestyle. Moreover, gender distribution data enables us to ensure that our sports programs are inclusive and equitable, providing equal opportunities for all students, regardless of gender.

The roles of individuals involved in university sports are varied and vital to the success of university sports and it is the dedication and hard work of those who make university sports possible. Analyzing their participation and contributions allows us to support and develop these roles further, ensuring the continued growth and success of university sports.

Diversity in the sports offered is another key focus of our survey. By examining the range of sports organized across different institutions, we can identify popular trends, emerging sports, and areas where we can expand our offerings. This diversity not only caters to the varied interests of our student body but also promotes a culture of inclusivity and participation.

Lastly, understanding the funding mechanisms behind university sports activities is essential for sustainable development. This survey provides insights into how sports

programs are financed, highlighting best practices and potential areas for improvement. By leveraging this data, we can advocate for better funding and resources, ensuring that university sports remain a vibrant and integral part of the student experience.

In conclusion, this report is more than just a collection of data; it is a first contribution for a roadmap for the future of university sports in Europe. It reflects our dedication to continuous improvement and our belief in the power of sports to enrich the lives of students. I extend my heartfelt thanks to everyone who contributed to this survey and to those who will use this information to drive positive change. Together, we can build a brighter, more inclusive, and dynamic future for university sports.

Sincerely,

Adam Roczek,
EUSA President

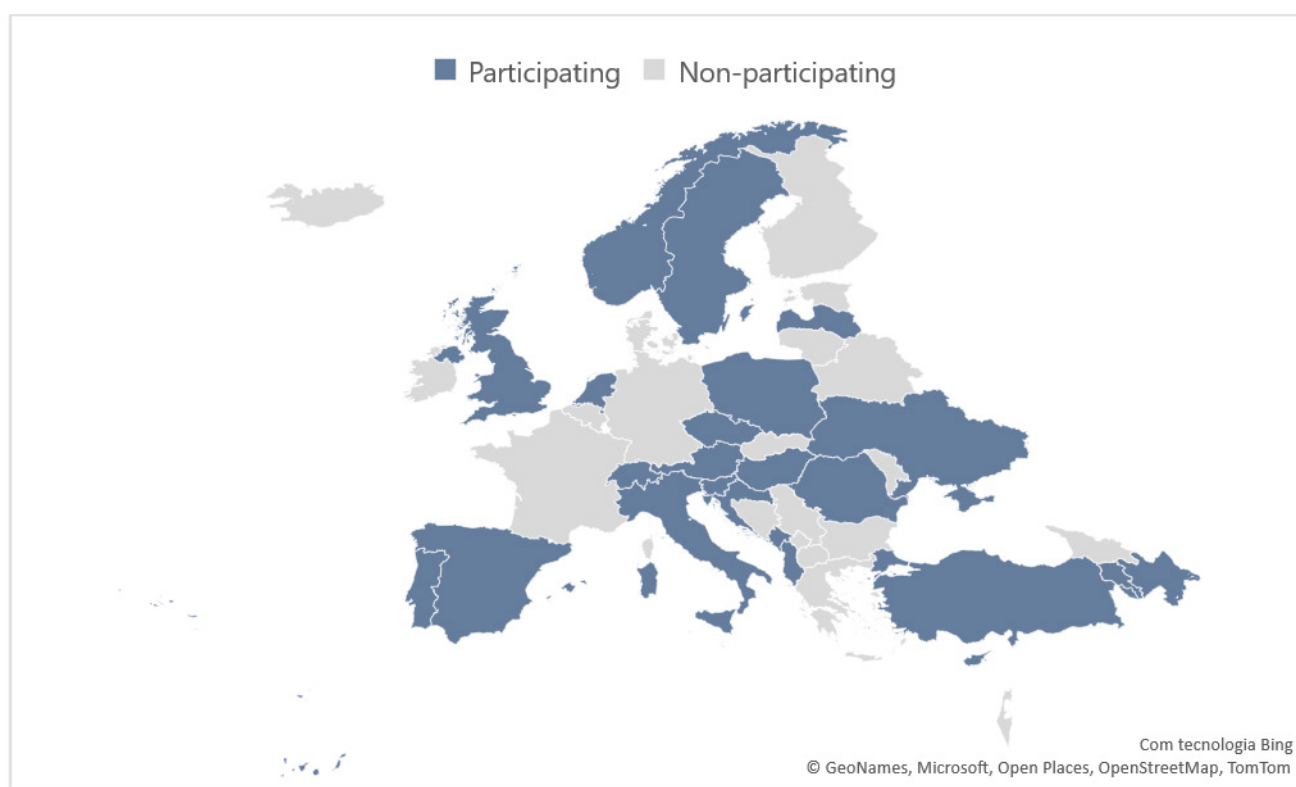
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Introduction

The European University Sports Association – EUSA is a multi-sport organization focusing on the promotion and development of university sports. By 2023, EUSA aggregates a total of 47 member countries represented by the countries respective National University Sports Associations (NUSAs)¹.

The reality of university sports varies significantly from country to country. To provide a global perspective on the different realities of university sports a survey was sent to the different member organizations. A total of 24 member organizations have participated in the survey providing data for the year (or sports season) of 2023, which represents approximately 50% of participating members. Figure 1 presents a map of participating member countries, and a detailed list is provided in Appendix A.



*Figure 1 - Map of participating and non-participant members of the EUSA
(not showing Russia for map visualization simplification)*

¹ A list of members National University Sports associations can be consulted at <https://www.eusa.eu/members>

The main objective of this survey is to provide a global perspective on the university sports activities developed at each country. Questions focus on the national organization of university sports, comprising National University Sports Associations staff composition, Universities and enrolled students in each country, number of students participating in sport activities, sports organized in each country and coaches and technical officials contributing to the sports activities. A focus is given to the participation by gender and interest is taken on the funding structure of each organization. The list of questions used is available in Appendix B.

National University Sports Associations

In 2023, NUSAs staff was composed of a total of 391 staff members divided between full-time and part-time staff members as illustrated in Figure 2. Most of the staff is full-time staff (68%) and Male (58%).

