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Improving Leisure-time Physical Activity in the Local Arena (IMPALA) - report on work package 1

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Summary

The EU sponsored IMPALA project (IMproving leisure-time Physical Activity in the Local Arena) aims to identify, implement, and disseminate good practice in the planning, financing, building, and managing of local infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity. The project's focus is on the following three types of facilities:

1. Sports facilities (e.g., fitness facilities/gyms, soccer fields)
2. Facilities/infrastructure designed for sports and physical activity (PA) (e.g., playgrounds, cycle/walking paths)
3. Facilities/infrastructure not designed for sports and PA, but usable for PA and non-organized sports nonetheless (e.g., parks, forests, beaches, lakes).

The first work package of IMPALA (which is reported on here) aimed to identify existing policies (both guidelines and regulations) for the development of infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity. For this purpose, qualitative interviews with experts (e.g., policy-makers) and a focus group interview with end-users for LTPA were conducted.

IMPALA's second work package will provide insight in national mechanisms. Based on the outcomes of work packages 1 and 2, good practices will be identified and disseminated.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

IMPALA (Improving Infrastructure for Leisure-Time Physical Activity in the Local Arena) touches on issues that have, until now, been neglected in efforts to promote physical activity (PA) through the built environment. While a number of projects have engaged in standardising and harmonising approaches to fostering human-powered transportation across the European Union, there have not been any similar efforts in the area of infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity (LTPA).

The development of standardised approaches for the financing, planning, building, and management of local LTPA infrastructure is justified by the high rate of utilisation of that infrastructure by European citizens. Twenty-nine percent of European citizens report using infrastructure (such as gyms and sports club facilities) to be physically active in their leisure time, and 60% report engaging in at least some recreational PA (Eurobarometer, 2005). In addition to PA for transportation, leisure-time PA has the highest potential for promoting active lifestyles.

Moreover, the complex intersectoral nature of the decision-making processes in this area means they are expected to be diverse and complex throughout Europe and, most likely, to involve a range of government levels (local, regional, national), sectors (urban planning, sport, recreational management and health) or private companies. Including all essential stakeholders in the processes of financing, planning, building, and managing LTPA infrastructure is very difficult (the health sector is often not included, for example). This means that harmonising efforts in this area is a challenge.

Finally, standardisation would seem to be necessary because of social inequalities in Europe caused by rigid or cross-cultural access, and utilisation regulations. Moreover, disadvantaged subgroups are under-represented in sports clubs, partly because they may not be able to afford memberships fees and therefore may have fewer infrastructural opportunities to engage in LTPA.

These issues will be addressed through IMPALA, and good practice criteria for the development of LTPA infrastructure will be agreed upon.

The content of this document represents the findings of work package 1 of the IMPALA project, which is about identifying existing regulatory legislation and guidelines for the development of infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity.

1.2 Overall goal IMPALA

The IMPALA project aims to identify, implement, and disseminate good practice for planning, financing, building, and managing local infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity. The project focuses primarily on sports and recreational facilities for leisure-time physical activity (gyms, swimming pools or sports fields, for example). It will also look at opportunities for leisure-time physical activity, such as recreational areas (parks or beaches, for example) and playgrounds.

IMPALA will help to concert efforts for the development of local infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity in EU member states, helping to reduce inequalities in access to infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity within and across nations.

1.3 Strategic objectives of IMPALA

- To assess national policies relating to the development of infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity.
- To assess national mechanisms in the development of infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity.
- To agree on good-practice criteria for policies and mechanisms relating to the development of infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity.
- To disseminate and implement good-practice recommendations within the European Union.

1.4 Work package 1: Assessment of national policies

This describes the results of the first work package of IMPALA, which aimed to identify existing regulatory legislation and guidelines for the development of infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity. Qualitative interviews took place with experts and policymakers, and there was a focus group interview with end users of LTPA infrastructure.

1.5 Other IMPALA work packages

Work Package 2: Assessment of national mechanisms (Lead partner: University of Jyväskylä)

This work package will collect information about existing national mechanisms (i.e. procedures and instruments) used for the development of local infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity. This data will be collected through document analysis and qualitative interviews with policymakers.

Work Package 3: Agreement on good-practice criteria (Lead Partner: University of Erlangen-Nuremberg)

On the basis of the data collected in the previous work packages in WP 3, an attempt will be made to develop a set of quality criteria for policies and mechanisms. In a consensus meeting of project partners, agreement will be reached about a good-practice checklist. Finally, existing policies and mechanisms in participating nations will be evaluated using the good-practice checklist that will be developed.

Work Package 8: Coordination of the project (Lead Partner: University of Erlangen-Nuremberg, Germany)

This work package is about coordinating communications with partners and the European Commission and general project management tasks such as ensuring the timely completion of project tasks and providing assistance for work package leaders.

Work Package 9: Dissemination of the project (Lead Partner: University of Vienna, Austria)

The project results will be disseminated by the University of Vienna, which will set up an internet platform (Impala-eu.org) and additional meetings. This work package also involves the organisation of an international conference for experts and policymakers.

Work Package 10: Evaluation of the Project (Lead Partner: TNO Leiden, Netherlands)

This work package will evaluate the quality of IMPALA's work, deliverables and milestones. However, it also involves the evaluation of the project's effectiveness in achieving its goal of identifying, implementing and disseminating good practices (the impact of the deliverable on policymakers, for example). The evaluation will involve the use of internet questionnaires and semi-structured interviews.

2 Methodology

Two different qualitative methods were used to collect information about existing regulatory legislation and guidelines for the development of infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity:

1. semi-structured interviews with experts and policy-makers; and
2. a focus group interview with end users of infrastructure for LTPA.

2.1 Semi-structured individual interviews

Sampling strategy

Interviews with representatives of **at least** 6 different parties were required for Work Package 1. The participating representatives from these parties had to cover three types of facilities:

1. sports facilities (such as fitness facilities/gyms and soccer fields)
2. facilities/infrastructure designed for sports and physical activity (PA) (such as playgrounds and cycle/walking paths)
3. facilities/infrastructure not designed for sports and PA, but still usable for PA and sports (such as parks, forests, beaches and lakes).

Countries were instructed to interview a sample of representatives operating on the national and local level (municipal authorities, for example) or, if the national government played no role at all, at the state/province/regional level.

To ensure that a complete picture was obtained of stakeholders and their respective efforts in the policy area, countries were asked to make sure that they had a sample of experts in the areas of sports, urban planning and tourism/recreation.

To facilitate an adequate sample of representatives, including all facility types, areas and levels, countries were asked to fill out a sampling matrix (**appendix A**). This matrix provides the countries with a schematic overview of the parties they were requested to recruit for the interviews.

Interview protocol

A guideline (**appendix A**) was used for the semi-structured individual interviews. It addressed the following topics:

1. national policy (for example: which policies are in place, what are the policy documents?)
2. local/regional policy (for example: how are national policies distributed/communicated to local parties?)
3. stakeholder analysis (for example: who are the relevant actors, which party/parties lead decision-making, what is the role of each party and the quality of collaboration?)

The countries were asked to record the interviews and to summarise and/or transcribe (word by word) the important sections of the interviews.

2.2 Focus group interview

The individual countries performed one focus group interview with end users to evaluate the experiences and opinions of the end users relating to the development process of infrastructure for LTPA and to evaluate the collaboration between different parties in this area.

Sampling strategy

The countries were asked to recruit a total of 10 representatives from the following types of organisations municipal authorities, NGOs involved in coordinating land use for recreation or sports, commercial contractors/property developers with regional coverage, local sports facilities and sport clubs/fitness centres (see: **appendix B**).

Other requirements for the focus group interview were that the participants must not overlap with the population for the individual interviews. The focus group also had to include a group of participants covering the whole development process (i.e. planning, financing, building and managing) and all three facility types (see 2.1).

Interview protocol

The focus group interviews were conducted using a structured interview guideline (see also **appendix B**) so that all the participating countries gathered comparable data.

The first step was to explain the main goal of the IMPALA project to the participants.

The following questions were asked in the protocol:

1. Introduction question (approximately 10 minutes)

Participants were asked to introduce themselves (name and organisation) and to state in three sentences their role in the development process for LTPA infrastructure.

2. A transitional question (approximately 10 minutes)

Participants were asked to describe briefly their experiences (such as problems and limitations) with existing policies for the development of LTPA infrastructure.

3. Key questions (approximately 40 minutes)

This was the start of the group interview, in which the interview leader was asked to monitor the process and make sure the following questions were asked:

- A) What are the existing problem areas in the *development* process for LTPA infrastructure and how can they be resolved?
- B) What are the main *maintenance* issues relating to LTPA infrastructure and how can they be resolved?
- C) What are the main issues regarding *access to* the LTPA infrastructure and how can they be resolved? (for example: ethnic groups, costs, opening hours, rules/regulations)
- D) What is the quality of the *collaboration/communication* between the national/local policies and the end users, and how can it be optimised?

4. In the final part (approximately 20 minutes) of the focus group interview participants were asked to give a key recommendation for the development of local LTPA infrastructure. The participants were also given the opportunity to make a final statement about anything that had been left unsaid but that they considered important.

3 Results per country: individual interviews

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter we present the results of the individual interviews. For each country the following topics will be addressed:

General information:

- Background information of the policy system
- Selection of experts for the interviews

National policy:

- Recent developments in the area of the infrastructure for LTPA
- National policy and policy documents
- Policies for specific target groups (ethnic groups, age groups etc.)

Regional and local policy:

- Tuning national policies with regional and local policies

Stakeholder analysis:

- Involved policymakers on national, regional and local level
- Collaborating partners
- Benefits and downfall of existing policies

We finish each paragraph with a conclusion. At the end of this chapter a general conclusion is written based on the participating countries.

3.2 Austria

Background information policy system

The Republic of Austria is a federal, parliamentary representative democracy through the Federal Constitution of 1920, reintroduced in 1945. Austria consists of nine federal states with all in all 8.3 million inhabitants. The head of state is the Federal President (Bundespräsident), who is directly elected. The chairman of the Federal Government is the Federal Chancellor, who is appointed by the president after federal elections every five years (Nationalratswahlen). The Parliament of Austria consists of two chambers, the National Council (Nationalrat) and the Federal Council (Bundesrat). With the separation of state powers into legislative and executive, the courts (judiciary) are the third column of Austrian state powers. Notably the Constitutional Court (Verfassungsgerichtshof) may exert considerable influence on the political system by ruling out laws and ordinances not in compliance with the constitution. Just like the federation, the nine states of Austria all have written state constitutions defining them to be republican entities governed according to the principles of representative democracy. The federal state constitutions congruently define the states to be unicameral parliamentary democracies; each state has a legislature elected by popular vote and a cabinet appointed by its legislature.

