



Promoting Health in Sports Clubs in Ireland : lessons learnt from a Marie Curie Fellowship

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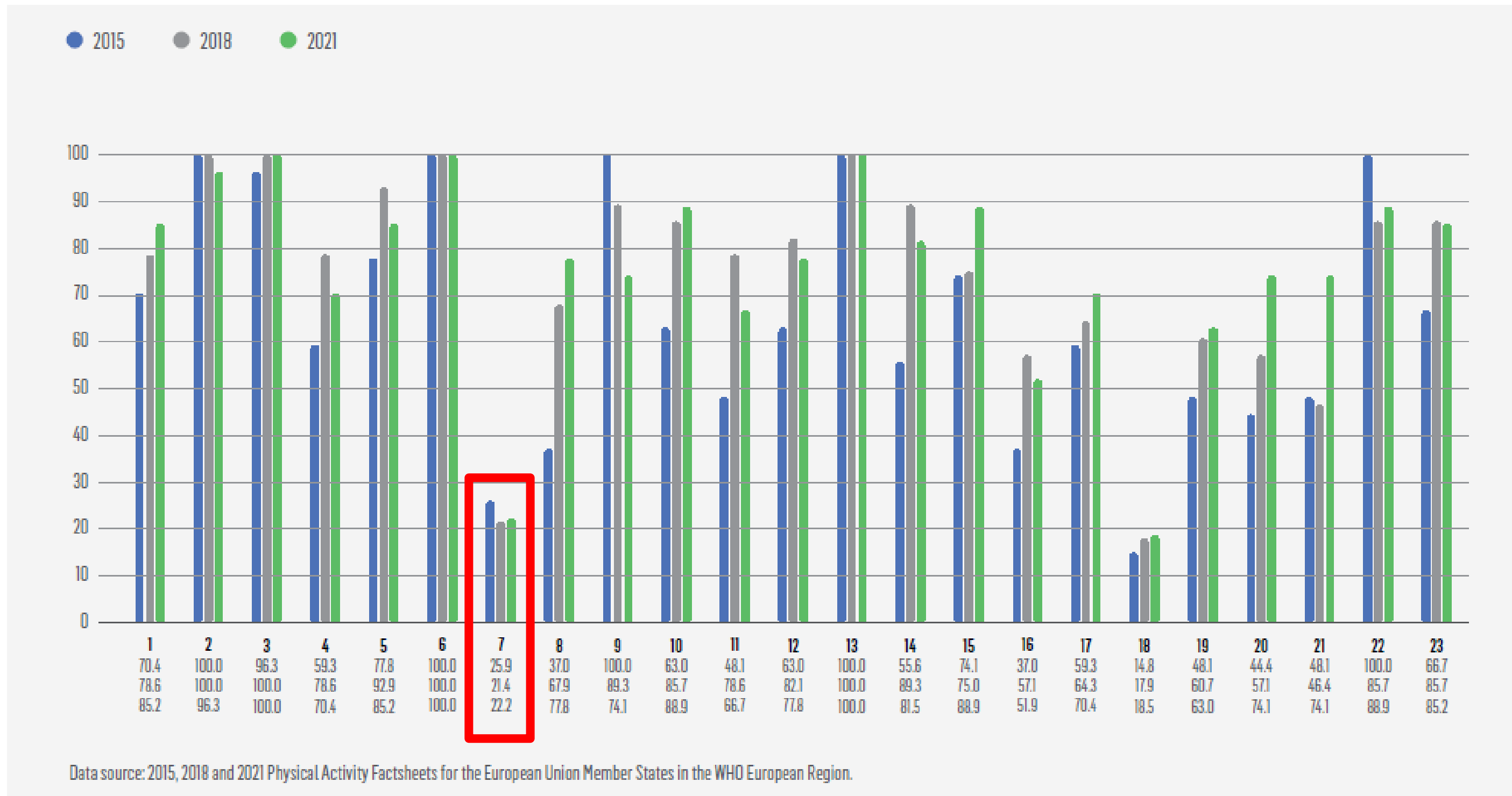
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What is a Marie Curie Fellowship?



- A mobility program for post-doctoral researchers
 - Up to 8 years post-PhD
 - Funded by the European Commission
 - Under the supervision of a leader in the field
- => To build your independency on your research

Why did we set up this project?



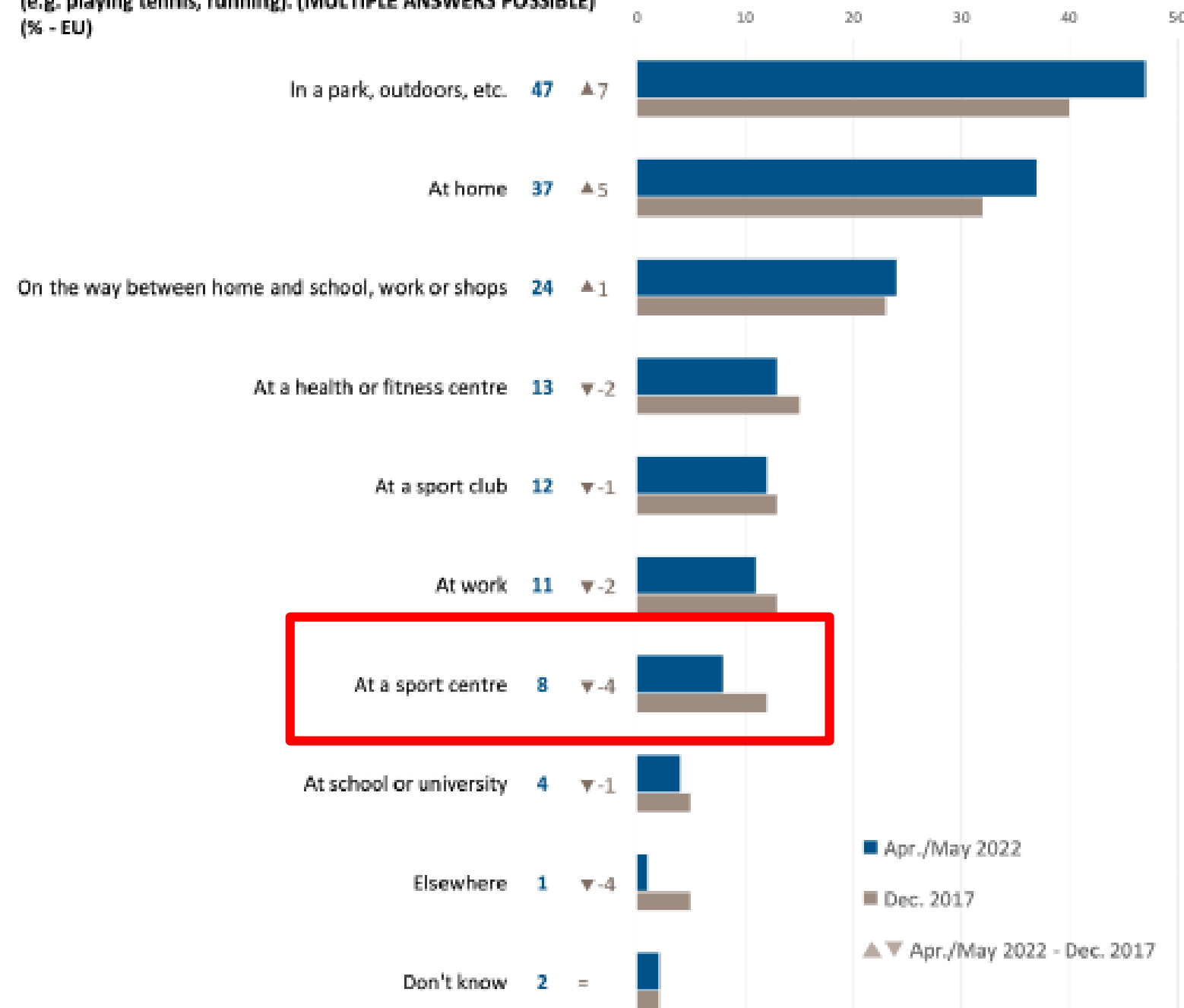
EU Physical Activity Monitoring :