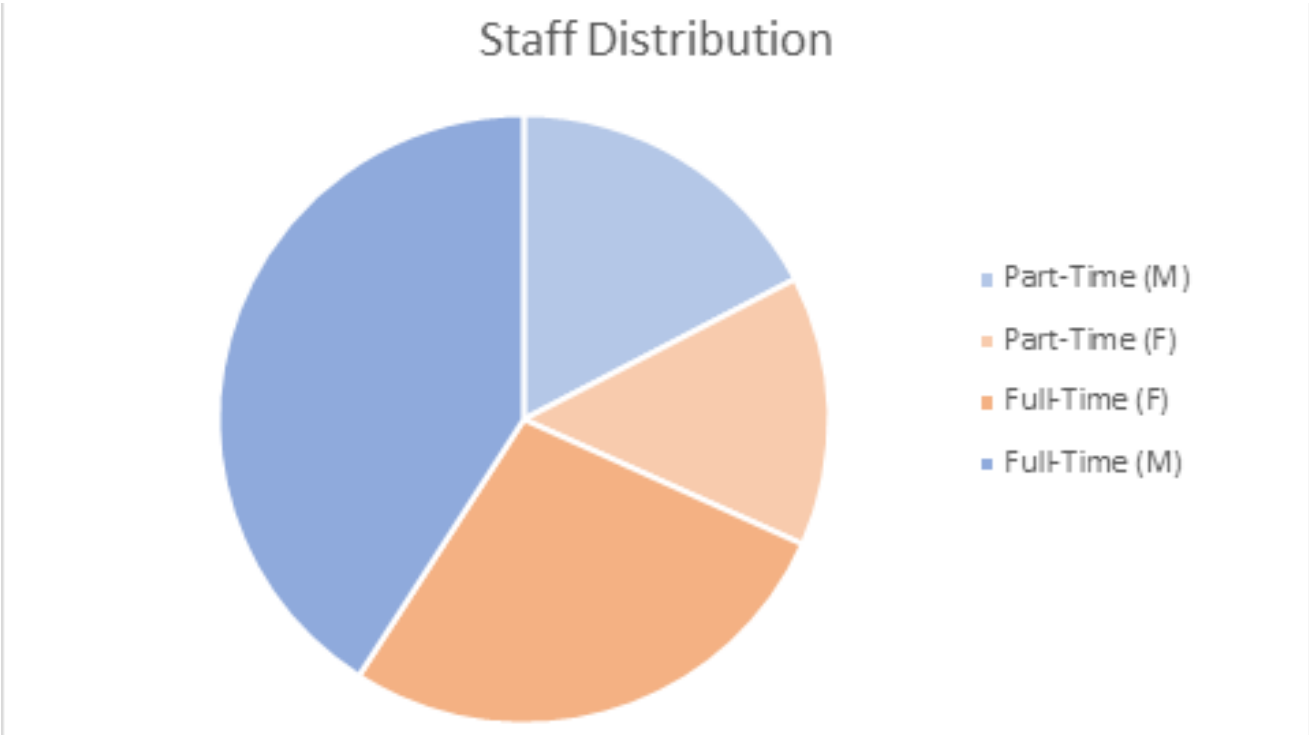


Figure 2- Staff members distribution among Full-time (dark colors) and part-time employees (light colors). Male and Female staff members identified in blue and pink, respectively.

Furthermore, a total of 502 individuals served as decision body members (comprising of EC Members, Vice-presidents, and Chairs of Commissions). Decision making positions significantly differ from staff gender distribution and are mostly occupied by Male members (75%) as shown in the country-by-country distribution presented in Figure 3.

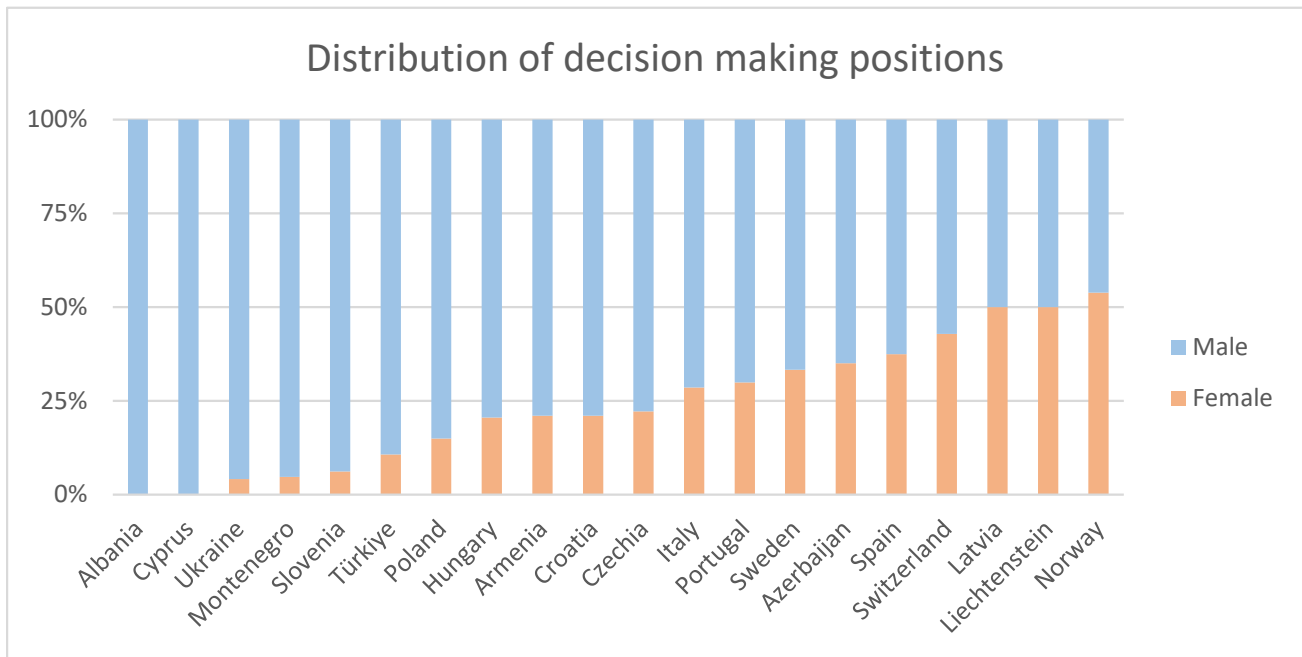


Figure 3- Distribution of decision member positions by gender among the different country's NUSAs.
(No data available for Austria, the Netherlands, Romania, and United Kingdom)

Participation in University Sports

The countries participating in this survey report a total of 2081 universities in their territories. On average, over the sample countries, 55% of the students enrolled in higher education are female and participation in university sports activities has an average gender participation of 50-50. Figure 4 shows the gender distribution per country on students enrolled in higher education and students participating in university sports activities at the national, interregional, and regional level.

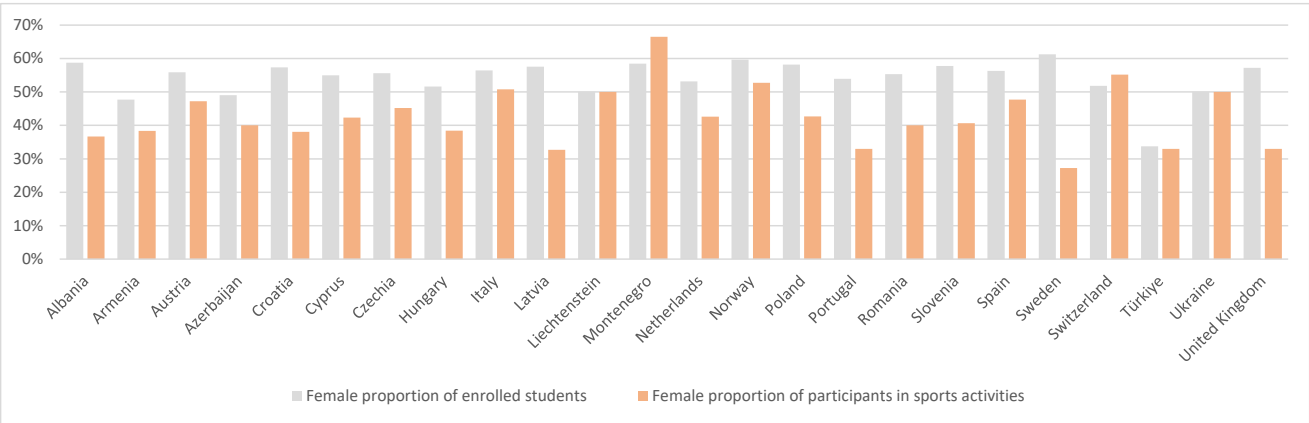


Figure 4- gender distribution per country on students enrolled in higher education and students participating in university sports activities at the national, interregional, and regional level.