Issues of mass sports and physical activity as well as issues on planning, tourism and recreation are issues on a federal state level in Austria. Every one of the nine federal states has its own policies, laws and guidelines on sports, on planning and on tourism or recreation. The responsibility for developing infrastructure for leisure time physical activity is not a cooperative, intersectoral process at the moment. The three different types of infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity are developed by different sectors (sports, planning, tourism, recreation, environment), which are marginal

connected. The duty of the nine federal state governments and their administration is to develop the infrastructure in partnership with smaller regions and municipalities. Therefore even within the single federal states differences exist between smaller regions or single municipalities depending on their specific political networks.

In Austria the ÖISS – Österreichisches Institut für Schul- und Sportstätten (Austrian Institute for School and Sports Facility Development) is a foundation that works on policies of sports facility planning on a national as well as on a regional level.

Recent developments

The development of infrastructure for leisure time physical activity as a cooperative intersectoral method for all three types of facilities became a stronger issue recently and is summarized by the first published concept on a national level called the resolution on sport facilities. At the moment there are two pilot projects on municipal and regional sport facility planning in Austria. One project took place in the region around the town of Hartberg, Federal State Styria, led by offices for sport planning and landscape planning. The second project took place in the capitol of the Federal State of Burgenland, in the city of Eisenstadt, led by the Institute of Sport Science, University of Vienna. Both projects involved local authorities, sports associations and population groups to investigate specific needs for a future development of local infrastructure for sports and physical activity. A plan of measurements is the result of both projects. While the project of Hartberg had the benefit of working in a region (network of municipalities) the project in Eisenstadt took more intensive efforts to investigate the population's needs, discussing the results with local representatives of the population, politicians and sports associations and finally working out measures and further steps within this local platform in a participative process. As a further step both project groups intend to exchange their experiences from Eisenstadt and Hartberg together with the ÖISS and could be influential on further infrastructural developments for physical activity in Austria.

Selection of experts

In Austria 24 organisations from the sectors sports, urban planning, recreation/tourism and environment were contacted. From the sports sector 2 organisations were on a national level and 4 on a federal state level. From the planning sector 3 organisations were consulted on a national level and 6 on a federal state level. From the environmental and tourism sector 2 organisations were asked on a national level and 7 organisations on a regional level. On the regional level we had contact with organisations from 5 out of 9 Austrian federal states. The experts were selected after consulting our personal network from the sports and from the planning and environmental sector and additionally by asking institutions, where we had no personal contact before, but which could be responsible for developing local infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity. Either through personal or new found contacts we found the final interview partners by the snowball method.

Finally we conducted 10 individual interviews. We decided to conduct more than 6 interviews because of the strong role of policy making on a federal state level in Austria. 4 interviews, one of each sector (sports, planning, tourism), took place with organisations on a national level. 6 interviews took place with organisations on a regional level. 3 interviews on the regional level, one of each sector, were taken in Vienna. This row of interviews represents infrastructural development for leisure-time physical activity in urban areas. Another row of 3 expert interviews took place 2 federal states of Austria, who represent rural areas. The sports and the tourism sector were

covered by 2 interviews in Lower Austria. The interview from the planning sector was held with an institute of Upper Austria, because we could not find one expert of the planning sector in Lower Austria. One reason was that one major expert of the planning department went on pension. Other arguments were that the planning sector did not feel that the development of infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity was a major topic in their department and infrastructure like cycling paths are more an everyday not a leisure-time infrastructure.

The following 11 experts from 10 organisations were consulted for the individual interviews:

National level:

1. ÖISS – Austrian Institute for School and Sport Facility Development (Head of the institute).
The ÖISS is installed by the state and the federal states, with the head office in Vienna and regional offices in the five federal states of Austria: Upper Austria, Salzburg, Styria, Tyrol, Vorarlberg. The ÖISS provides information on sports facility planning, guides planning competitions, examines projects of national and regional interest especially on technical and financial aspects.
2. Austrian Federal Ministry of Defense and Sports - Department V/2: General Federal Sports Funding, Investment Funding, Major Events, Sports and Society (Head of the institute).
The duties of this department of the Austrian Ministry of Sports are in general funding and organising major sports events e. g. the European Football Championship in 2009. Until the early 1990ies a department for leisure-time physical activity still existed within the ministry, also providing a small budget for this field. At the moment the departments of the Ministry of Sports are neither working on leisure-time physical activity nor on the development of local infrastructure in this field. Recently, the interviewee worked on the chapter of sports infrastructure in the paper "Zukunft:Sport" ("future:sports") and is member of the steering committee of the ÖISS. The meeting with the interviewee took place after the report was written. Due to the short time quota of the interview only some open matters were discussed instead of using the whole interview guideline.
3. Austrian Federal Forests – Real Estates and Tourism (Head of department).
The Austrian Federal Forests is a state-owned enterprise that manages forests and lakes that are state-property. The organisations duty is to manage those estates in terms of sustainable forestry and water management. Along with those main responsibilities they also work on concepts for tourism and recreation management for mountainbiking, hiking, horse riding, swimming, diving, etc. The Austrian Federal Forests consist of one head office, 25 regional forestry companies, 2 technical forestry companies, 1 sawmill, 2 forestry administrations for national parks and 1 tourism office.
4. Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management - Department for Traffic / Mobility / Urban Area / Noise (Coordination for Cycling).
This department of the ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management works on different matters improving the environment of built-up areas. Ecological tourism and mobility are their major issues. Especially the

“Master Plan Cycling”, a policy paper to increase the percentage of cycling within the total volume of traffic in Austria from 5 to 10 %, was developed and is now executed in every federal state of Austria. This master plan was worked out for everyday usage of bicycles mainly as an environmental measurement.

Regional level:

5. Federal States of Lower and Upper Austria (Rural Areas). Federal State Administration of Lower Austria – Group Economy, Sports and Tourism – Department for Sports (Head of the department). This federal state department works on concepts all sports issues in Lower Austria. As a subgroup of the economical department it i. a. provides budgets for building and maintaining Lower Austrian sport facilities (mainly professional and competitive sports facilities).
6. IFAU – Institute for Applied Environmental Education (Upper Austria) (Head of the institute). This non-governmental institute is a major organisation in Austria for the development of playgrounds especially through organising an annual symposium on playgrounds and open space since 1995. Other activities of the 7 employees are environmental education, municipal and regional development and designing open space and playgrounds.
7. Federal State’s Publicity Agency of Lower Austria (Coordination of cycling tourism in Lower Austria). One major activity of the federal state publicity agency of Lower Austria is the management of tourism issues. Besides hiking tourism the cycling tourism plays a strong role within the development of infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity in Lower Austria.

Regional/local level:

8. Municipality and Federal State of Vienna (Urban Area). Municipal Department 51 – Sports Office of Vienna – Department for Sports Facility Development (Head of department)
This municipal department works on concepts concerning sports issues in Vienna starting from events in the competitive sports sector to sportive activities of the population and administrating and maintaining larger sport facilities. The municipal department consist of 10 subdivisions; one of them is the department of sports facility development.
9. Municipal Department 18 – Urban Development and Planning – Department Open Space and Landscape Planning (Head of the department and Department’s Consultant i. a. Sport Facility Planning). This municipal department works on concepts concerning urban development and planning in Vienna e. g. new development areas for housing, urban greenery networks (“green belts”), urban traffic plans including cycling lanes. The department consists of 11 subdivisions; one of them is the department of open space and landscape planning, which recently also starts to work on the topic of physical activity.

10. Municipal Department 49 - Forestry Office and Urban Agriculture – Group 1 Urban Forest, National Park and Biosphere Parks (Head of department). This municipal department works on concepts concerning urban forestry and agriculture in Vienna and consist of 9 subdivisions; one of them is the group for urban forest, national park and biosphere parks. It is responsible for existing hiking and mountain biking tracks. Their work includes the cooperation with the neighbour federal state of Lower Austria, which surrounds the area of Vienna, connecting the facilities. Within the city area the department guides and consults the 23 of Vienna districts in building and maintaining infrastructure for hiking, jogging or mountain biking.

National policy

According to the information provided by the interviewed experts working on a national (=state) level or on a regional (=federal state) level, two recent policy documents explicitly deal with the development of infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity on a national level: “Zukunft:Sport” (future:sports) by the Austrian ministry of sports, 2008, and “Sportstättenresolution” (resolution on sport facilities) by the ÖISS, 2009. Those national papers are recommendations and action plans that are not compulsory. Additionally we found out about regional documents either for specific types of facilities or that indirectly or not exclusively deal with infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity. In general Austrian policies for the development of infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity are developed on a regional level (=federal state) or even only on a local level (= small regions or municipalities).

Policy documents

One very general kept document is an expert paper that deals with the future of sports in Austria: **“Zukunft:Sport” (Austrian ministry of sports, 2008)**. The former state secretary of sports (since 2008 the ministry of sports) therefore invited agents and experts on a national level (e. g. ÖISS) and on a regional level from every federal state in Austria to discuss the development of sports in Austria. One chapter of this paper deals with the development of sports facilities for leisure time physical activities. One critique in several of the interviews was that this paper is kept very superficial, only stating that the development of infrastructure for leisure time physical activity is a general need and has to be established by the federal states. It does not go into detail which means it does not provide information about the concrete planning process.

The second explicit document, **“Sportstättenresolution” (resolution on sport facilities)**, was presented in March 2009 at the Austrian conference “Sportstättenenquete” (sports facility conference), organised by the ÖISS. The two days conference provided a broad range of lectures on strategies and on recent sports facility planning: e. g. sports facility development in certain federal states and in municipalities, pilot projects of cooperative sports planning, technical aspects (e. g. standard sizes and markings of sport facilities in Austrian schools combining basketball, football, volleyball and handball, the use of materials to guarantee security for accidents), of sports facility planning, school yards, physical activity in the open landscape, gender aspects, planning for handicapped people, etc. The conference was summarized by the **Resolution on Sports Facilities (Sportstättenresolution)** which among other subjects resulted into issues like cooperative planning methods for municipalities and regions in Austria. The resolution is a first step towards a follow-up model to the dated document from 1968, **the Austrian Sports Facility Plan (Österreichischer Sportstättenplan)**, which was an inventory of all sports facilities that nominated a quantitative m²-key for

the lack of facilities in each Austrian municipality. The new paper offers a broader view of the meaning of infrastructure towards physical activity including now facilities for the organised sports sector and as well as for big population group doing self-organized physical activity.

Though some interviewed experts prefer to have a standardized tool for planning infrastructure like the Austrian Sports Facility Plan from 1968, the aim of the resolution is to communicate the benefits of a modified paradigm in planning and developing infrastructure for physical activity not summarized in a simple instrument as a quantitative m²-key. The ÖISS installed a work group including agents from all federal states, from the ÖISS and the Ministry of sports. The work group regularly meets to discuss this topic and still goes on with negotiations.

Within the other sectors (Environment, Health, Urban Planning) there are neither national nor regional strategy papers that only deal with developing infrastructure for leisure-time physical activities. Some of them are specified documents for playgrounds, for cycling or for hiking infrastructure. (e.g. **“Play Ground Subsidies NEW”** from Upper Austria or **“Criteria for tourism top cycling paths”** from Lower Austria). Other regional documents only indirectly deal with the development of leisure-time physical activity by recording the importance of recreational infrastructure in general or by rating m²-keys for open space within the urban area (e.g. **the urban development plan of Vienna** or **the Concept for Regional Development of Lower Austria**).