<https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/345335/WHO-EURO-2021-3409-43168-60449-eng.pdf?sequence=2&isAllowed=y>



Why did we set up this project?

QB10 Earlier you said you engage in sport or another physical activity, vigorous or not. Where do you do this? A sport club is an organised setting (for example karate club, football club). A sport centre is more generally a place where people can do different sports (e.g. playing tennis, running). (MULTIPLE ANSWERS POSSIBLE)
(% - EU)



Base: If practices a sport or a physical activity (N=19,246)

Sport and Physical Activity Eurobarometer:
<https://europa.eu/eurobarometer/surveys/detail/2668>

What we planned

Health Promoting Sport Clubs Policy
Audit Tool

GAA Healthy club
policies



National to local
HPSC policy review



Health Promoting Sports
Clubs Policy Audit Tool

What we have done

Health Promoting Sport Clubs Policy Audit Tool

GAA Healthy
club policies

Sports clubs
need in regard
HPSC policies

National to local
HPSC policy
review

GAA healthy
club
implementation

Internal sports clubs dynamic

National to local level

Health Promoting Sports Federation
Guidelines

Study 1: Grassroots sports clubs implementation of national to local policies

Objective: Identify which national to local policies sports clubs mobilise to promote health

Method: Online survey

Club selection : Invitation to sports clubs by Local Sports Partnerships

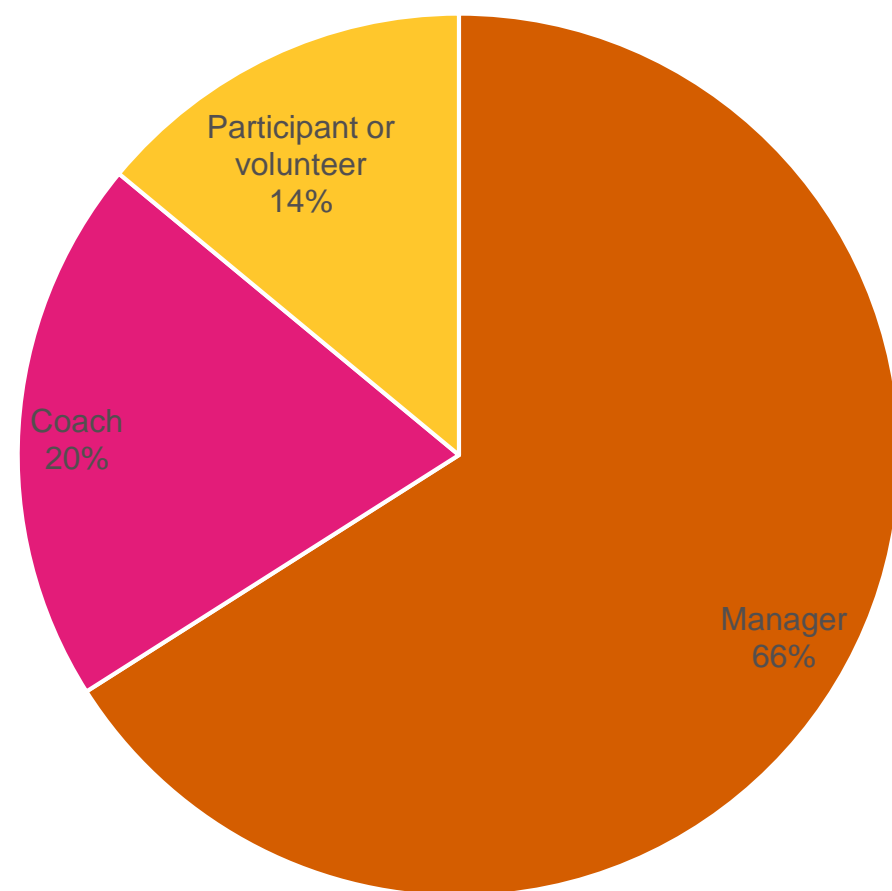
Instrument: e-PROSCeSS questionnaire, policy cycle

Data analysis: descriptives and multi-variate quantitative data analysis and thematic qualitative data analysis