Therefore, a clear gap exists between the gender distribution between enrolled students in participants in sports activities. Figure 5 shows the country-by-country gap.

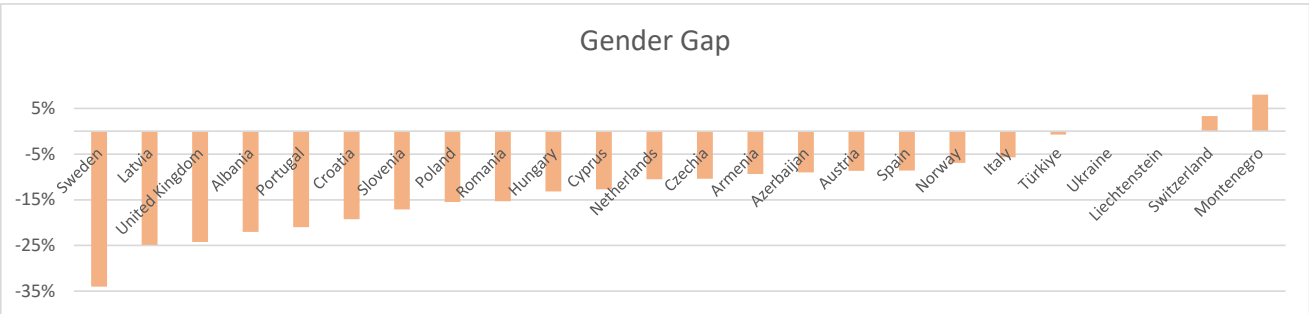


Figure 5- Gender gap in enrolled students vs participating students.
 Negative (positive) percentage means female (male) gender is under-represented.

Only Montenegro and Switzerland have a male under-representation in participants, with most of the countries showing a female under-representation when

considering the gender distribution of students enrolled in higher education. The 24 participating countries have reported a total of 683 858 student participants in their activities at the national, inter-regional and regional level. A country-by-country distribution is available in Appendix C.

Activities are supported by local sports directors, coaches, or other support technical roles. In 2023, a total of 22 126 support technical staff was involved in the National University Sports Associations' activities. Figure 6 illustrates the distribution of the support technical staff by country and gender.

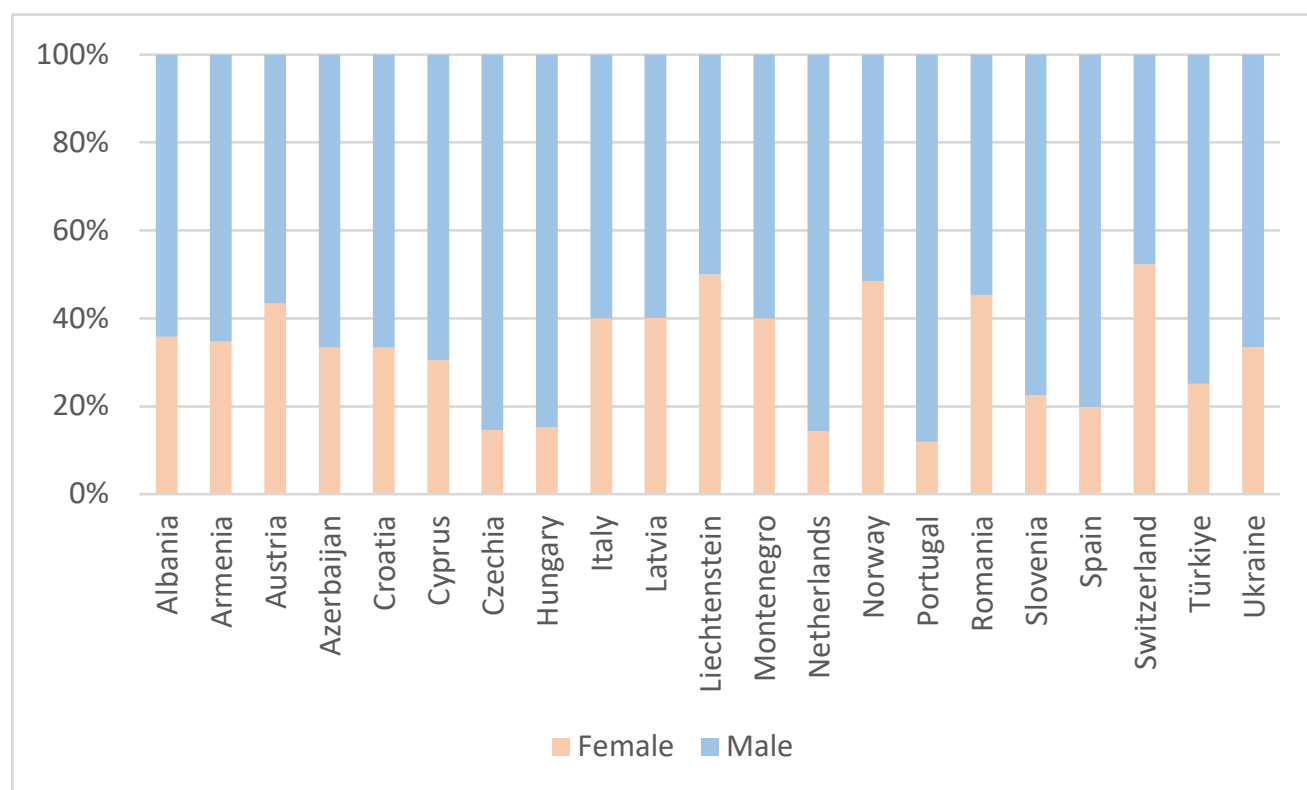


Figure 6 - Support technical staff distribution by country and gender.

Sports organization

Türkiye (49), Ukraine (44) and Czechia (41) are the leading countries in terms of number of sports organized at the national level. Figure 7 presents the different number of sports organized in each country.