The Austrian Federal Forests worked out three documents on a national level dealing with users rules for the infrastructure for leisure time physical activity (for lakes, mountainbiking and horse riding) that are in state property. There is an **Austrian law on forestry** that generally allows the usage of the forest by the population as a recreation area but there are no further national strategies on developing that the infrastructure.

There is one national policy document for everyday cycling as an environmental measure. This programme is financed by the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management (**“Master Plan Cycling”**). One step forward was an entry on the cycling traffic in the Austrian government programme. The cycling traffic should be doubled from 5% to 10% until 2015.

Other Austrian documents are technical guidelines and laws for planning and building, which marginally include the development of local infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity. Documents recording technical and safety standards: e.g. (1) the **“ÖNORM” (catalogue of Austrian technical standards)** - among others for example **ÖNORM B 2605 outdoor sport facilities**, **ÖNORM B 2606 surfaces of outdoor sport facilities**, or (2) the nine **“Bauordnungen” (Building regulations)** of the nine federal states e. g. in Vienna playgrounds for small children under 6 years are compulsory in housing estates bigger than 14 apartments, additionally playgrounds for bigger children and teenagers are compulsory in housing estates with 50 apartments or bigger.

Policy documents for specific target groups

There are no specific policies or notations in national policy documents dealing with the development of infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity. There are Austrian laws dealing with antidiscrimination in general e. g. against discrimination of gender. Another example, the equality law for handicapped people, prescribes among other

aspects that public buildings must be accessible to handicapped people. Within our interviews we could not find out how many sport facilities are accessible for handicapped people. Further information could be probably provided by the Austrian Handicapped Sports Organisation. A pilot project to make open nature accessible for wheel chair user is a walking path around a Carinthian lake initiated by the Austrian Federal Forests.

In general policies concerning population subgroups are made on a federal state level and the range of policies differ. In Vienna e.g. there is a planning directory for specific gender needs, there are departments for integration and for adolescent people. In Lower Austria the tourism cycling paths include not too steep routes that are friendly for families and children equipped with playground and other attractions on the route. In Upper Austria subsidies for playgrounds include planning criteria with gender aspects.

Policies on regional and local Level

In general Austrian policies for the development of infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity are developed on a regional level (=federal state) or even only on a local level (= small regions or municipalities). The main reasons are that federal states in Austria have a high autonomy in governing the countries and that the term “infrastructure for leisure-time physical activities” summarizes a heterogeneous field of different actors and policies that vary from federal state to federal state.

There are no policies for the planning process that connect the three types of facilities. Even within one facility type the range of methods how planning projects are initiated can be very different. Due to the fact that there are few policies most infrastructure are developed on a local, municipal level. In practice the municipality initiates and decides to develop playgrounds, cycling paths, sport facilities, hiking tracks, etc. because those infrastructure are voluntary measures of the communes.

To plan and design the facilities it is common that external planning offices and civil engineers are awarded with a contract by a municipality or a region. In large municipalities with bigger administrations some infrastructure are made by employed planners. For example in Vienna cycling paths, hiking tracks, many playgrounds, etc. are done by the different municipal departments. For bigger infrastructure, depending on the costs of the project, architects and planners are found by competitions to enhance a certain project quality. Smaller projects can be awarded directly.

The building process is strongly connected to the planning and designing part of the project. After designing the infrastructure on the paper and finding the right financing form for a project a construction firm is found to build the infrastructure. For bigger infrastructure a call for bids is done. Smaller projects can be awarded directly. In case of bigger housing projects it is compulsory to build playgrounds (e. g. building laws in Vienna). In Vienna the city tries to offer a great range of playground and public facilities for leisure-time physical activity.

Usually master planning (= creating a map or a catalogue expressing conceptual requirements in a greater contexts for a specific area to guide the realization of architectural designs. A master plan could e. g. define where housing estates, where greenery, where commercial or industrial areas will be situated and what general qualities the areas should have e. g. defining that the houses will be a blocks or single family homes, defining maximum heights and densities, etc.) especially in bigger

municipalities is done before single building projects are developed. In Vienna the master plan for urban development prescribes a 3,5 m² of green area for each inhabitant, prescribes a green network through the city and affects the land use and zoning plans of Vienna. In case of cycling infrastructure master planning is done within the different federal states. In general infrastructure for leisure-time physical activities are planned in reach of public transport.

The form of financing infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity varies a lot, depending on the size of the project and the measures of the different federal states. An important financing form are subsidies connected to quality criteria to guarantee certain infrastructural standards. This method is practiced for playgrounds in e.g. the federal states of Lower Austria and Upper Austria (federal state's housing departments). In Lower Austria sport facilities of a certain size are financed by federal state (federal state's economy department) or by regional subsidies (regional management departments), but the project quality is individually awarded, depending on the type of the project. Another form of financing is the model of co-financing. In case of top routes for cycling tourism in Lower Austria, which are nominated by the federal state and have to fulfil certain quality criteria, they are financed 2/3 by the federal state (federal state's economy department) and 1/3 by the municipalities that are connected by the infrastructure. Some recreational facilities in the open landscape need connection between two or more federal states. In those cases the federal states cooperate in planning and co-finance the facilities (cycling or hiking paths). In Vienna most of the projects are co-financed partly by the central budget of the city and partly by the decentralized budget of the Viennese districts. Bigger urban developments are financed by the central budget or are even co-financed by the European Union. E. g. a new park within a new housing area in Vienna was built by funds of the EU. Inside the park there are many zones for different physical activities. Two programmes by the European Union to improve infrastructure in general are the URBAN programme (e. g. there are projects in Vienna and Graz financed by the URBAN funds) and the LEADER programme, which funds regional projects in rural areas. Recently, bigger infrastructure are also developed in form of public-private-partnerships, where the question how to finance the management and maintenance of an infrastructure in the future is included in the planning process.

The management of the facilities varies. Sport facilities are often managed by the municipalities themselves. Many sport facilities, which are used for leisure-time physical activity are school properties owned by the municipality or the federation (elementary and secondary schools are property of the municipalities, grammar schools/high schools are property of the federation). Some other sport facilities, are managed by one of the three Austrian sport associations ASKÖ, Sportunion or ASVÖ, sport clubs or private users, who rent the estates. Facilities like parks, cycling paths or forests that are public space are usually managed by the municipalities. E. g. parks in Vienna are administrated and maintained by the municipal department 42 – parks and gardens. Forests and open landscape of Vienna are administrated by the municipal department 49 –forestry and urban agriculture, etc. Facilities in rural areas like hiking paths or mountainbike tracks are either maintained by the municipalities or alpine associations.

Most of the facilities are already established and exist for long time. This means the question of renovation is another aspect of planning facilities. For sport facilities we found out that in two federal states (Styria and Vienna – probably there are more) there is a law to protect existing sport facilities (Sportstättenschutzgesetz). This means sport facilities have to be maintained and modernized after some time.

Tuning National policies with regional and local policies

Most of the policies are made in the federal states in Austria. There are mainly two kind of activities that discuss and bring ideas together on a national or at least supraregional level: First of all there are annual meetings of the different sectors (sports, cycling, playgrounds and open space). Secondly there are workgroups, one from the ÖISS and some more to discuss technical standards.

The annual meetings of the different sectors are not coordinated intersectoral. Those meetings are not compulsory but still most of the relevant actors of each sector are involved: There is an annual conference of the federal state's sport consultants. There is another annual meeting for cycling experts and another one for experts and planners for playgrounds and open space. The ÖROK (Austrian Conference on Spatial Planning) is a conference on a national level for spatial planning, but the issue of infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity is only marginal discussed there. All of the interviewed experts mentioned that there are no publications or documents based on those meetings. The meetings have more the character of networking events to exchange experience in those field.

For playgrounds and for sport facilities there are additional workgroups installed to discuss technical standards called Ö-Norm (Austrian Standards). Another workgroup that consists of national and federal state coordinators implements the “master plan cycling” by the Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management. Additionally a consulting programme and a financing programme is installed for municipal administrations, developers, tourism offices and planning offices who built the cycling infrastructure.

Maybe the most relevant work group for the IMPALA study was installed by the ÖISS to work out new guidelines for developing infrastructure for physical activity. A first public release of this work group is the “Sportstättenresolution” (resolution on sport facilities), presented in March 2009 at the Austrian conference “Sportstättenenquête” (sports facility conference).

Description of policy makers

The three types of facilities (sports facilities, facilities designed for sports and physical activity and facilities not designed for sports and physical activity but usable nonetheless) are administrated by different fields and coordinated on federal state or municipal level. There is no over-all intersectoral concept for developing infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity. If policies are made, the strategies and papers are made for specific facilities like cycling paths or playgrounds and are first discussed between the political level and the administrative level of a federal state or within the municipality, in case of bigger cities. In rare cases they are discussed on a national level (Master Plan Cycling). Most of the facilities are not developed by the guidance of regional or national policies or strategies. Therefore the municipalities have the strongest role in decision making. This means that the situation of decision making in Austria is very heterogeneous and depending on local political networks.

Description of collaborating partners

The actors and parties participating in the development of leisure-time physical activities vary within the three different types of facilities. In general the field of sports facility planning is independent from the stakeholders of the other two types of facilities. The relevant actors for facilities designed for sports and physical activity and facilities not designed for physical activity but useable nonetheless are sometimes the same stakeholders and there is more cooperation and exchange within their federal state or municipality.

Sport facilities are in general matters of political agents for sports and the administrative departments for sports on a federal level and are guided by the ÖISS (Austrian Institute for School and Sports Facilities). The dated policy, the Austrian Sports Facility Plan, is not in use anymore. The ÖISS tries to define a new strategy for the development of infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity at the moment and therefore published a first concept, the resolution on sports facilities. Traditionally there is a strong influence of the Austrian sports associations. The sports sector is therefore also interested in developing facilities for professional sports additional to facilities for leisure-time physical activity.

A special situation affects swimming facilities that are not developed for swimming championships: They are either administrated by an own department for public pool like in Vienna or are administrated by the health department like in Lower Austria.

Facilities designed for sports and physical activity are the duty of the federal state sectors urban and spatial planning, cycling coordinators, tourism and environment. The administrative level define the criteria for subsidises and funds e. g. for cycling paths or playgrounds on a federal state or municipal level usually after discussing the issues with the councilors of the local government. In urban areas departments for forestry, urban planning and for urban parks can be awarded to work out guidelines for the amount of green areas and guidelines for the qualities of there parks. It is not a single sector or stakeholder leading the decision making but the personal commitment of politicians and persons working in the administration are highly necessary. Non-governmental organisations (e. g. interest groups for cycling) are sometimes involved in the process either because they try to initiate projects or programme with a communal partner themselves or they play an advisory role for the communal actors.