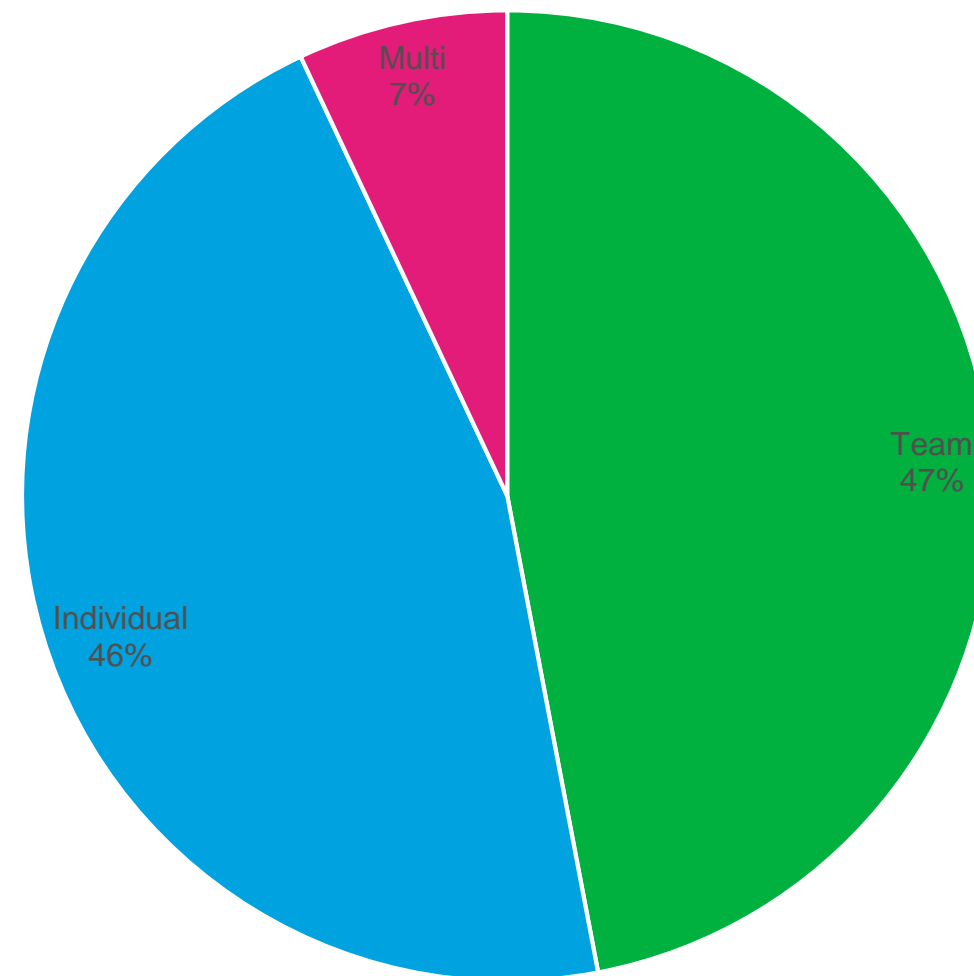
Results

239 answers (77%; 116 women and 121 males; Mage= 33 y.o.)