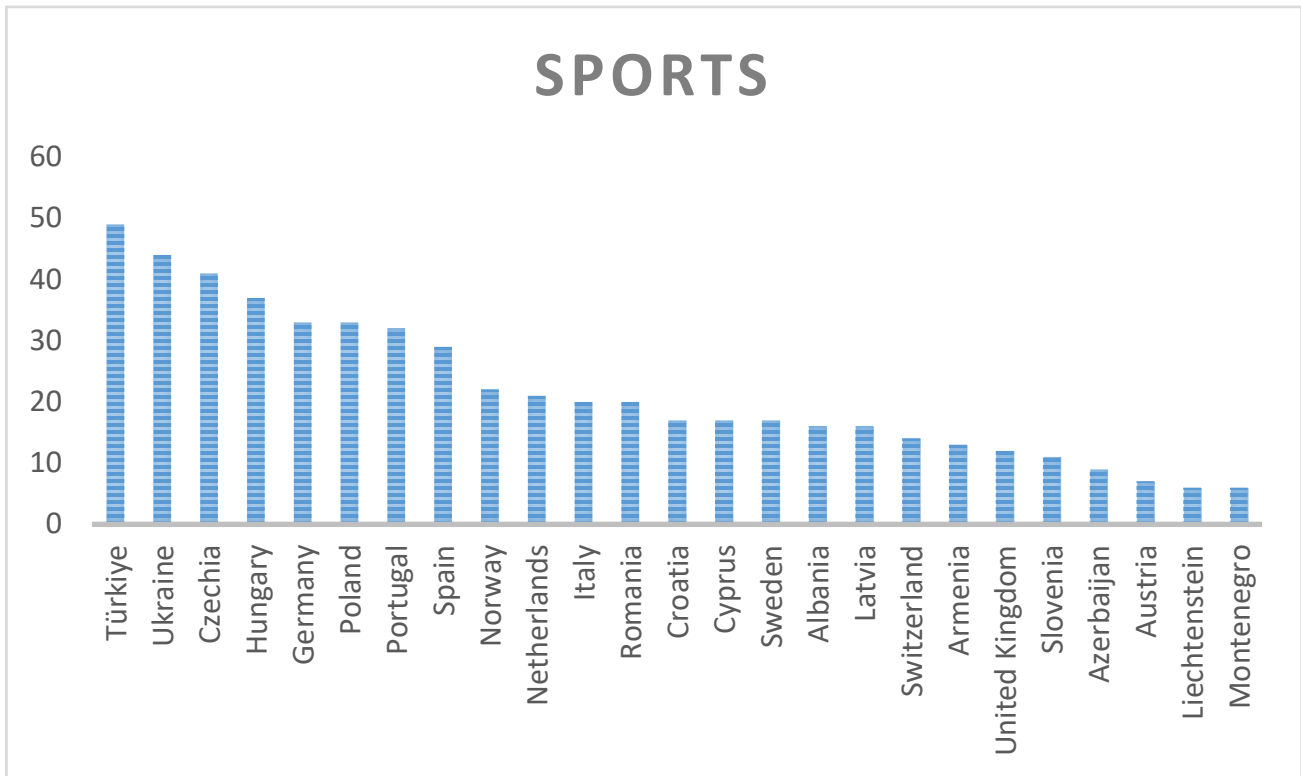


Figure 7- Number of sports organized per country.

Performing a per sport analysis, Volleyball (23), Futsal (22), Basketball (21) and Table Tennis (21) appear as the most organized sports among the 24 responding countries. Table 1 lists the sports organized by 10 or more countries with the sports that are part of the EUSA 2023 championships highlighted in bold.

Table 1 - List of sports organized by 10 or more countries. Sports part of the EUSA 2023 European Universities Championships highlighted in bold.

Countries	Sports
23	Volleyball
22	Futsal
21	Basketball, Table Tennis
20	Beach Volleyball
19	Badminton, Tennis
17	Swimming
16	3x3 Basketball, Football, Chess
15	Athletics, Handball
13	Judo, Fencing
11	Karate, Triathlon

It is noted that although not part of the 2023 EUSA program, sports such as Swimming, Chess, Athletics, Fencing and Triathlon have a significant number of national championships organized.

Gender distribution differs strongly for each sport. A complete comparison is made available in Appendix D.

If the total number of participants is considered, the most participated sports at the European level are Football, Basketball and Volleyball. From the top 15 sports, only Athletics and Swimming were not part of the EUSA 2023 sports program as shown in Table 2.

Table 2- List of the top 15 sports by number of participants.
Sports part of the EUSA 2023 European Universities Championships highlighted in bold.

	SPORT	PARTICIPANTS
1	Football	21 558
2	Basketball	14 838
3	Volleyball	14 047
4	Futsal	11 686
5	Handball	7 391
6	Athletics	6 856
7	Badminton	5 078
8	Tennis	4 427
9	Swimming	3 641
10	Table Tennis	3 186
11	Karate	3 022
12	Beach Volleyball	2 626
13	Taekwondo	2 543
14	3x3 Basketball	2 528
15	Judo	2 295

In 2023, the European Universities Championships involved a total of 5570 participants from 524 Universities based in 40 different countries. Figure 8 shows the countries participating in the championships.



Figure 8- Countries participating in the European Universities Championships in 2023 (light blue)

In terms of participants and official distribution per gender, a gap exists with a higher number of male participants. This gap is very expressive especially for the team officials as shown in Figure 9.

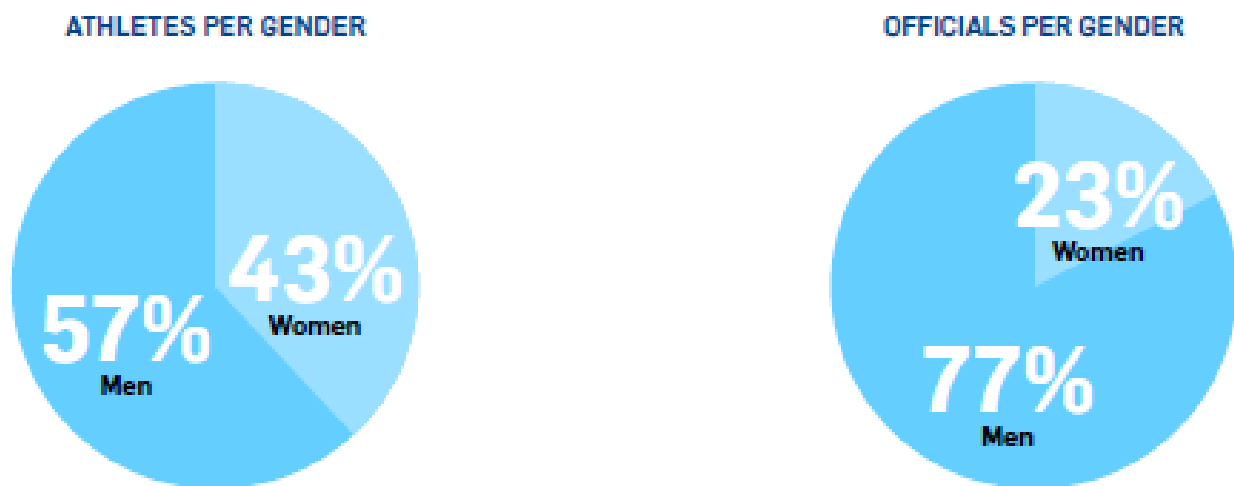


Figure 9- European Universities Championships gender distribution for athletes (left) and officials (right)

The numbers are in line with the average distribution for the European countries and numbers show that there is still a need to engage in gender equality promoting actions, particularly on the officials involvement.