The development of surroundings not designed for sports and physical activity but usable nonetheless are duties of the owner of the territory, who might be the state, a federal state, a municipality or private owners. In case of communal property the environmental sector and the land use and forestry departments of the federal states or municipalities are responsible for the policy making. In case of state property the Austrian Federal Forests, who additionally administrates state-owned lakes are responsible. At a local level they work together with non-governmental actors like alpine associations, horse riding associations or diving associations.

In the planning process of all three types of infrastructure of leisure-time physical activity the end-users are hardly involved. In case of sports facilities the sports associations are asked and represent the interests of their members. More difficult is the participation of the population doing self-organized physical activity because they are a very heterogeneous group. In some cases like new housing areas it is difficult to find out specific needs because the future inhabitants are unknown. Most of the parks (in

Vienna) are planned with participation of the neighbourhood. Though most of the interviewed experts are conscious about the importance of involving the population in the planning process it is still an exception that end-users participate in planning in Austria, but the amount of projects increases.

Benefits and downfalls of existing policies (national, regional and local level)

All of the experts mentioned as a major benefit of the existing Austrian situation that the development of infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity is very flexible and therefore can be easily adapted to local conditions. The constructive exchange between different competences in diverse sectors and departments in municipalities and in federal states and the cooperative process of decision making are an expression of democracy. The good network is another major benefit of the existing situation. Also the involvement of the municipalities and districts guarantee a high accuracy to plan due to local, individual requirements. The existing system in Austria is motivating actors for own initiatives.

In case of the national master plan for cycling it has a high political acceptance and is quite successful on an executive level. Many regions in Austria are motivated to improve their cycling facilities recently. It created a positive competition between the different federal states and on the local level the population and politicians are convinced about the improvement of the cycling infrastructure.

One expert pointed out the elaborate concept of planning green areas in Vienna. The city builds up reserves of green areas, so that the green areas can be defined before the building process of housing areas starts. Therefore the greenery can grow in the meantime to be used right from the beginning of the new housing areas.

Obverse to the benefit of the high freedom for the development of infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity is the dependence of single actors who are or are not committed to sports and physical activity. The ÖISS therefore started to develop strategies to improve the development of infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity and launched the first concept, the resolution on sport facilities. It is a first step to create a higher sensibility for the topic in Austria although it gets more difficult to develop infrastructure because of the higher range of types of physical activity nowadays. Many of the experts emphasise that a new instrument like cooperative sports facility planning like the two Austrian pilot projects done in Eisenstadt and Hartberg could help to improve the development of infrastructure for physical activities. This instrument brings together all three types of facilities, investigates the needs of a municipality or region and discusses the measures with local authorities, sports and other associations and population. The interviewees expect that this new instrument would show the effort of the municipal level more clearly and would guarantee a transparency of the development process. Therefore some of the experts wish to get more assistance by the federal states and federation to establish instruments for all over Austria.

Another problem area named was that the sometimes insufficient organisation for the usage of the existing facilities. Many sports facilities of schools and sports organisations are only frequently used at certain daytimes. At times they are not used they could be accessible for groups like adolescent persons or students. In Vienna the department for "Mehrfachnutzung" (multiple usage) tries to open school facilities but only few examples could be realized. It is mainly a question of legal liability to open schools e. g. on weekends or in the summer holidays.

At some places urban nature and forests are used to intensively by mountainbikers, joggers, hikers, etc. This means ecological problems and conflicts between user groups especially between mountainbikers and hikers. There are plans and strategies to offer those groups separate path systems. In urban areas this can be difficult due to the general lack of green areas in cities.

Public outdoor facilities cannot be used in the evening. Some of the facilities were equipped with light systems. Evening usage means extra costs for the commune and additional noise in the neighbourhood therefore this strategy cannot be applied to every public outdoor facility.

Another problem area most of the experts mentioned was how self-organised groups can be involved in the process of the development for leisure-time infrastructure.

Conclusion

The development of local infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity in Austria takes place on a federal state or municipal level. In Austria it is a voluntary measure of the communes. There are only few policy papers on a national level or a regional level. If policies exist they are mostly developed for specific facility types (sport facilities, cycling facilities, playgrounds, etc.) or not exclusively deal with infrastructure for leisure-time physical activities. Most projects on local infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity are built and developed individually in each municipality or smaller region. Different sectors (sports, planning, tourism, recreation, environment) are responsible for the three facility types. Those sectors are not necessarily connected in the development of local infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity. The situation of local infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity seems to be satisfying but could be improved. The major benefit in developing infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity in the current situation is the good possibility to adapt them due to local conditions. The major problem area is the dependence on singular political actors that are or are not aware of the importance of local infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity. The ÖISS (Austrian Institute for School and Sports Facilities) already began to work out a concept, called the resolution on sport facilities, a concept that shows tendencies for better integration of all types of facilities. This could be an occasion to build up a better intersectoral network on developing infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity. Although the different actors may have different interests an intersectoral network could mean new synergies for the development of infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity.

3.3 Czech Republic

Background information policy system

In the Czech Republic, there is a government which prepares bills and passes government resolutions (e.g. national policy program of the development of sports for all), which require other ministries and authorities to carry them out in practice. These resolutions are also concerned with sports and physical activities. The Czech Republic is comprised of municipalities (being managed by mayors and municipal councils) which are the smallest administrative units (e.g. a village, a town, or a city). These are merged into 14 regions that are higher authority units. Administrative units have their clearly marked territory, its population and elected representatives. They have own property and manage their own budget. The representatives are democratically elected

for the period of 4 years; the councils are the executive bodies of the municipalities. The municipalities carry out state administration in accordance with the law.

Recent developments

We have not identified any trends concerning sport/facilities for LTPA on the national level, nor the interviewed people have mentioned any. On the regional level, there is a document from 2003 named “Programme of the development of tourism of the Olomouc region” which includes topics of possible projects that also address the development of facilities for LTPA in Olomouc region. This document was created with the aim to strengthen tourism in the region, with the development of sport/facilities for LTPA as a minor part of it.

Selection of experts

We approached 9 organizations and conducted 13 interviews because there are not strictly divided competencies as it was supposed by the guidelines of the IMPALA project. 4 interviews out of the 13 were carried out at the municipality of Olomouc (a cooperating partner) due to the accessibility and the responsibilities of individual departments and their connections to practice. When addressing the representatives, we took advantage of personal networks (the representatives of the Faculty of Physical Culture knew some of the people we wanted to interview and they assisted us in addressing them, they were mainly people from the Ministries, and the Czech Sport associations, SOKOL), and contacts in different institutions and corporations. We were not successful in addressing anybody from the Ministry of Local Development as we had planned. The aspect of infrastructure for LTPA in the Czech Republic is not specifically planned and controlled, there are no special organizations, people, and divisions responsible for it; it is more or less fragmented.

National level:

1. Czech Sport Association - is a voluntary association of sport and tourist clubs with national operation. It has got over 300 thousand members. The Czech Sport Association was founded in 1990 and its mission is to support sport, physical activity and tourism, sport representation of the Czech Republic and its preparation. It represents and protects the interests of associated subjects, provides service and creates conditions for mutual cooperation. We interviewed the secretary-general on national level who conducts and makes legal acts.
2. SOKOL is a voluntary association of sport clubs which practices different kinds of sports and physical activities. Officials, instructors and trainers of SOKOL clubs spread the idea of SOKOL within the environment of their sport clubs. Its mission is to increase physical fitness of its members and educate them to moral conduct in private as well as public life, to personal modesty and discipline, to patriotism and respect to spiritual heritage of our nation. We talked to the president of SOKOL organization who leads this organization on national level.
3. Czech Association - Sport for All wants to open physical activities and sport for broad public. It professes Sokol ideas as proposed by its founder M. Tyrš. It derives from work of doctors, Physical Education teachers, and other specialists who advocate the importance of physical activity in human life. It unites local sport organizations and creates conditions for them, it educates instructors and trainers. It also secures money for activity of local sport organizations. We talked to the

secretary-general on national level who knows how this association works and about its major concerns.

4. The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport is responsible for education system, all kinds of schools in our republic, it deals with all facets associated with youth and it is responsible for sport (all sort of). They prepare laws, make decisions and monitor their fulfilment. They prepare concepts of different kinds of activities. The area of sport is under division 5 led by a secretary. We talked for the IMPALA project (national level) with the secretary of this division. This division announces the State support of sport each year which is divided into three blocks (sport representation and preparation of sport talents, physical activities, and financial investment into reproduction of sport property).
5. The Czech Chamber of Architects is an autonomous professional association. It is responsible for professional, skilled and ethic performance of the profession of architect in the Czech Republic and their integration into European structures. They offer service for architects, their clients and public. They defend adherence to the law by the subjects in the market and enforce correct attitudes within architectonic services. We interviewed an architect who is a member of this association, works at the Czech Technical University, Faculty of Architecture in Prague and specializes in architecture of infrastructure for sport and physical activity.
6. The sport architect we interviewed, is one of the experts in the field of planning and projecting of sport infrastructure, he made block plans for different cities in the Czech Republic. In present, he is retired, but he possesses unique experience and knowledge. This architect used to work in a private firm 'Sportprojekta' that concentrates on building sport facilities, civic building and statics of building constructions. We learnt about him through his articles on the concerned areas (infrastructure for LTPA) in national newspapers.
7. The Center for Transport Research is a public research institution and the only transport scientific-research organization under the Ministry of Transport. It was established in 1992 and it replaced an original institution, the Research Transport Institution in Žilina (the Slovak Republic). Basic mission of the Center for Transport Research is research, development and expertise activity within national scope for all types of transport, both of public and private sector and further securing service activity for the Ministry of Transport and other state organizations, again both public and private sector. There are over 140 specialists involved. We talked to a representative of the Center for Transport Research who is in charge of cycling transportation and is responsible for development of cycling transportation (mainly cycling paths) on national, regional as well as local level. We contacted him through the City of Olomouc, division of transport. National level.

Regional level:

8. The Olomouc region is an autonomous community of inhabitants. The Regional Authority of Olomouc region manages general development of its territory and takes care of the needs of its inhabitants. It cooperates with municipalities but cannot influence their autonomous work. It administers own properties and can have profit from them. The head of this authority is the regional council chair. The office holds several deputies. We talked to a deputy and a competent person for culture,

preservation of monuments, physical activities, sport and leisure time. Regional level.

Local level:

9. City of Olomouc is a municipality and its mission is general development of Olomouc city as an important regional metropolis. Municipality council leads the city and it is represented by elected members of the municipality board. This board strives to make Olomouc an attractive place for living for its inhabitants as well as for tourist, for businessmen and for entrepreneurs. We talked to several people from this municipality, because the problem of infrastructure for LTPA is not concentrated into one division and because the mayor of the city signed an agreement on cooperation with our research center. One interviewed person is working within the section of concept and development, another expert is working within the section of greening and recreation, an architect is working within the section of territorial planning and architecture, and an engineer is working as the head of the transport development section.