Profile

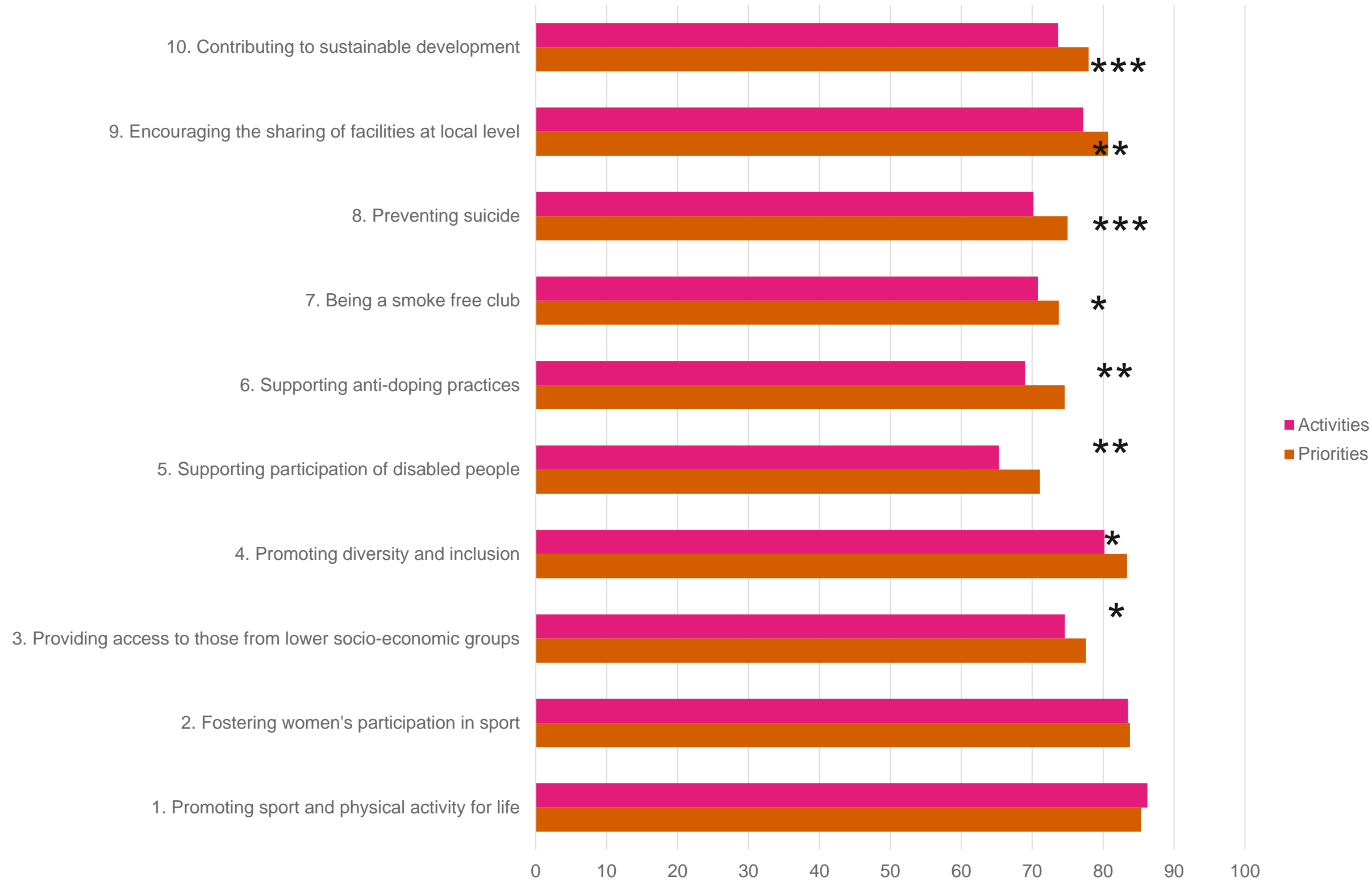


Sport



Results

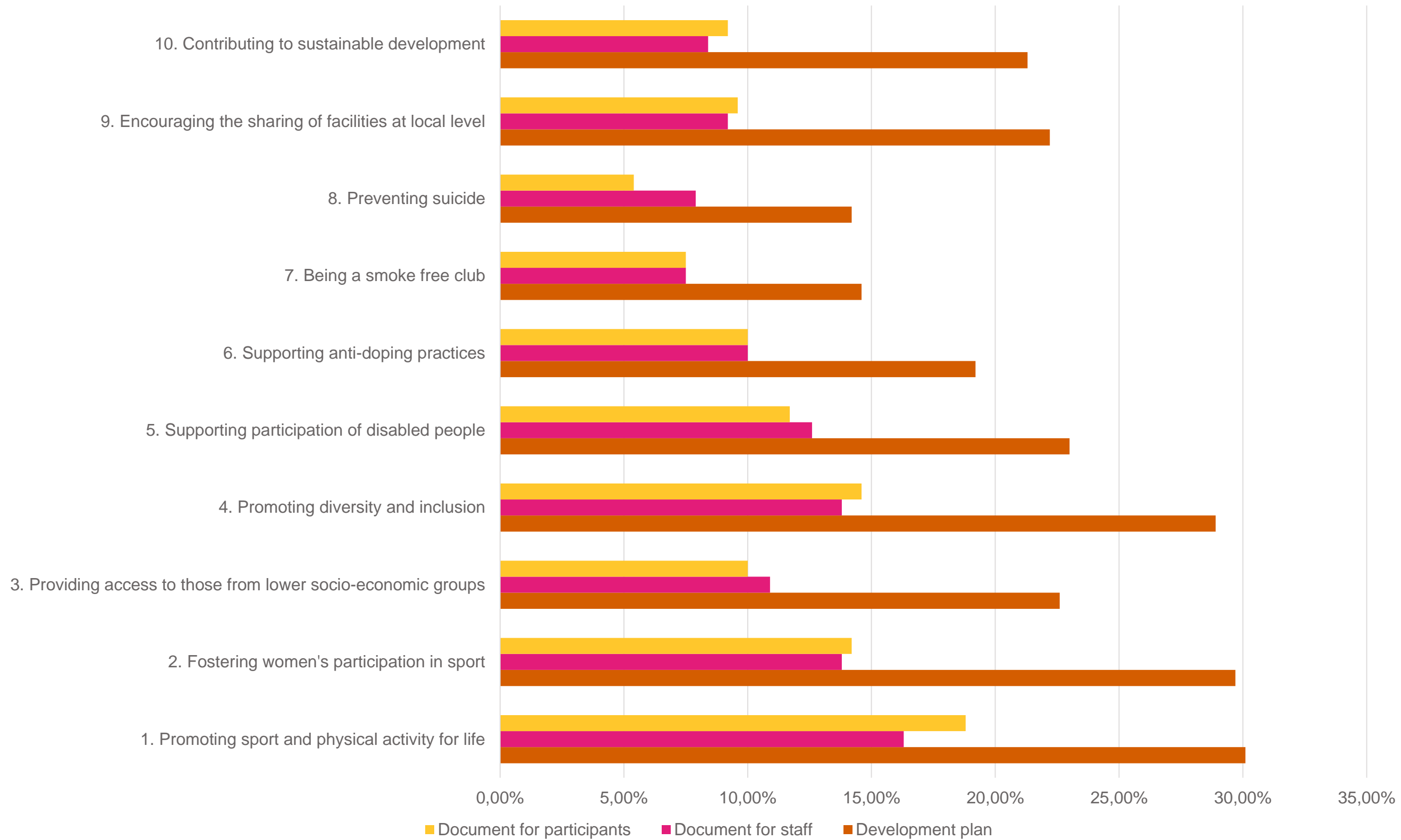
Percentage on having the health topic as priority or activity