Funding

The structure of university sports funding varies significantly among European countries as shown by Figure 10. Public funding comprises state or European funding and private funding comprises all other sources of income.

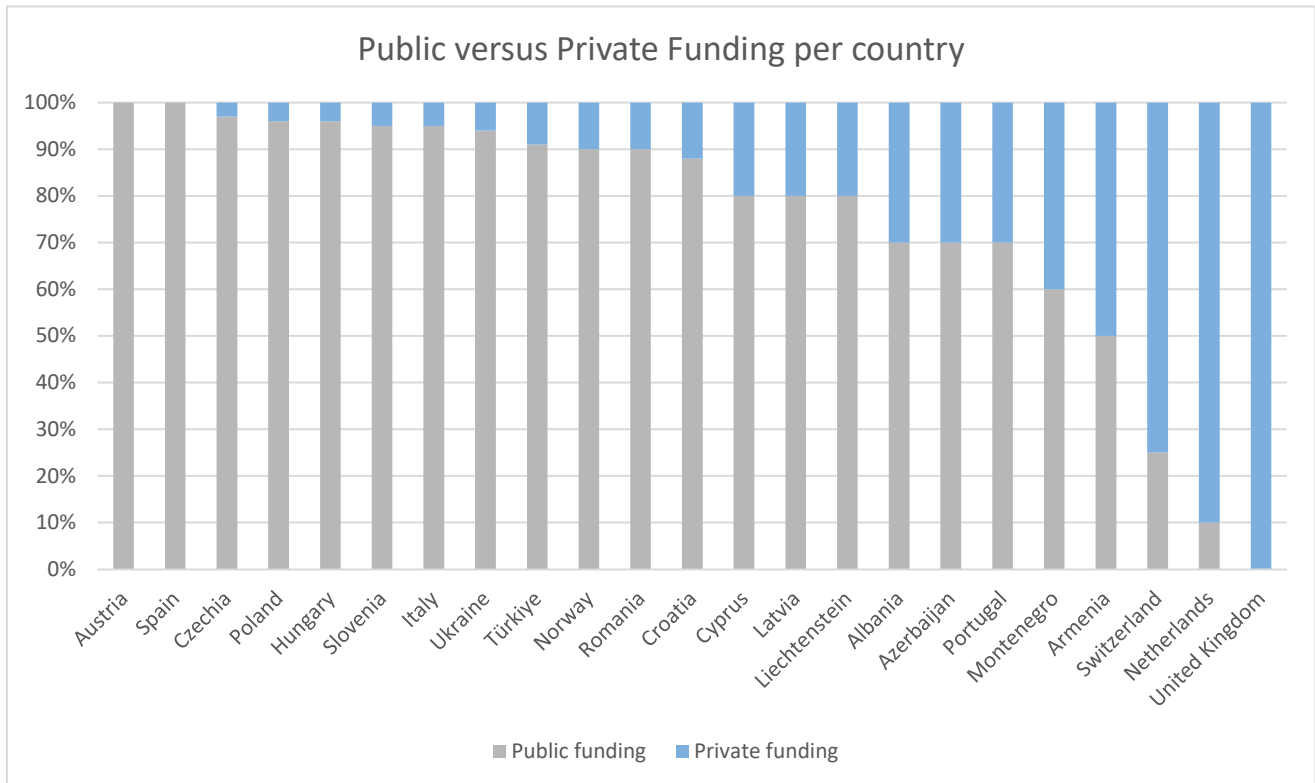


Figure 10- Proportion of public and private funding for the activities in each country.

More than half of the countries have a higher than 80% dependency on public funding. Austria and Spain have 100% of the funding originating in public funding, while the United Kingdom relies completely on private funding. Within public funding it is interesting to highlight that in the Netherlands, the public funding consists exclusively of European funding. Besides the Netherlands, only other 5 countries reported having European funding. With relevant levels of European funding there are Hungary and Croatia, and with minor level of European funding there are Poland and Slovenia.

A more detailed view on the per country funding structure is provided in Appendix E.

Conclusions

The findings of this comprehensive survey on university sports across Europe mark a significant step forward in our understanding and development of this vital aspect of student life. Through detailed analysis of student participation, gender distribution, the roles of those involved, the variety of sports offered, and the funding mechanisms supporting these activities, we have gained a clearer picture of the current landscape and the areas in which improvement can be made.

Our insights into student participation rates reveal both strengths to build upon and gaps to address. By encouraging broader engagement, we can foster a more active and healthy student population. The gender distribution data underscores the progress made towards inclusivity, while also highlighting areas where strive for equality must continue.

The diversity of sports currently organized showcases the rich variety of opportunities available to students, promoting a culture of inclusivity and widespread participation.

Understanding the financial underpinnings of these activities is crucial for their sustainability. This survey provides valuable insights into effective funding strategies and areas needing attention. By addressing these financial challenges, we can ensure that university sports programs are well-resourced and able to thrive.

In conclusion, this report not only highlights the current state of university sports but also serves as a strategic guide for future enhancements. The data-driven insights gathered here will enable us to make informed decisions, fostering an environment where sports can flourish and contribute significantly to the overall student experience. As we move forward, let us leverage this knowledge to create more inclusive, dynamic, and well-supported university sports programmes across Europe. Together, we can achieve a brighter future for university sports, enriching the lives of countless students along the way.

Appendix A

Participating countries

Albania	Germany	Norway
Armenia	Greece	Poland
Austria	Hungary	Portugal
Azerbaijan Republic	Iceland	Romania
Belarus	Ireland	Russia
Belgium	Israel	San Marino
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Italy	Serbia
Bulgaria	Kosovo	Slovakia
Croatia	Latvia	Slovenia
Cyprus	Liechtenstein	Spain
Czechia	Lithuania	Sweden
Denmark	Malta	Switzerland
Estonia	Moldavia	Türkiye
Finland	Montenegro	Ukraine
France	Netherlands	United Kingdom
Georgia	North Macedonia	

Table 3 List of member countries of the European University Sports Association with participating countries in the 2023 survey highlighted in bold.

Appendix B

Survey Structure

1. Country
2. Name of your NUSA
3. NUSA Statistics
 - a. How many people are employed full time in your NUSA?
 - b. How many people are employed part-time in your NUSA?
 - c. How many Vice-Presidents are in your NUSA?
 - d. How many Executive Committee members does your NUSA have?
 - e. How many Committee Chairs does your NUSA have?
4. How many universities are there in your country?
5. Number of students enrolled in higher education.
6. Number of students participating in sport activities in higher education at national, inter-regional and regional level (national focus)
7. Which national championships are organized, with an estimate of participants (annually)?
8. What is the number of men and women as directors of academic sport services /University sport facilities in your country?
9. What is the number of men and women working as physical education teachers/coaches at academic sport services / University sport facilities in your country?
10. Number of coaches and technical officials contributing in your national championships?
11. Please estimate the percentage of your average annual funding from the following sources (...)