National Policy

The sphere of sport belongs under the supervision of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport, into a specialized section of Sports. However, sport is only one of the areas that the Ministry is concerned with, as its title suggests, and therefore it is not necessarily its only priority. The Ministry is responsible primarily for education. It consists of 7 departments and in one of these there is a group responsible for sports and youth. The departments have altogether 34 sections, and only one of the sections deals with sports (it is concerned mainly with sports representation and with organized physical activities carried out in some facilities).

Further, there is an organization operating on the national level called "All-sports collegium", which is a consultative body in the legislation sphere. All important sport organizations and associations are members of this collegium, but they are not decision makers, it is only an advisory body, e.g. they provide comments and consultancy for legal documents under preparation.

The three biggest sport organizations in the Czech Republic involved in the collegium are the Czech Association of Physical Education, SOKOL, and the Czech Association of Sports for All. These organizations have their representatives on national, regional and local levels. On the local level they often comprise other smaller physical activity oriented organizations and sports clubs.

Other members of the all sports collegium are the Olympic committee, which is responsible primarily for the Czech representative teams in the Olympic games, their preparation and the organization of their participation in the Olympics, the Association of school sports clubs in the Czech Republic, the Club of Czech tourists, etc. There are 11 organizations involved in the collegium.

On regional level, there are 14 regional authorities responsible for the general development of each region. They financially support some sport projects, not only planning and building of infrastructure for LTPA, but also competitions or events.

The main responsibility and opportunities to change things rest with municipalities. The municipal councils can do a lot in their local conditions provided they have enough money and land usable for infrastructure and are e.g. pressed by the inhabitants represented in civil associations or sport clubs.

Policy documents

The Government of the Czech Republic passed a law on the support of sport in 2001 "**Law about support of sport** (No. 115/2001 and no. 219/2005)" [1] that is still valid. The **Law about support of sport** defines position of sport within society and determines different tasks for Ministries, regional authorities and municipalities. There is a comment involved, which concerns the infrastructure of LTPA in regions: §5 Regional authorities are responsible for the construction, reconstructions, maintenance and functioning of their sport facilities, they provide financial support for sports from their budgets. There is a similar part in the law about towns and villages: §6 Towns and villages are responsible for the construction, reconstructions, maintenance and functioning of their sport facilities, they provide financial support for sports from their budgets. They provide these facilities to their citizens and supervise their effective use and they issue obligations to the operators of the facilities (§7a).

The government also passed four resolutions dealing with some areas of sport. These are the Resolution of Government of the Czech republic to Principles of overall support of state sport representation including system of sport talents education (1999) [2], Resolution of Government of the Czech republic to National program of sport development for all (2000) [3], Resolution of Government of the Czech republic to Directions of state policy in sport 2004-2006 (2003) [4], and Resolution of Government of the Czech republic to National strategy for development of cycle transport (2004) [5].

The resolution of the Government of the Czech Republic to Principles of overall support of state sport representation including system of sport talents education (1999) [2]. It defines principles of overall support of state sport representation including system of sport talents education. The resolution is concerned with the support provided by the state to the national sport representation, i.e. very limited number of Czech citizens. The government requires the Ministry of Education to "plan and allocate investment and non-investment means from the state budget to sport and civic organizations and sport representation of the state and the education of sports talents".

The resolution of the Government of the Czech Republic to National program of sport development for all (2000) [3]. The aims of the National program of the development of sport for all in the Czech Republic is to transform social and material conditions in the society in favor of lifelong performance of health enhancing and health safe physical activities that would not harm the environment to the higher number of citizens as possible. The program implies that it is necessary to expand the material conditions since there is a lack of sport areas accessible to public with equipment and maintenance secured. There is a missing coordination of the means being invested into the construction of sports facilities coming from different resources. This document is a key document concerning the infrastructure for LTPA and it is based on evidence about physical activity in the Czech Republic.

The resolution of the Government of the Czech Republic to Directions of state policy in sport 2004-2006 (2003) [4] requires the Minister of Education, Youth and Sports to carry out state policies regarding sports and thus to enhance these areas: state sport representation, development of talents, important sport events, school activity in sport, development in sport for all, development of sport infrastructure, handicapped athletes, anti-doping program, science and research.

The resolution of the Government of the Czech Republic to National strategy for development of cycle transport (2004) [5]. National strategy of the development of cycling transportation in the Czech Republic has 4 priorities: 1) The development of

cycle transport as an equal type of transportation in the Czech Republic, 2) The development of cycling in order to promote travel business, 3) the development of cycling in order to support environment protection, 4) the enhancement of the coordination between resorts and subjects, which concern all areas (planning, construction, finances, and maintenance) of construction of cycle paths connecting to European cycle routes.

State support of sport for 2009 (10 programs) [6]. This is a document that describes the application process for state subsidy of sports and physical activity, it has 10 specific programs. The infrastructure for LTPA is described in program VIII - on the maintenance and functioning of sport facilities. Further, the "Financial investment into reproduction of sport property (PROGRAM 233510)". The subsidy is allocated for the development and renovation of the technical background of sport organizations (non-profit organizations or towns/villages can apply) or sport representations (their home organizations can apply).

The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport has got a division for sport and this division announces each year the program **"State support of sport for 2009"** [6] which is divided into three blocks this year (sport representation and preparation of sport talents, physical activities, financial investment into reproduction of sport property). Sport representation and preparation of sport talents includes four programs: 1. Support of sport preparation of the Czech representation, 2. Support of sport centers for youth (adolescents and junior categories), 3. Support of sports talents, 4. Support of sport centers. In block two, named "Physical activities" there are 4 programs: 5. National program of development of sports for all, 6. Sport and school, 7. Sports for the disabled, and 8. Maintenance and operation of infrastructure for sport and physical activity. The later program aims at the support of maintenance and functioning of facilities for sports and physical activities, both in the property of state or in rent, or the support of the technical equipment for sports both in the property of state or in rent. Further, block three (PROGRAM 233510): "Financial investment into the reproduction of sport property" is about distribution of financial sources into the infrastructure for sport and LTPA. Subsidies are allocated for the development or renovation of the technical and material background of sports organizations (the applicants can be non-profit organizations of sports or towns/villages) or sport representatives (the applicants are their home sports associations or organizations). "State support of sport for 2009" [6] is issued each year in July by the Ministry of Education and it is a subsidy program, in which individual subjects can apply for financial support for their activities.

Policy documents for specific target groups

In the Czech Republic there is no special national policy aimed at ethnic groups. All policies are aimed for everybody regardless ethnicity, with slight differences for age groups (children, seniors) or disabled people but these policies are not written down.

Policies on regional and local level

There is a principal document approved by Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport called "Law about support of sport (2001)" [1] which gives formal limits and rights to local (and regional) authorities and defines their responsibility for development of local infrastructure for LTPA. Nothing more specific is mentioned in this national document about the individual steps in the planning process. As we knew from the interviewed architect and representatives of Olomouc city, municipalities/cities/villages are autonomous and should improve conditions of the facilities for LTPA for their citizens.

That's why policy of local infrastructure for LTPA is developed on local level mainly by individual municipalities.

National policy documents [1-6] do not distinguish the individual steps in the planning process. They are primarily oriented on planning/designing and financing. These documents do not speak about building and constructing. This needs to be in compliance with the the Law on Construction. Managing is then in the hand of the owner of new infrastructure for LTPA, either some sport club or association or municipality itself.

Policy is more oriented on sport infrastructure and infrastructure for sport and LTPA (first two facility types). Other infrastructure not primarily used for LTPA is under supervision of local/regional authorities. No specific Ministry is responsible for the infrastructure for LTPA. The Ministry for Local Development is responsible for the development of regions, and is thus partially responsible also for this type of infrastructure for LTPA (especially regarding the environment that could be used for sports). Local/regional authorities prepare concepts that deal with recreation and tourism which covers also infrastructure for LTPA.

Tuning national policies with regional and local policies

The Ministries upgrade web pages and publish information leaflets. Yet, some interviewed people mentioned a lack of information, they point at the fact they must search for it and it is sometimes very difficult. None of the interviewed people mentioned any other way of obtaining information than searching for it themselves. It is not systematic. There are some trainings organized by private companies but these are usually focused on a specific problem (e.g. safety precautions in children playgrounds). We have not identified any meetings, trainings, or programs that would provide mediation of the information between the Ministry and regional authorities

Description of policy makers (national, regional, local)

National policy is developed by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport. It is then brought to Government meeting and discussed, and later approved. Some basic documents are prepared at main sport organizations (associations) that use the newest research results.

The development of local policy is mainly done by local authorities, usually by their divisions concerned with development (in case of the Olomouc city authority this job is done by the Department of Strategy and Development, the Department of Strategy of Green zones and Recreation, the Department of Strategy of Transportation, and the Department of Land Planning and Architecture). Some civil associations (e.g. representatives of a certain city quarter), sport organizations are invited to comment on the prepared documents, and if it concerns territorial planning also the public is invited to special meetings. Land planning is an activity concerned with the development of city zones or villages with regard to the needs of the inhabitants of the locations or regions, general public needs, with the emphasis on long term effect. Final decisions are made by the city council (or village council) about planning, financing and managing. For building, councils must announce tenders under specific conditions and the invited developers compete with their projects.

Description of collaborating partners

Municipal councils involved are those that prepare concepts of future development (infrastructure for LTPA). Later, the members of municipal board discuss the documents and comment on them. Apart from these, interest groups are addressed (for instance urban districts), civil associations, sport associations (SOKOL, Czech Association of Sport for All, Czech Sport Association etc.), the public and some lobby groups (representatives of construction companies, entrepreneurs, who can be affected by the plan) can also play some role in persuading members about the necessity of building certain infrastructure. The groups mentioned above are or can be involved, but the process differs in municipalities, and final decisions primarily depend on the people involved.

The municipal board defends public interest, the division of territorial planning secures legality and expertise when territorial plans are being prepared. The Commission of urban district discusses the potential infrastructure for LTPA with their inhabitants and makes comments on the prepared concepts. Most of the interviewed people think they cooperate quite well (the representatives of city quarters with the municipality representatives). Because the infrastructure for LTPA is an important item for health enhancement, the president of SOKOL thinks that "...the Ministry of Health and some health insurance companies should be involved" or some expert groups (such as the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport and "Ministry of Finance"). There is also the opinion that everybody who is in charge of money distribution should be somehow involved to control the use of the money. There also should be an independent Ministry of Sport because the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport does not have sports among its top priorities. The to-be Ministry should create a register or database of sport infrastructure and infrastructure for LTPA because there is no clearly defined system.