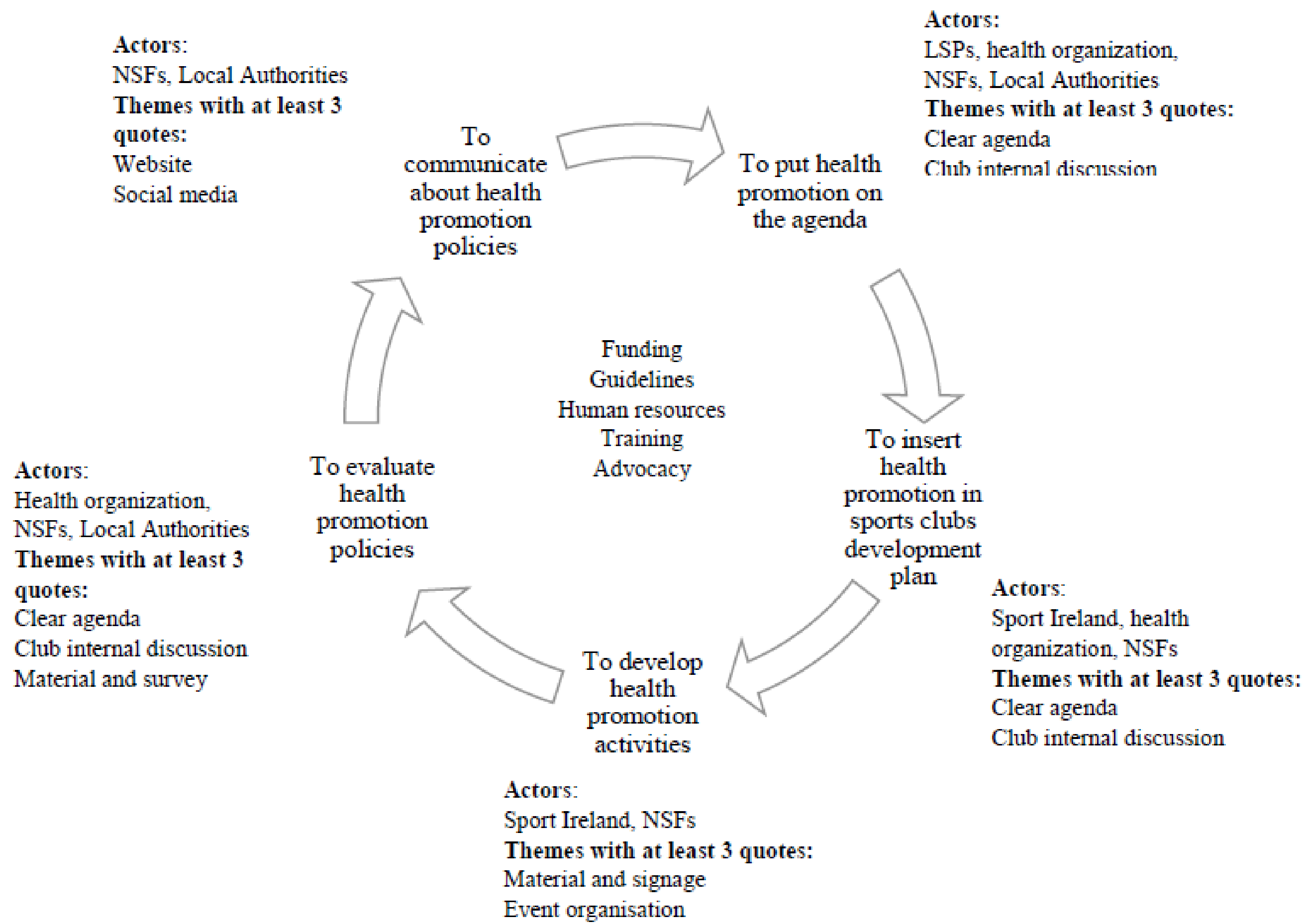


Results



Type of documents on health topics





Conclusions

- 1) Sports clubs feel themselves being active, especially towards physical activity and access to sport
- 2) Only up to 30% have a policy document
- 1) Support request varied through the policy cycle from National Governing Bodies, Sport Ireland, Local Sport Partnerships, national and local authorities

Study 2: Analysing GAA healthy clubs policies

Objective: Create a list of indicators of policies implemented by exemplar sports clubs

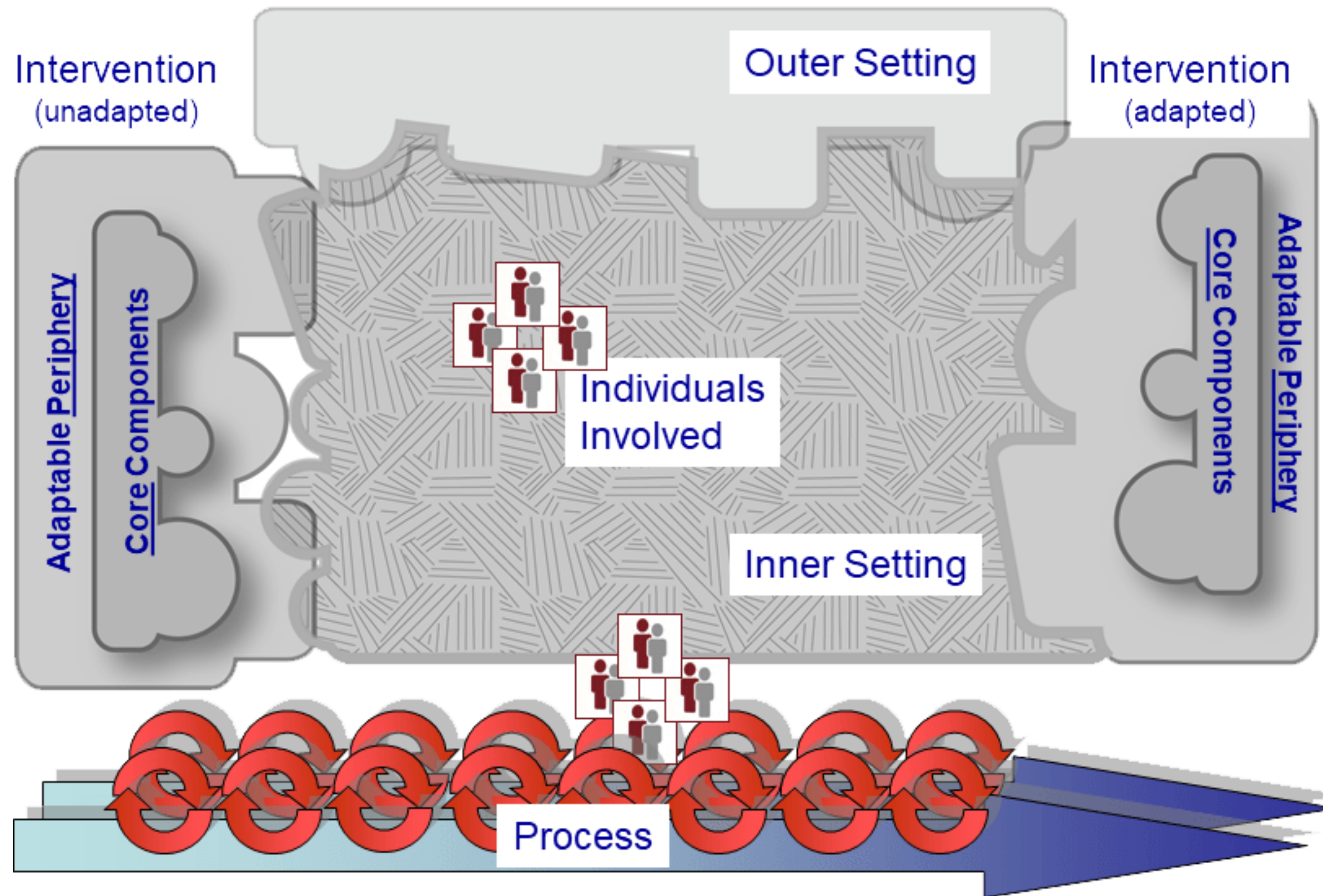
Method: Case study

Club selection : 16 initial 'healthy clubs' starting 2013 => 5 clubs

Data analysis: CFIR framework



Consolidated Framework for Implementation Research



The Healthy Club Project



Results

“we try to be something for everybody in the club. It's not just about people who play the games or people who coach and mentor. No, this is for all those and the rest, ourselves being the rest. I mean, people who no longer coach or who no longer play and maybe their kids.”