Appendix C

Country by country distribution

Country	Participation	
	Male	Female
Albania	9 500	5 500
Armenia	1 230	765
Austria	211	189
Azerbaijan	1 800	1 200
Croatia	2 528	1 555
Cyprus	1 500	1 100
Czechia	1 700	1 400
Hungary	2 579	1 609
Italy	95 000	98 000
Latvia	2 020	980
Liechtenstein	50	50
Montenegro	485	962
Netherlands	3 191	2 367
Norway	20 883	23 270
Poland	13 178	9 812
Portugal	5 073	2 492
Romania	3 000	2 000
Slovenia	730	500
Spain	2 436	2 224
Sweden	1 057	396
Switzerland	82 000	101 000
Türkiye	15 762	7 763
Ukraine	57 980	57 964
United Kingdom	24 705	12 162
Total	348598	335260

Appendix D

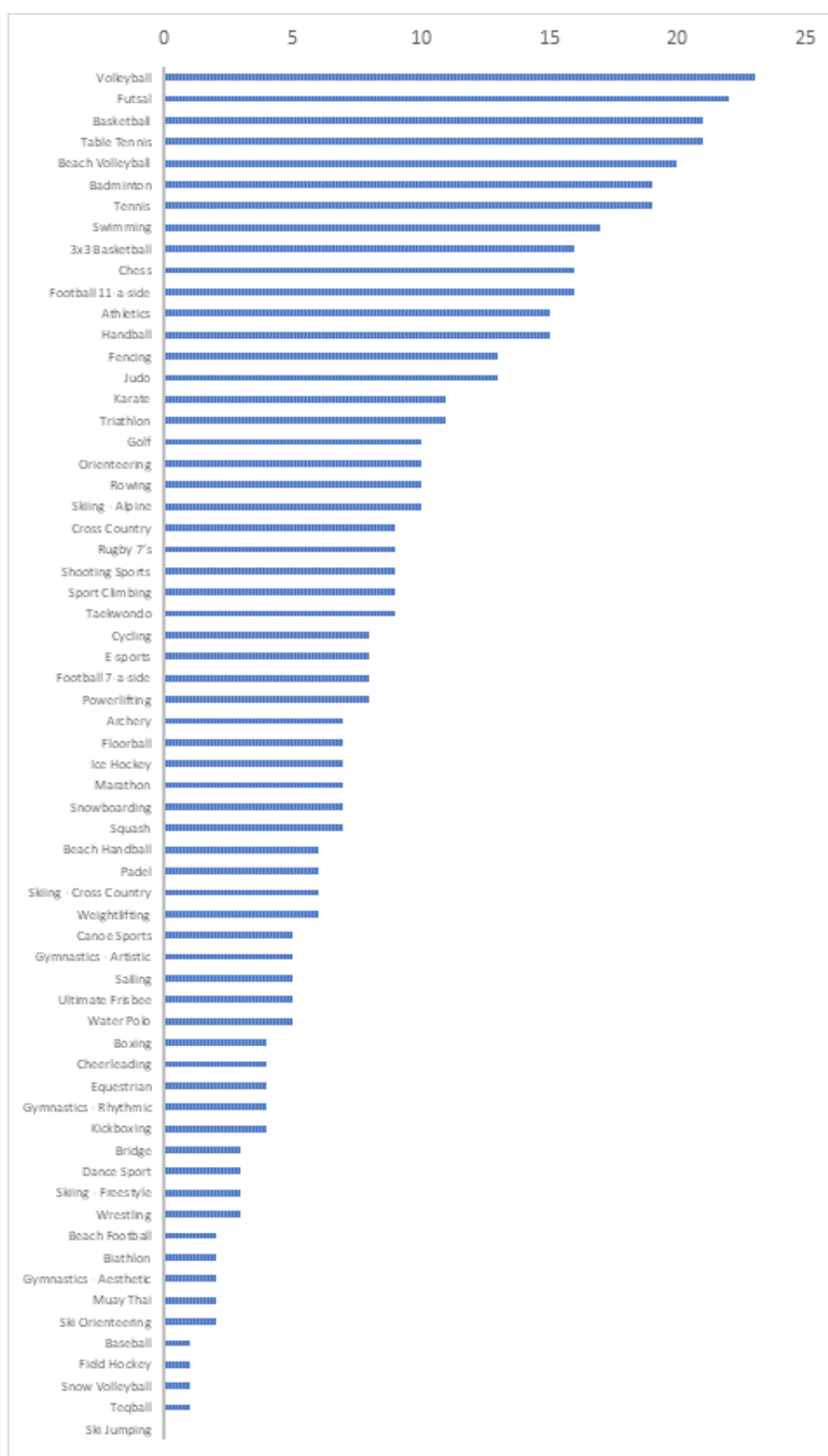


Figure 11- Number of countries reporting to organize a given sport.