Benefits and downfalls of existing policies (national, regional and local level)

Some of interviewed people did not see any potential benefits of existing national/local policies for the development of infrastructure for LTPA. On the other hand, some of the participants mentioned some of the perceived benefits of local policies. According to them, the benefit is the press coming from local people (mentioned by two architects) who know about needs in the place of living and want to have some infrastructure built. The advantage is that the actual residents are involved in the planning process of the construction of new sport facilities, since they are those who are to use them in future the most. On local level the system of infrastructure building functions effectively due to the fact that there are territorial plans which mark some land that can still be used for infrastructure for LTPA and cannot be used for building of any other type of infrastructure. The land plan secures that certain land will be used for certain specific purposes, and can be changed only under certain conditions. In case of building infrastructure for LTPA, this brings benefits, since land which has been planned for physical activity purposes cannot be easily used e.g. for commercial or retail land use. The local authorities have also the right to define and change priorities in the transport sphere. The benefit of the work is mainly the enthusiasm of people who are involved (the representative of the Center for Transport Research).

There were several problem areas mentioned, major problems are lack of money for the construction, maintenance or functioning of the infrastructure for LTPA according to the deputy expert. The maintenance and functioning require other financial needs which should be calculated already during planning of the construction. Others mentioned that

there is not continual policy, all plans are primarily connected with election period (4 years) according to the expert from Olomouc city; there is not any long-term strategy which would name priorities for longer periods in the development of the infrastructure for LTPA (the general secretary of Czech Sport Association). Another problem is the non-existence of any coordination in this field according to the general secretary of the Czech Sport Association. For 80% of inhabitants there is not any legal norm securing accessibility of local infrastructure for LTPA and the development of these infrastructure (the architect from the Czech Chamber of Architects). The same interviewed experts also suggest that there should be some fixed sums of money coming from Ministries or municipalities that are aimed specifically for this purpose. Another mentioned problem area is the imbalance between certain types of infrastructure for LTPA (e.g. in Olomouc there is one ice-hockey stadium, which serves both sports clubs and various civil organizations, therefore public has got limited access to the facility, only about three times a week for one hour). Furthermore, there is not any standardization, i.e. a given norm about how many people a certain infrastructure is aimed for. Further, they mentioned ownership of land by private subjects who often speculate with it (to earn more money) according to the engineer and the architect from Olomouc city. There is not any law that would legally dispossess land for public interest. Care for children under the age of 6 and for seniors within the sphere of sport or leisure-time physical activity is not a priority and the offer of activities for them is thus limited (the president of SOKOL).

Plans to change existing policies should be mainly formed on the level of Ministries, namely the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport, and Ministry of Finance, and health insurance companies according to the suggestions made by the sport architect and the president of SOKOL. The representatives of these organizations claim there is a lack of any strategy on national level dealing with the infrastructure for LTPA. The Czech Sport Association (the biggest one in the Czech Republic) representative mentioned some ideas what infrastructure is needed but according to him, there is lack of interest in these plans on the side of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport. The Ministry prefers their own concepts developed on the basis of their information strictly. This fact was also mentioned by the representative of the Czech Sport Association. In the Municipality of Olomouc working groups of people from different divisions are formed to cooperate and to create an integrated system (the expert from Olomouc city). Another mentioned plan is to talk with involved people, to persuade them, to give them positive examples of how it can work (the representative of Center for Transport Research).

Conclusion

There is not a clear system for the development of the infrastructure for LTPA in the Czech Republic. National policy is fragmented, there is not any special policy dealing with population subgroups. No norms exist for planning and building infrastructure for LTPA and financing is also a big problem because it is fragmented. Financing is done from various sources (the EU, the state, private corporations such as the SAZKA a.s. lottery, regional authorities, municipalities, sport organisations, etc.). Policy is developed mainly on local level and is realized by municipalities through their municipality councils. Before it is agreed upon, the municipality board discusses the important documents with groups involved, sport clubs, organisations and associations and possibly the public. The main benefit of the current system is the enthusiasm of people involved in the problem areas of the development of local infrastructure for LTPA involved in the planning on the local level (e.g. members of various committees,

representatives of sports clubs, city neighborhoods, etc.). The major barriers are the lack of money for maintenance and operation of these infrastructure and the questions of the ownership of the land. Prospective plans for change of these shortcomings do not exist on the national level, or at least they have not been identified in the IMPALA project. Interviewed people are keen on the findings from this project and would like to know about good practices in the development of the infrastructure for LTPA from other European countries. However, they are pessimistic about their application into practice.

3.4 Denmark

Background information policy system

The political system of Denmark is a multi-party structure, where several parties are represented in the Parliament (Folketinget). There are five regions in Denmark, and 98 municipalities. The regions are led by an elected regional council without the authority to levy taxes and with health services and regional development as their main tasks. The municipalities have a high degree of local autonomy – this means for example that they have their own elections and local administrations. Each of the 98 municipalities is led by an elected municipal council with the authority to levy taxes. The municipalities are responsible for tasks within e.g. health care and health promotion, environment, local planning, urban renewal, construction, roads and transport (for more information see table 2). Each council elects a chairman among its members – the mayor. Every municipality has an administration that serves the municipal council and the committees. Normally, the administration has several departments, e.g. a technology and environment department, a social and health services department, a finance department and an education, culture and leisure department.

Recent developments

Infrastructure for physical activity in Denmark are generally of a high quality and there are good opportunities for cycling and walking as part of LTPA. The number of sports facilities in Denmark per inhabitant is among the highest in Europe. There are e.g. 1230 inhabitants per sports hall and gym, 9344 inhabitants per swimming bath and 734 inhabitants per football ground (<http://www.loa-fonden.dk/facilitetsdatabase>). But the distribution of sports facilities is geographically imbalanced, and there is a shortage of club houses and drop-in facilities. Organized sports are very popular both in children and adults, but in the last decades a greater proportion of the population are involved in self-organised physical activity such as running, walking and biking.

Selection of experts

Six interviews were conducted with experts on both national and local level. The experts were selected using personal network and the snow balling method.

National level:

1. The Danish Foundation for Culture and Sports Facilities, Head of Planning. The mission of The Danish Foundation for Culture and Sport Facilities is to develop and support construction in the field of sport, culture and leisure. The aim is to contribute to the innovation of the physical framework. The task is to move the focus away from the conventional approach based on standardised facilities towards an approach which to a much greater extent based on the actual development in people's physical and cultural activities as well as on architectural and aesthetic parameters. Innovation in relation to the design and planning of culture and sports facilities is rooted in changes and new patterns in everyday life, and the challenge is

to combine the best of tradition with the new trends of cultural and social habits. The Foundation was established in 1994 and has a non commercial purpose. Read more at: www.loa-fonden.dk

2. The National Board of Health, National Center for Health Promotion and disease Prevention, Head of section. The National Board of Health is the supreme health care authority in Denmark. The Board assists the minister for Health and Prevention within the administration of the health care service, and advise the ministry for Health and Prevention as well as other authorities and inform citizens on specific health issues. The task is to set the best possible frames within the health care system for the prevention and treatment of illness, suffering and functional limitations for the individual. It follows health conditions through monitoring and evaluation and endeavour to be at the cutting edge of knowledge and experiences. Read more at: www.sst.dk
3. Danish Ministry of the Environment, Forest and Nature Agency, State-owned areas and Communication, Head of Section. The main focus of the Danish Forest and Nature Agency will be on ensuring opportunities for nature recreation, and to develop, establish and restore nature and to undertake practical management measures for wild flora and fauna. In addition to the efforts for nature on state land, the Danish Forest and Nature Agency will engage in green partnership arrangements with i.e. local authorities, aiming at nature management and awareness raising. The Danish Forest and Nature Agency is part of the Ministry of the Environment. The Danish Forest and Nature Agency includes a central office in Copenhagen with the board of directors and 3 divisions, and 19 regional offices. Read more at: www.skovognatur.dk/International/

Local level:

4. Odense Municipality, Department of Culture and Urban Development, Head of Parks and Nature.
5. Odense Municipality, Department for Children and Youth. Odense is the third largest city in Denmark, and is in Region of Southern Denmark on the island of Funen in central Denmark. The municipality covers an area of 304 km² (117 sq mi), and has a total population of 187,929 (2009). It is the most populated municipality in Region Syddanmark. The municipality of Odense is governed by a council with 29 members and five specialist committees. Each committee is chaired by a councillor and the Finance Committee is chaired by the mayor. The council is elected for a four-year term. Odense Municipality has a total of around 17.000 employees, working in five services: Mayor's Department; Department of Culture and Urban Development; Department of the Elderly and Disabled; Social Services and Labour Department; Department for Children and Youth. Read more at: <http://odense.dk/english.aspx>
6. Hørsholm Municipality, Technical department, Head of division, Roads and Nature. Hørsholm is a municipality in the Copenhagen Capital Region in the northern part of the island of Zealand (Sjælland) in eastern Denmark. The municipality covers an area of 31 km², and has a total population of 24,197 (2008). The main town and the site of its municipal council is the town of Hørsholm. Hørsholm and the neighbouring town Rungsted (which is part of Hørsholm Municipality) have an average income per household among the highest in Denmark. Wealthy households are attracted to Hørsholm by its comparatively low income tax rate, proximity to

forests and the sea. Moreover, the commuting distance to central Copenhagen remains reasonably short. Read more at: www.horsholm.dk.

National Policy

In the government national health policy 'Healthy throughout Life' the target is: 'The number of people who are physically active should be increased considerably, and physical activity should become a natural part of everyday life'. The national strategy to promote health in relation to physical activity includes: general information on recommendations for physical activity, including targeted information and counselling for physically inactive people; making physical activity a natural part of everyday life, through such measures as improving opportunities for physical activity; and ensuring physical activity as part of treatment and rehabilitation. It is stated that individuals have the opportunities for being physically active in everyday life, including in spontaneous ways. 'This applies to home life, leisure activities, community environments, transport and workplaces, and especially workplaces with sedentary work. Policies on exercise can be established in many areas and achieve benefits. The voluntary organizations and associations are important actors'. Another overall relevant document for LTPA is the 'Sport for All' by the Ministry of Culture, which include 42 proposals to strengthen people's participation in sport and leisure time physical activity. The 42 proposals are grouped under five headings: Sports for children and young people; Sports for socially vulnerable and disadvantaged groups; Facilities - development and application. How to maintain, promote and develop facilities, urban spaces and other outdoor recreational areas for leisure time physical activity; Sport in the planning, how to promote physical activity in the urban planning, need for more knowledge in this field; Exercise and sport at the workplace.

Furthermore the Government Prevention Council (The Ministry of Health and Prevention) has published the report: 'We can live longer and healthier'. Among other things, the report includes recommendations on how the Danes can be more physical active in their everyday life: Municipalities need to promote physical activity in the development of municipality- and local planning. Key elements are e.g. bicycle paths, facilities for leisure time physical activity and sports playgrounds. Increased national and local financial support to sports associations targeted health promotion activities, while taking into account to maintain the voluntary participation etc. in the associations; Exercise prescription (health professional supervised physical training) should be offered to persons with specific risk factors and diseases where there is evidence of a health effect; School aged children should be physically active at least one hour per day during the school day; Active transportation to and from school should be promoted in co-operation between parents and schools; Increasing the general knowledge on the exercise recommendations (30 min a day for adults and 60 min a day for children) by campaigns and should be targeted the inactive groups.

Policy documents

All of the informants were able to mention some (but not all) relevant national policy documents for LTPA. To obtain a comprehensive picture it was thus necessary to conduct a literature search.