Results

*“And we had started a number of initiatives doing exercise classes, and we were doing fruits and things like that. **Small initiatives or small projects**, but we were, I suppose we were well placed. And we were lucky as well at the time that there was somebody from the HSE through connections, I suppose through my connections, through **various connections** was interested.”*

Results

“Yeah. We do have a policy written here somewhere. Yeah, we do have. But, we don't give it to them when they register. No, I'd say it's on our website and it's display outside. In general. Yeah. And everything is online now, so it's yeah. It's something we should be doing code of conduct and all that, but it's up there. We should probably inform people.”

Conclusions

- 1) Healthy Club project officer position depending on willingness of the club board
- 2) Dichotomy between sports participants core matters and healthy club for community
- 3) Unawareness of the healthy club to all members of the club (and benefits seen only for hard-to-reach)
- 4) Use of already known and packaged programs coming from external or GAA (6-8 weeks)
- 5) Paucity of written planification and few policy implementation



Study 3: Analysis of national to local policies supporting HPSC

Objective: Identify and analyse the Irish policies supporting HP in sports clubs

Method: systematic search and interviews

Data collection: 139 documents selected and 12 interviews with key stakeholders

Data analysis: Indicators present in the HPSC-NAT tool and policy instrument categories

Results

17 policy documents

49 actions (45 at national level)

6 Departments

16 actions targeting sports clubs directly

26 actions using education and knowledge strategy

Results

Health
Promotion
(4)

Physical
Activity (13)

Women in
sport (8)

Disabled
participation
in sport (8)

Results

An HPSC
program funded:
GAA Healthy
Club

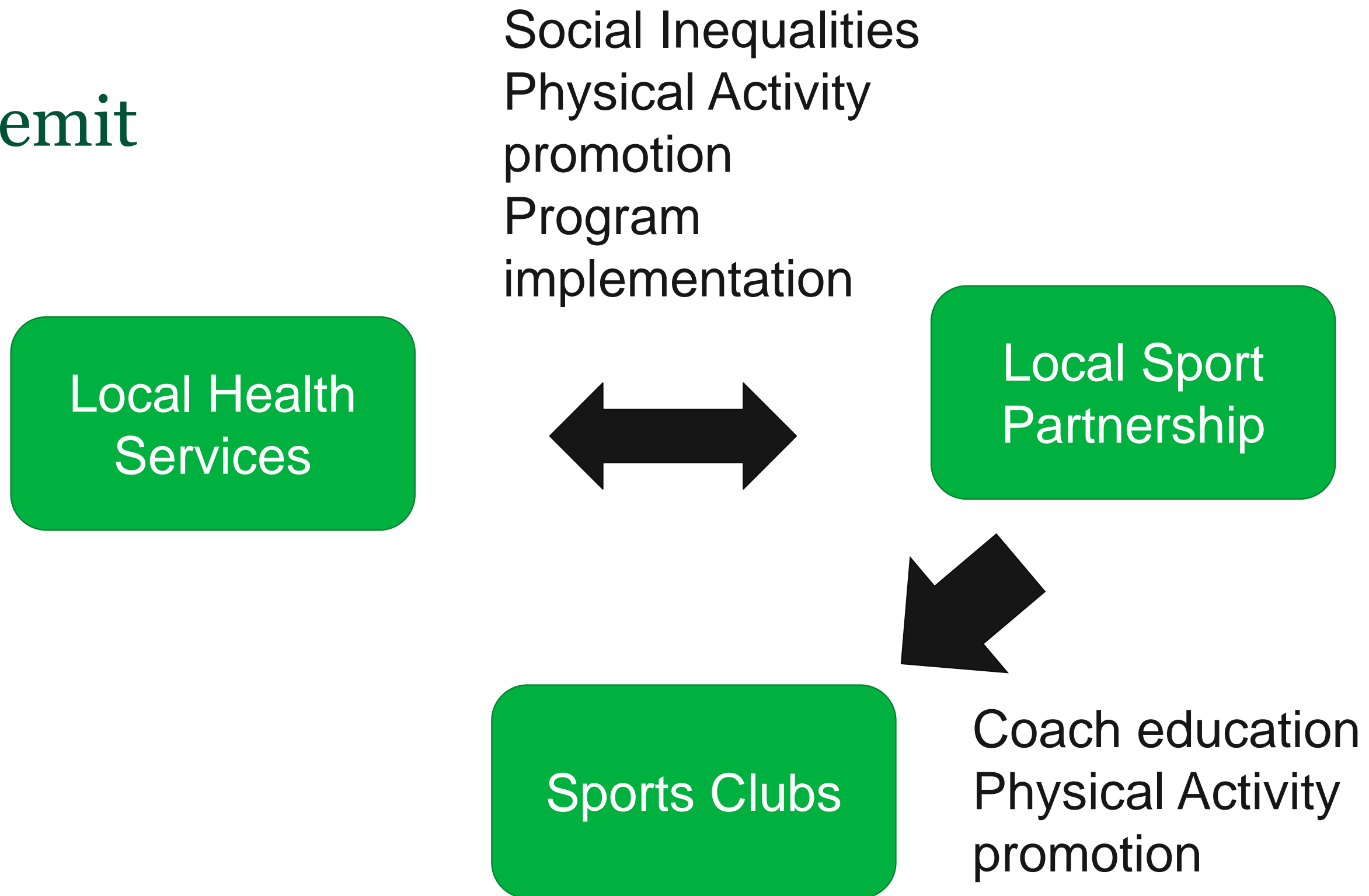
No national
campaign or
event

A PA coordination
(I-PARC) but no
HPSC
coordination

Private company
enrolled for policy
design, limited
consultation

No monitoring
system

Policy remit



- Health Department has a Tobacco plan (smoke free stadia), where Sport Ireland has anti-doping strategies and regulations