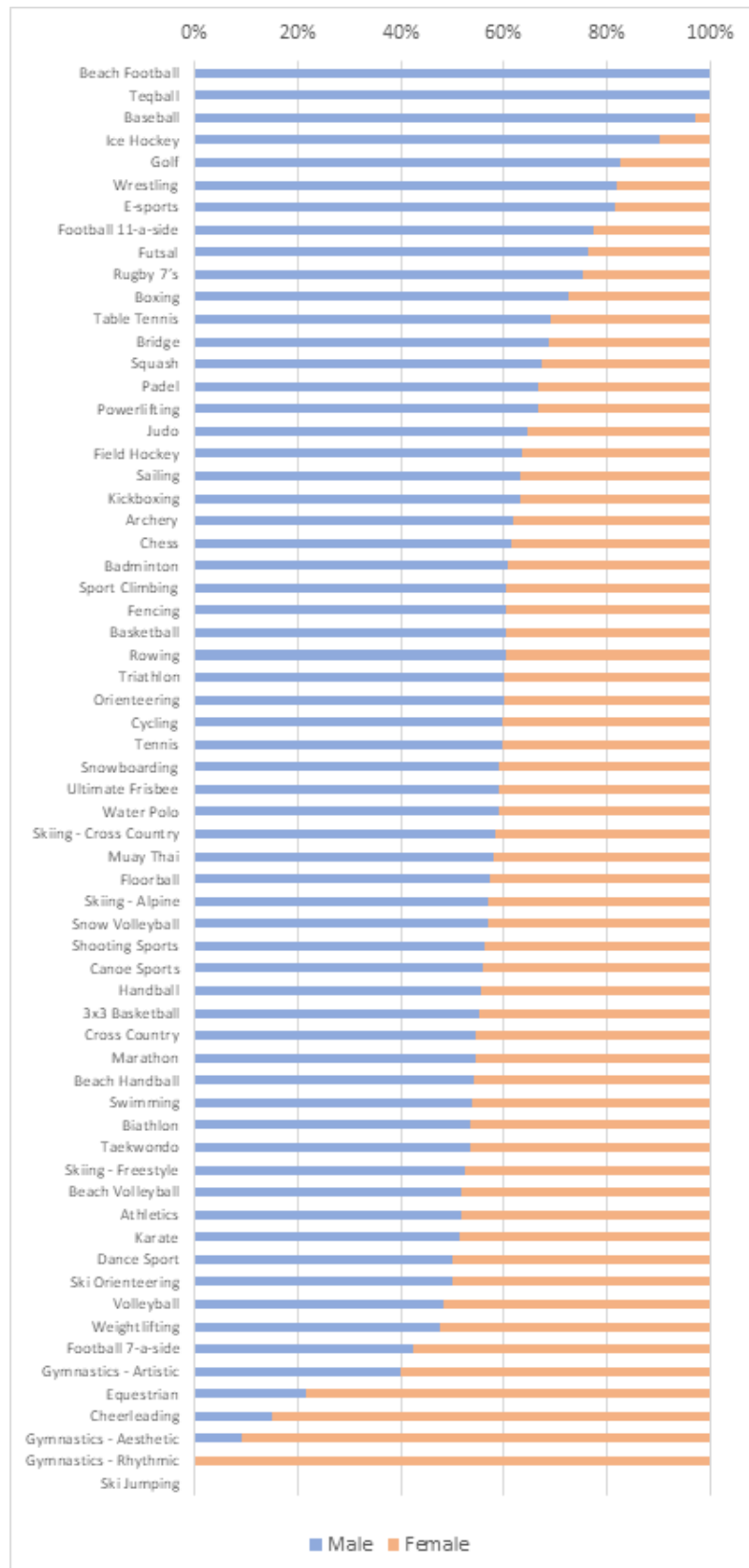
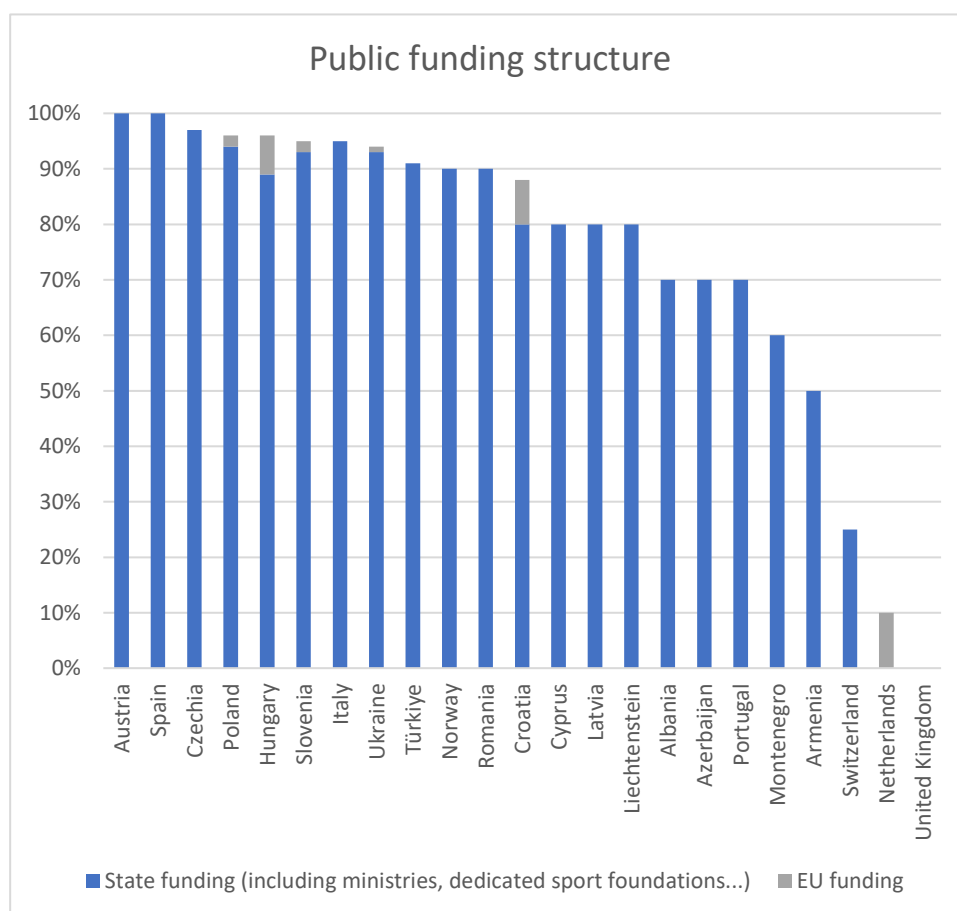
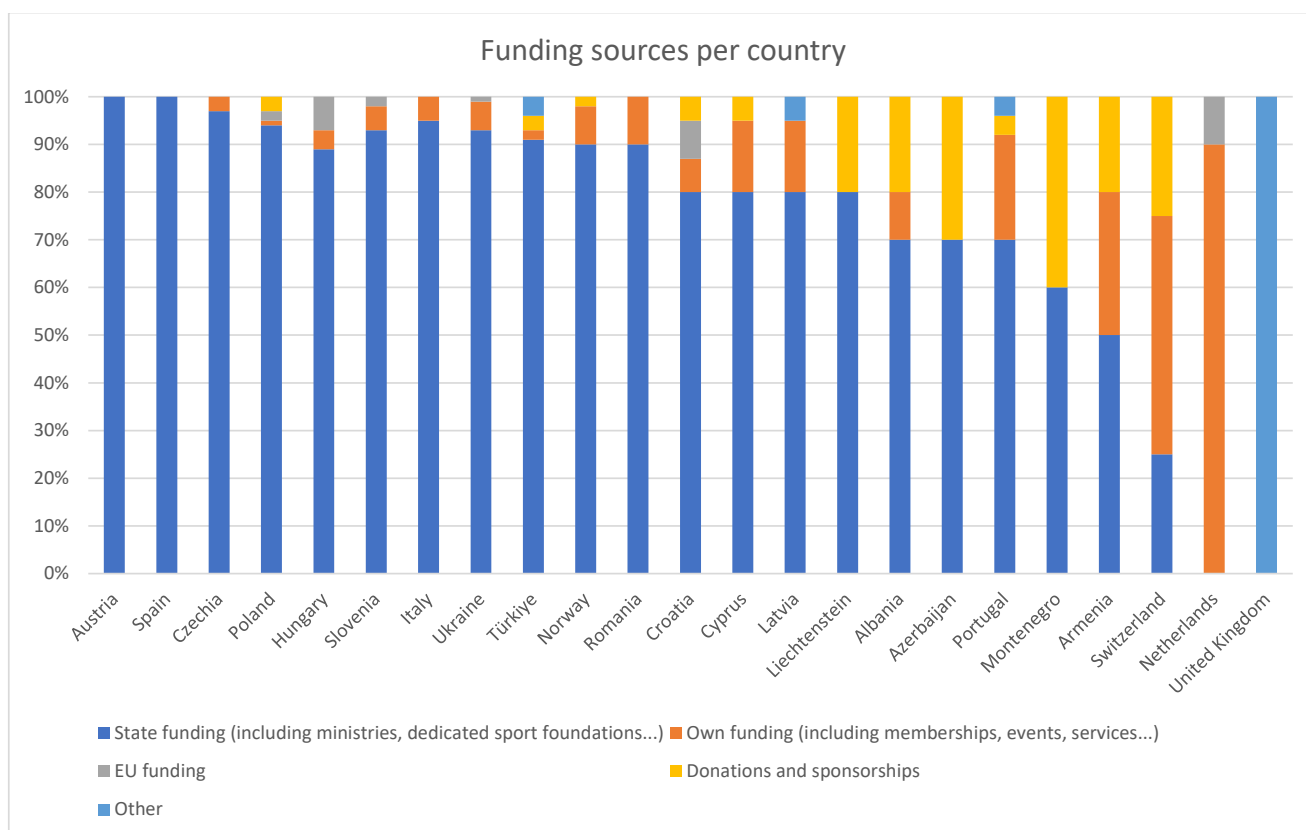