One of the most important policy documents is '**The Local Government Reform**' (came into force January 2007). As a result of the reform the municipalities have been assigned more tasks within e.g. health care and health promotion, environment, local planning, urban renewal, construction, roads and transport. The Health Act specifies

that the municipalities are responsible for promoting health in creating environments that promote health and prevent disease.

Other relevant policies are **The Act on Youth and Adult Education** with the purpose to ensure municipal aid to leisure time education and activities, including local sport, in the form of grants to sports activities and rent of indoor and outdoor facilities. The Ministry of Education has the responsibility on this act. Furthermore 'The Act on Football Pools, Lotteries and Betting Games' is very relevant for the public sports facilities. The act stipulates the allocation of funds from the proceeds of football pools, betting games and lotteries to a number of different cultural and humanitarian purposes. A large portion of the funds goes to the sports organizations (e.g. Danish Gymnastics and Sports Associations, the National Olympic Committee and Sports Confederation of Denmark; Danish federation for company sports) and the Danish Foundation for Culture and Sports facilities. The Danish Ministry of Taxation is responsible for this act.

The Planning Act is also very relevant for all three types of facilities because it deals with the overall planning of land use. The purpose is to ensure that the overall planning synthesizes the interests of society with respect to land use and contributes to protecting the country's nature and environment, so that sustainable development of society with respect for people's living conditions and for the conservation of wildlife and vegetation is secured. Spatial planning is especially intended to ensure that: The whole country and the individual counties and municipalities develop appropriately, based on overall planning and economic considerations; valuable buildings, settlements, urban environments and landscapes are created and conserved; The open coasts continue to comprise an important natural and landscape resource; Air, water, soil and noise pollution are prevented; The public is involved in the planning process as much as possible. The Danish Ministry of the Environment is responsible for the act.

Specific relevant for facilities for sports and physical activity (e.g. outdoor urban public areas) is **The Danish Act on Urban Renewal and Urban Development**: A tool the local authorities can use to make targeted urban and housing political initiatives. To address this objective, the local authority can choose between building renewal, area renewal, open spaces and condemnation. The Ministry of the interior and social affairs is responsible. Specific relevant for cycle paths is the 'Regulations on road and traffic': A collection of road and traffic technical knowledge and experience. It is a kind of best practices in the field of roads and traffic, including guidelines e.g. how to construct a safety road. Some of the regulations are also actual rules or norms to be followed. 'The Road safety Audit', is a review of a road from a road safety point of view. It is systematic accident prevention, based on existing knowledge. Road safety audits can be done in all phases of a project, but it is often beneficial to make an audit more than once, especially in the case of larger projects. The Ministry of Transport is responsible for the above mentioned regulations and audit.

Specific relevant to facilities not designed for sports and physical activity but useable nonetheless (e.g. beach, forest) is **The Danish Act on Forests**: The Purpose is to conserve and protect the Danish forests and to increase the forest area; and **The Danish act on Nature Conservation**: To protect the country's nature and environment so that social change can happen on a sustainable basis in respect for human life and for the conservation of flora and fauna. The Ministry of the Environment has the overall and cross-cutting responsibility of these acts. The municipalities administer most provisions: they supervise the waivers and denials, perform maintenance tasks, monitor, plan and inform.

Policy documents for specific target groups

National policies specific for ethnic groups do not exist, but there are some policies/recommendations on how to promote access to public spaces and recreational facilities for disabled people. In the publication: 'Outdoor areas for all - Planning and design - Guidelines for providing access for disabled persons' advice is given on how to facilitate access of handicapped people to riding, fishing, yachting, bathing, and camping. Moreover the 'Audit on Accessibility' is a recommended method to ensure access in the public open space for disabled people.

Policies on regional and local level

Policies are developed both at a national and at local (municipal level). The national policies regulate the local policies and are in all cases subordinate to the national policies. In general the national policies state that the municipalities are authorized to conduct certain tasks e.g. provide sports facilities for local sports associations (The Act on Youth and Adult Education - specific relevant in the planning of public sports facilities) but it is not specified exactly how the municipality should do it. Likewise with The Act on Planning (relevant in the planning process of all three types of sports facilities), that among other things state that the municipalities should promote recreational areas for the citizens and promote a sustainable environment, but it does not claim specific how this should be done in each municipality. The Act on Forests and the act on Nature Conservation are primarily relevant to recreational areas and facilities for sports and physical activity in the nature and open land. In some cases the responsibility of the municipalities is not always stipulated by law, and the municipalities may handle certain tasks on the basis of the municipal authority rules. The municipal authority rules constitute of a set of unwritten rules (principles) on the non-statutory responsibilities of local authorities. The rules stipulate that tasks to be handled or supported by the local authority must be of a certain benefit to the local citizens, that the local authority must not handle tasks that have been transferred to other authorities and that support must not be given to individuals or sole traders unless specifically provided for by law. A classic example of a task to be handled by a local authority under the municipal authority rules are initiatives related to recreational, cultural and sports activities.

In the Municipality of Odense they have developed a vision for the city called: 'To play is to live' It was passed by the city council in 2008 and aims at improving the quality of life and developing a sustainable and healthy city. One of the goals in this vision is to create space for the possibilities for the citizens to be physically active, not solely in fitness centres and on playing fields but also in more alternative places.

In the sport policy the aim is to: promote physical activity in the population; increase the number of people in sports association; promote elite sports in achieving national and international standards; Increase the number of sports events; improve cooperation between relevant actors in sports e.g. the voluntary sports associations, the municipality institutions (schools, kindergarten, workplaces) and private actors. The sport policy was passed by the town council in 2008 and consists of very specific guidelines in how to act upon the above mentioned aims, and is considered a very good tool in the local policy planning.

Furthermore the health policy in the Municipality of Odense consists of 12 health related topics; one of them is to increase the level of physical activity among the citizens. To do this the city council will among other things: monitor and inform about possibilities for exercise and outdoor activities; develop new opportunities for physical

activity, especially for deprived groups, increase the possibilities for physical activity in public open spaces, parks, play spots etc.; promote (even more) the infrastructure for cycling in the city. To ensure the implementation of the health policy a health advisory committee has been established with representatives from all parties in the city council.

Likewise the municipality of Hørsholm has developed a health policy with a specific focus in improving the built environment for physical activity e.g. increased bike ability and greater access to green spaces. For instance it is a specific goal that in 2012 all citizens should have easy access to parks and natural areas at a distance of 400 m from their home.

Tuning national policies with regional and local policies

Ministers and any member of the Parliament (Folketing) may introduce bills, which have to be read three times in full session before they can be passed. Between each reading, the bills are committed to debate by one of the 24 standing committees. When the bill has been passed after its third reading, it is signed by the monarch and countersigned by the minister, who thus assumes responsibility for the act. Around 200 bills are passed every year. The Legal Information Division (part of the Ministry of Justice) publishes and edits the legal gazettes of the Danish state, 'Lovtidende' and 'Ministerialtidende'. The two gazettes are available in Danish only on the internet lovtidende.dk and ministerialtidende.dk. The specific ministries are responsible for the content and the editing of the legislation they publish in the gazettes. The agency also operates and develops retsinfo.dk, the official legal information system of the Danish state, available on www.retsinfo.dk. When new legislation is published in 'Lovtidende' or 'Ministerialtidende', it can also be found by searching the homepage of www.retsinfo.dk. All documents in retsinfo.dk are in Danish. Translations of some of the central acts etc. can, however, in some cases be found on the homepage of the relevant ministry.

The Local Government Denmark (LGDK) also plays an important role in this matter, as an interest group and member authority of Danish municipalities. It is voluntary to be a member of LGDK, but nevertheless all 98 municipalities are members. The mission of LGDK is to safeguard common interests of the municipalities, assist the individual municipality with consultancy services, supporting implementation of new Acts and clarifying legal issues and in addition ensure that the local authorities are provided with up-to-date and relevant information, this includes both legislation and non binding policies e.g. action plans.

Description of policy makers (national, regional and local level)

The most relevant actors in developing national policies for infrastructure for LTPA are the ministries, as earlier mentioned this is specific The Ministry of Culture, The Ministry of the Environment, The Ministry of the Health and Prevention, the Ministry of the Interior and Social Affairs.

The ministry most directly responsible for LTPA is The Ministry of Culture with a specific task in promoting and supporting the population's participation in sport, by dialogue and cooperation with other relevant actors in this field (other ministries, municipalities, sports clubs and organisations etc.). In recent years there has been a tendency to involve sport and LTPA in addressing different societal challenges e.g. public health issues and social issues. Therefore LTPA is also relevant in other ministries e.g. The Ministry of Health and Prevention: Physical activity is considered as very important in relation to health promotion; The Ministry of the Interior and Social

Affair: Responsible for urban renewal and urban development, and a wide range of social issues; The Ministry of Education: Responsible for 'the Act on Youth and Education' with the purpose to ensure municipal aid to leisure time education and activities, including local sport, in the form of grants to sports activities and rent of indoor and outdoor facilities; The Ministry of the Environment: Responsible for the overall planning of land use and protection of nature and environment; Finally the Ministry of Taxation is relevant because the ministry is responsible for 'The Act on Football Pools, Lotteries and Betting Games'. The act stipulates the allocation of funds from the proceeds of football pools, betting games and lotteries to a number of different cultural and humanitarian purposes. A large portion of the funds goes to the sports organizations (e.g. Danish Gymnastics and Sports Associations, the National Olympic Committee and Sports Confederation of Denmark; Danish federation for company sports and the Danish Foundation for Culture and Sports facilities).

The most relevant actors in developing local policies for infrastructure for LTPA are the municipalities. The city council will pass the bill and the responsibility for carrying out the policy will typically be the administration for technology and environment (responsible for the local planning, roads, parks, traffic etc.) or the administration for culture, sport and leisure (Indoor and outdoor sports facilities etc.). New initiatives can be initiated by the city council itself, the municipal administration, sports organisations, the citizens, or it can be inspired by other municipalities or national guidelines.

Description of collaborating partners

In Denmark proposals for policies will be sent in a public hearing, so that all relevant stakeholders will have the opportunity to make objections and to influence decision-making. Depending on the case some stakeholders are mandatory in the hearing process e.g. when it comes to a proposal for establishing facilities for sports in the nature. For instance if you want to establish a mountain bike trail in a forest it is mandatory to involve the The Danish Society for Nature Conservation (www.dn.dk). Other relevant stakeholders are the landowners (private landowners, the municipalities or the state), Sports associations and organisations, NGOs e.g. the Danish outdoor council and the Danish Cyclist federation (<http://www.dcf.dk/composite-848.htm>), private and public (national and EU) foundations and private investors. In general there seems to be a high level of cooperation (when asking municipalities and the national authorities), there is however often conflicting interest between the different stakeholders e.g. between sports associations and the society for nature conservation. An example from the Municipality in Odense, illustrates this issue. A local mountain bike organisation wants to use a certain natural area for mountain biking, but the specific area is protected under nature conservation laws, and the Danish Society for Nature Conservation will not allow the mountain bikers to use the area.