Conclusion

- Sports clubs are **not recognised as a setting for health promotion by policy-makers**
- **A health topic approach (e.g. gender, doping, disabilities)** is employed, principally on physical activity participation, but less on making sports clubs environment and system healthier
- **No monitoring, coordination, campaign** support policy implementation
- **Policy remit creates gap at local level** to support sports clubs investment in HP
- **HPSC NAT** can help you review how health is promoted in sport in your country, as well as policy implementation mechanisms and policy remit

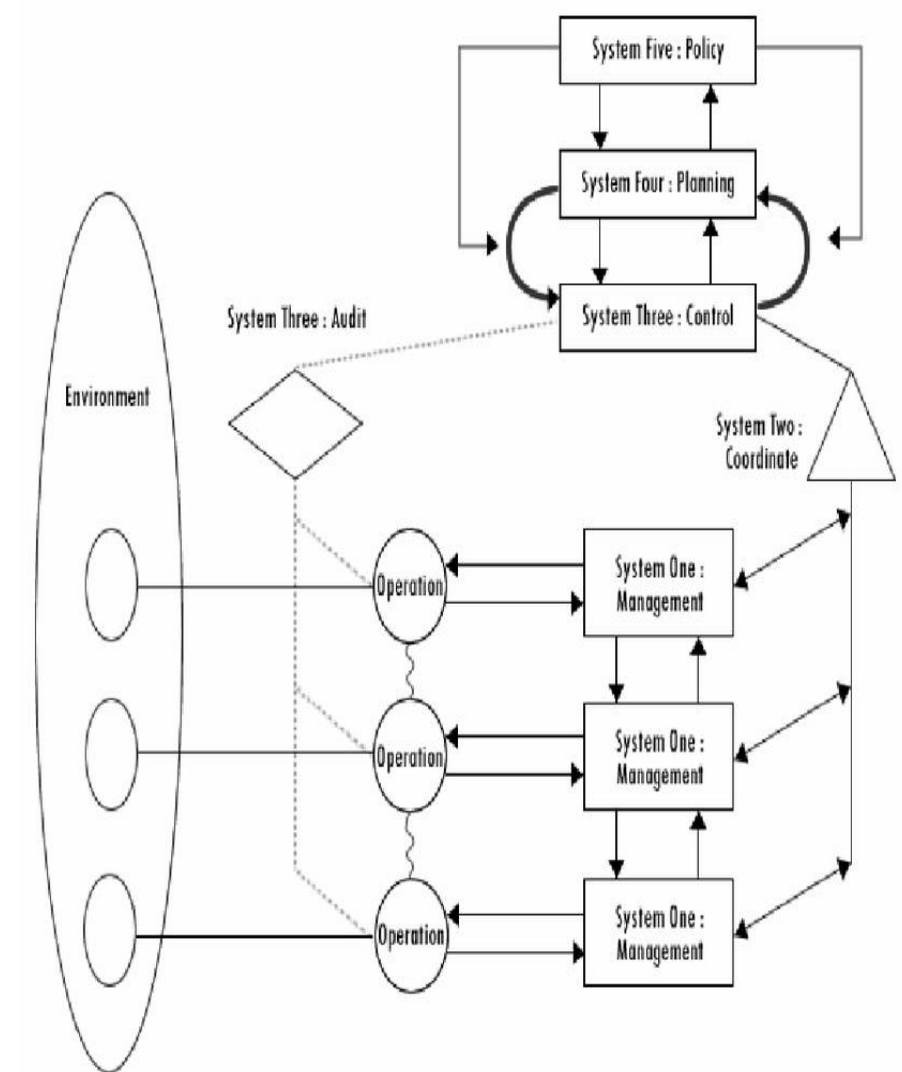
Study 4: Analysing national to local GAA “healthy club” implementation

Objective: Identify which national to local mechanisms to support ‘Healthy Club’ project implementation

Method: Case study design to inform viable system model

Participant selection: Snowball sampling within healthy club project

Data analysis: viable system model (Beer, 1988) and success factor to scaling up intervention (Milat et al., 2015)



Results



Conclusions

- 1) Healthy Club Project met most of the scaling up factors
- 1) Need to work **on county level**, on task clarification, on effective relationship with HSE (operationalisation of policy at national level)
- 2) Work on **internal lobbying within GAA** for more transversal approach
- 3) Advocacy for the recognition of the health promoting sports clubs approach



Study 5: Health Promoting Sports Federation Guidelines

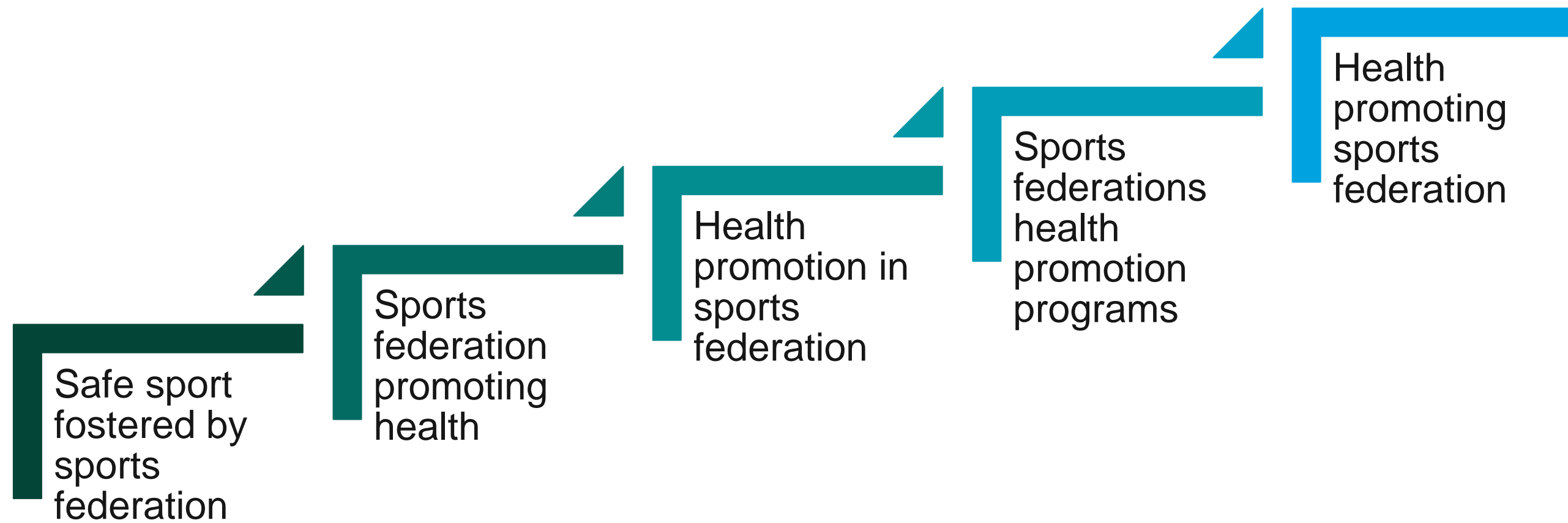
Objective: Develop guidelines for sports federation to implement HPSC