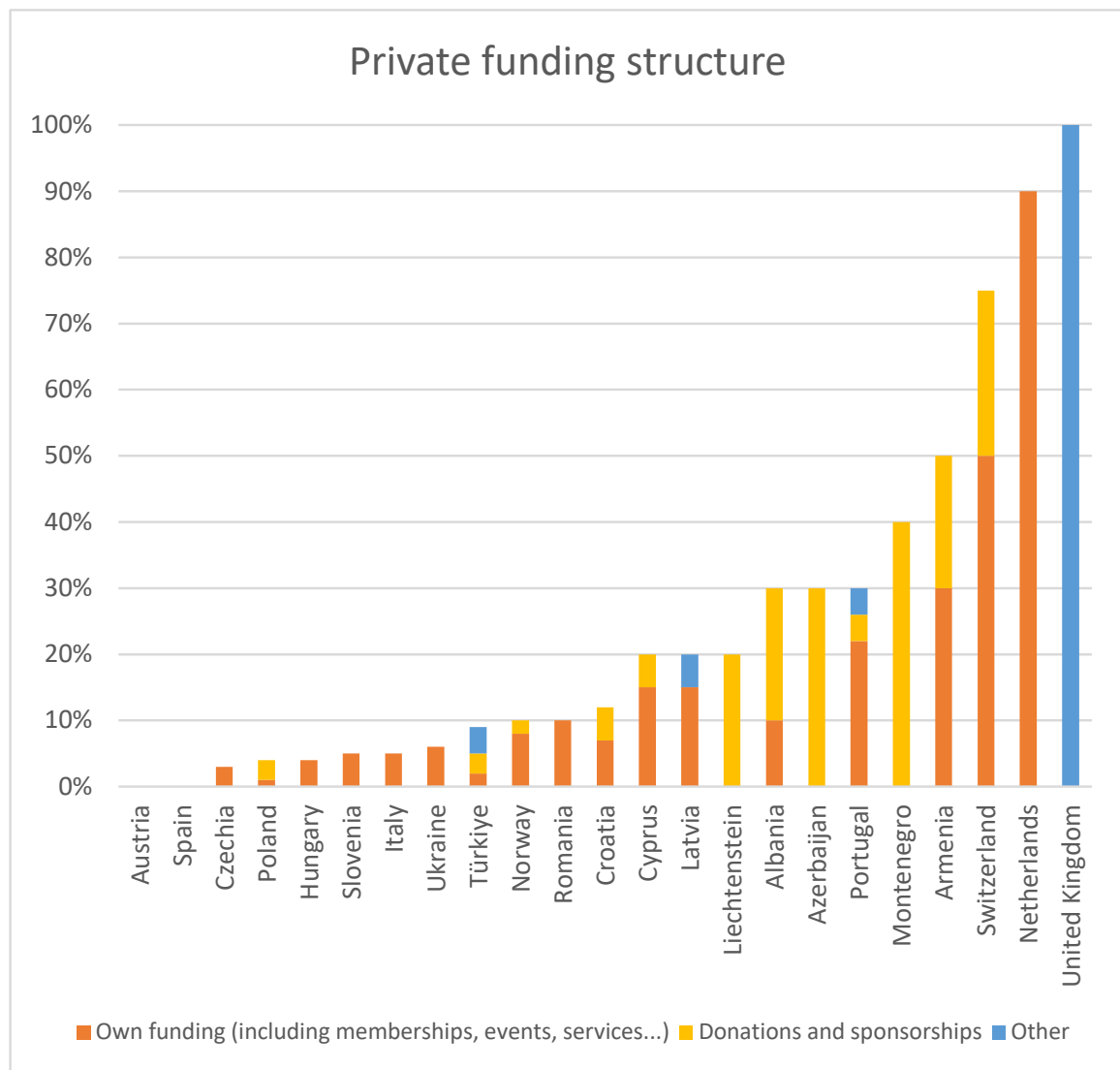
Figure 12 - Gender distribution by sport average over all countries.

Appendix E

Funding structure

		State funding (including ministries, dedicated sport foundations...)	Own funding (including memberships, events, services...)	EU funding	Donations and sponsorships	Other	Control total		Public funding	Private funding
1	Austria	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%		100%	0%
2	Spain	100%	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%		100%	0%
3	Czechia	97%	3%	0%	0%	0%	100%		97%	3%
4	Poland	94%	1%	2%	3%	0%	100%		96%	4%
5	Hungary	89%	4%	7%	0%	0%	100%		96%	4%
6	Slovenia	93%	5%	2%	0%	0%	100%		95%	5%
7	Italy	95%	5%	0%	0%	0%	100%		95%	5%
8	Ukraine	93%	6%	1%	0%	0%	100%		94%	6%
9	Türkiye	91%	2%	0%	3%	4%	100%		91%	9%
10	Norway	90%	8%	0%	2%	0%	100%		90%	10%
11	Romania	90%	10%	0%	0%	0%	100%		90%	10%
12	Croatia	80%	7%	8%	5%	0%	100%		88%	12%
13	Cyprus	80%	15%	0%	5%	0%	100%		80%	20%
14	Latvia	80%	15%	0%	0%	5%	100%		80%	20%
15	Liechtenstein	80%	0%	0%	20%	0%	100%		80%	20%
16	Albania	70%	10%	0%	20%	0%	100%		70%	30%
17	Azerbaijan	70%	0%	0%	30%	0%	100%		70%	30%
18	Portugal	70%	22%	0%	4%	4%	100%		70%	30%
19	Montenegro	60%	0%	0%	40%	0%	100%		60%	40%
20	Armenia	50%	30%	0%	20%	0%	100%		50%	50%
21	Switzerland	25%	50%	0%	25%	0%	100%		25%	75%
22	Netherlands	0%	90%	10%	0%	0%	100%		10%	90%
23	United Kingdom	0%	0%	0%	0%	100%	100%		0%	100%







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