Method: qualitative iterative study

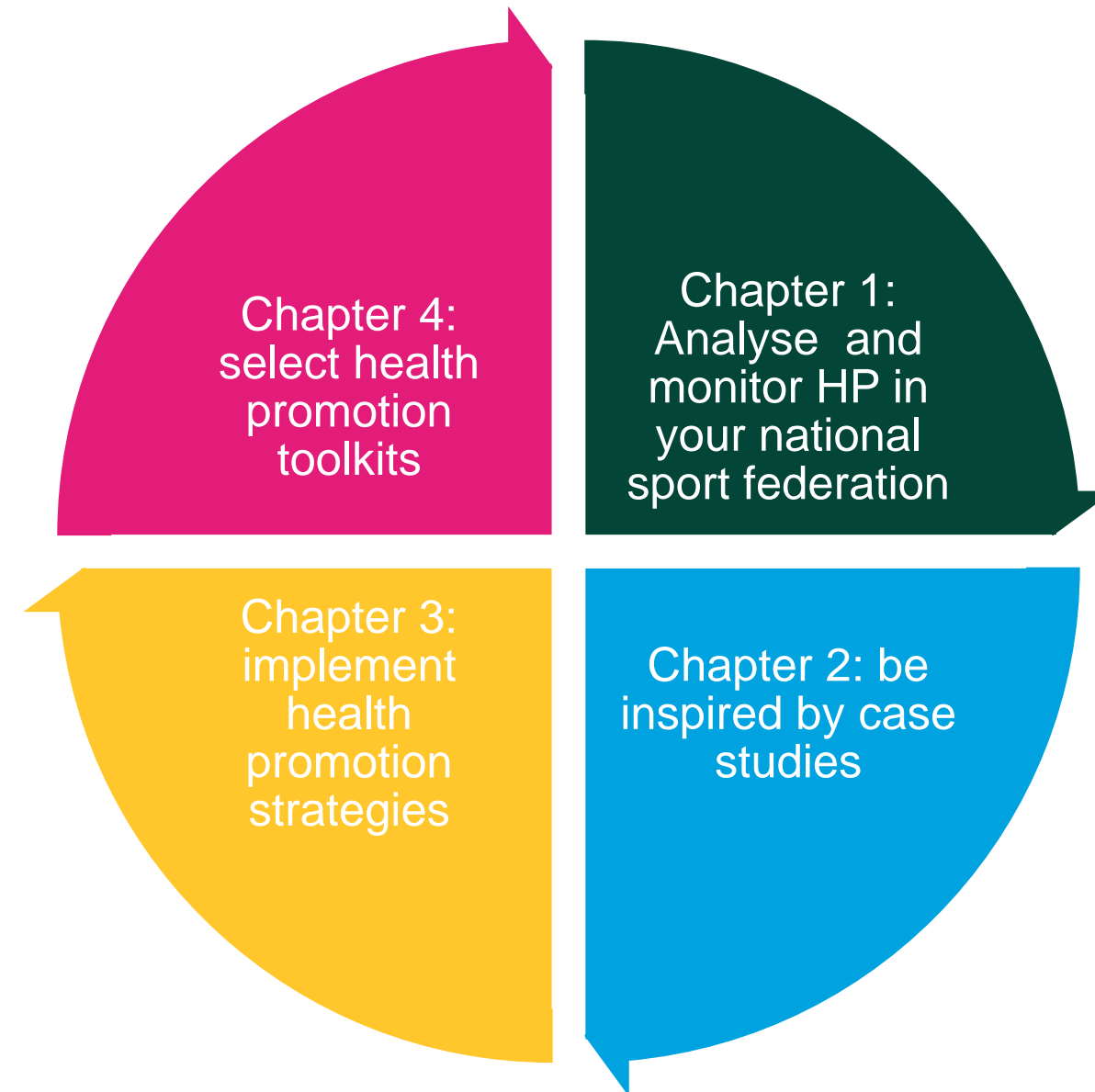
Data collection: 5 2-hours meeting of a group of 15 experts

Expert selection: 20 selected experts, based on their implication into health promotion in sport federation

Results



Content



Conclusion

- 1) Creation of the definition of health promoting sports federation
- 2) Use of indicators to help sports federation to know at which stage they are situated into the health promoting sports clubs stages
- 3) Provision of toolkits and practical examples for national sports federations
- 4) Willingness of the World Athletics to test its implementation



Key findings

- 1) Sports clubs and sports federation have activities in regard to health promotion, and do identify them as priorities, but not under the HP umbrella and are not equipped in terms of implementation
- 2) Policies are targeting physical activity principally, as well access to sport, but less on other health behaviors, and the settings-based approach is not recognised as such
- 3) All levels (clubs, NGB, local and national level) function in silo, without a health in all approach

Key challenges

- 1) Empower sports clubs to think about whole club dynamic, not only at participants level or on single behavior
- 2) Support NGBs and LSPs in how they can empower clubs for health promotion
- 3) Create a national coordination, surveillance and monitoring, to mobilise and share responsibilities
- 4) Finding the proper mixed method to evaluate both process and outcomes

Lessons learnt

- As a researcher, providing evidence on WHAT works, for WHOM and HOW was key to progress research
- As researcher, adaptations depending on evolution of the state of the art and previous studies is needed
- Being able to document unique practice based program (Healthy Club project) is such a privilege
- Conducting research in a new environment, language, culture was so insightful to think about my relationship to research
- Two years is enough to produce good research, but not enough to change policies in a unfamiliar country

Next step of the journey

- Working on evidence that health promotion in sports clubs work
- Using HPSC-PAT in other countries to allow cross-cultural comparison
- Working with International and National Sports Federation to foster club's support



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