The national sports organisations in Denmark play an important role in collaborating and planning for LTPA, since the three national organisations each receive substantial funds from the government, yet they maintain an almost complete level of independence in relation to their respective goals and programmes. Between them the three sports associations receive around DKK 500 million p.a. - funds which are channelled through the Ministry of Culture, but deriving from the Pools and Lottery Company Ltd, i.e. ultimately from the Danish public itself.

Benefits and downfalls of existing policies (national, regional and local level)

In general the democratic mandatory hearing process is seen as a benefit for the development of policies in this field, though it will postpone the implementation process. Often the municipalities will have a citizen involvement policy to ensure the involvement and opportunity for citizens and stakeholders to influence decision making. It was also mentioned as a benefit that some of the national policies (e.g. the regulations on road and traffic and the accessibility audit) actually are more guidelines than regulatory requirements. In the effort to ensure the municipal self-government this is a benefit.

According to the municipalities there are several limiting factors of the policies for the development of infrastructure for LTPA. The greatest challenge (according to the Municipality of Odense and Hørsholm) is the financial situation in the municipalities, the budget is quite tight because of the many municipal tasks, and since the municipal taxes already are very high, it is not popular to raise the tax level even more. The Municipalities often find themselves in the tension field between the agendas of local and national politics, citizens demanding quality, and tight economic conditions. The second problem is conflicting interests between some of the national policies. In some cases (as mentioned in 2.5.2) The Act on Forests and The Act on Nature Conservation can be a limiting factor for the sports associations. The third problem is related to the great challenge in reaching the target groups that most of all need to be physical active in a public health perspective. People from low socioeconomic groups are very hard to reach, and none of the existing policies by law state that infrastructure for LTPA should be specific aimed at reaching from low socioeconomic position, though deprived group is a target group for health promotion in general. Furthermore there is a municipal need for more national guidelines in how to develop infrastructure for LTPA, with a specific effect in population health. For instance it was mentioned that cost-effective analysis of interventions aimed at improving infrastructure for LTPA could be a relevant tool in policy making in a public health perspective. In June 2009 a Centre for Applied Research in Health Promotion and Prevention was established at the University of Southern Denmark. The Centre will conduct trials on new, innovative interventions and conduct implementation-research of interventions with known effects, one of the work packages has a specific focus in how the built environment combined with individual and organizational initiatives can promote physical activity in everyday life, including analysis of health-economic consequences.

Conclusion

There are several relevant national policies for developing infrastructure for leisure time physical activity. The municipalities in Denmark have a relatively high degree of self-government and have many tasks in relation to improving infrastructure for physical activity; this is tasks concerning planning, the environment, roads, parks, recreational facilities, sports facilities, cycle paths etc. In Denmark proposals for policies will be sent in a public hearing, so that all relevant stakeholders will have the opportunity to make objections and to influence decision-making. Depending on the case some stakeholders are mandatory in the hearing process e.g. when it comes to a proposal for establishing facilities for sports in the nature. Conflicting interests exist between the sports associations and policies on nature conservation. All national and local policies are available (in Danish and some in English too) on the internet.

3.5 Finland

Background information policy system

Finland is an open democracy, where local governance is strong and equality (in gender, ethnicity, religion, etc) is emphasised in all policymaking. The leading idea of policy making is that local leaders know the best what is needed for local people. The highest power is laid in the hand of the elected parliament, and the leading governmental body is the government, which is formed by the winning party of the parliamentary election with coalition parties. As for the governance of sport the Sports Council of the Ministry of Education is the leading authority. In Regional level all the six State Provincial Offices in Finland have a department, which is responsible for sports affairs. The department can be independent Sport Board (e.g. Lapland), or part of the Department of Educational and Cultural Affairs. At local level the case is similar. In some municipalities, like Jyväskylä for example, sport affairs are dealt in an independent department, whereas in other places sport is part of culture and education.

Recent developments

No general recent developments were mentioned by the experts. An interesting initiative, which is worth mentioning, is the local sports infrastructure in the town of Kerava. The town announced itself in 2002 to be the town of local sports infrastructure. In the project the town started to develop the schoolyards and their neighbourhood for all-daytime use. Skating arena, multi-functional ball game court for example were built. It was aimed to build low budget, yet quality and user friendly facilities distributed sporadically in the area, instead of build one expensive sport complex. By utilising the existing schoolyards, ground work could be avoided or minimised, and the facility can be used during and after school time.

Selection of experts

During the sampling of the research six representatives of four national decision making organisations were selected for an interview. All invited interviewees accepted the participation. One interview was carried out with two interviewees because of time management and limited resources of these subjects for executing interviews. Sampling was made by choosing one representative from all the major decision making bodies at national level from the governmental and non-governmental sector.

National level:

1. Ministry of Education with its multi-armed organisation is the main authority of sport governance in Finland. Interviewees were representatives of three independent fields, the Building Surveyor, the Councillor of Cultural Affairs, and the Councillor of Constructions at the ministry.
2. The Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities. The Association's goal is to promote the opportunities for local authorities to operate and co-operate and to enhance their vitality and viability for the benefit of the residents. The Association's vision for the future encompasses the core values of the Finnish welfare society: good basic services, living democracy and sustainable environment. Interviewee was the Special Expert in Sport Affairs.
3. The Finnish Sport Federation's mission is to increase the amount of physically active people and to develop the quality and effectiveness of sports, to ensure the working environment of non-profit, volunteer sports clubs and organisations and thus promote possibilities of sport as citizen activity in Finland, and to add cooperation between the different partners within the programme. Interviewee was

the Expert on Sports Policy, with special attention to circumstances and environment.

4. The Young Finland Association (Nuori Suomi) is an independent national organization, whose main objective is to promote children's and youths' well-being and joy of life by means of physical activity. The association offers operational models which promote physical activity in schools, day-care and sports clubs. The quality of children's sports is being improved by increasing the knowledge of and by encouraging the adults working with children and youth. The amount of daily exercise is also being increased by providing good facilities and environment for children's sports. Young Finland operates in close cooperation with various sport federations, regional organizations, local sports clubs, schools, municipalities, national governing bodies, media and companies. The interviewee was the Development Manager.

National Policy

The right for sport and physical activity in leisure time is recognised by the constitution as Basic Individual Right. Due to the large geographical scope and the large deviation in population density the equal opportunity principle can not always be respected. In Lapland for example the density is 2 people/km².

Policy documents

The Sports law (18.12.1998/1054) says that "the meaning of this law is to promote related civil activities to recreational competitive and elite sport, the well being and health of the population, further support the development and growth of children and youth with the help of physical activity". This law is the interpretation of the Ombudsman, referenced in the Constitution of Finland - Section 16. The right for education. Please note that here translation barriers rise, since the Finnish word 'siivistys' includes much more than 'education' in English. It is an expression to any kind of progress one individual can do, intellectual, emotional, physical, societal, etc.

The only document dealing in depth with infrastructure for leisure time physical activities is the Direction of Sport Facility development 2011. This 35 pages publication of the Ministry of Education, made by the State Council of Sport is the latest document of a chain of publications, which gives strategic directions for one governmental term (4 years). All decision makers in the sport (physical activity) field in Finland (local, regional and national alike) take this document as guidelines for their work.

Policy documents for specific target groups

During the research no evidence was found that any document deals with ethnic groups' or any other subgroups' need. Yet it must be noted that equal opportunities, in any sense, is an integral part of Finnish policy making norms.

Several subgroups are represented on several levels in different parts of the country.

In places where population is aging, local authorities are offering programs and modify facilities to the needs of elderly people, where more newborn babies are, there are more programs and services for young families. This is a great advantage for the independent decision making procedure at the local level.

Policies on regional and local level

Projects of larger sports facilities like swimming pool or stadia are usually dealt with directly at national level due to the required financial initiative capital. Smaller investments are used to be decided and performed at local level by the funds of the local government. Sport authorities are not involved in the development of infrastructure, which are not designated for sport or physical activity. Forestry agencies (Metsähallitus), and the Ministry of Road and Communication are developing the infrastructure in their own field, for example build new bicycle roads, or forest paths. Sports policy making bodies are not included in the work of the non-sport policy making bodies. No evidence was found that different stages of the development process (i.e. planning, financing, building, managing) are accompanied by different policy documents.

Tuning national policies with regional and local policies

The document Direction of Sport Facility Development 2011 was published on the beginning of the governmental term in 2008. The forthcoming end date of the document and the elections will bring the next edition of the same publication to light. This document was distributed to all decision-making offices countrywide as they are listed above and it serves as guideline for decision making in sport facility/infrastructure development. It is envisaged that future developments in infrastructure must be in comfort with the sustainability and in harmony with nature. The results of Finnish athletes represent the demand for further developments of any infrastructure. Further Finland is aiming to be able to successfully bid for major international sporting events, which predict investments also in sports where results are not representing necessarily demand. The accessibility, security, operative and technical design, maintenance should be environmentally friendly and as ecological as possible. Special attention is given to the quality of air in the indoor sporting facilities, due to the long winter. Main directives for the development are 1) to provide free accessibility (with wheelchair for example but also geographically), 2) to see the sustainable development for future, 3) the representation of equal opportunities, 4) to be high quality and safe, 5) and to maintain network communication among administrative bodies.

The focuses are 1) Children and youth 2) health related physical activities, and 3) quality.

Description of policy makers (national, regional and local level)

The Ministry of Education is responsible for developing educational, science, cultural, sport and youth policies and international cooperation in these fields. The Minister of Education and Science, Ms. Henna Virkkunen is responsible for education and science policies and the Minister of Culture and Sport, Mr. Stefan Wallin for cultural, sport and youth policies. In 2009 it is 200 years since the birth of Finnish autonomy.

The aim on the Finnish Sports Federation (SLU) is an equal sports culture, where all Finns have equal opportunities to participate, act and make decisions concerning sports. The most important task for the Finnish Sports Federation is to ensure a healthy social environment for the sporting society in Finland and to be able to respond to the changing requirements of physically active people. The Finnish Sports Federation has chosen to operate through a vital, non-governmental activity in sports. SLU is the umbrella organisation of 9 000 sports clubs and other local organisations on the local level. On the regional level it is the umbrella organisation of regional organisations and the regional organisations of the member organisations. And on the national level SLU operates in the national member organisations.

The Young Finland Association (Nuori Suomi) is an independent national organization, whose main objective is to promote children's and youths' well-being and joy of life by means of physical activity. Our goal is to ensure that daily exercise is an essential part of life for every child. We also want to ensure the availability of inspiring and developing possibilities for sports for each girl and boy. The association offers operational models which promote physical activity in schools, day-care and sports clubs. The quality of children's sports is being improved by increasing the knowledge of and by encouraging the adults working with children and youth. The amount of daily exercise is also being increased by providing good facilities and environment for children's sports.

The goal of the Association of Local and Regional Governments is to promote the opportunities for local authorities to operate for the benefit of their residents. The membership consists of all Finnish towns, cities and municipalities. At the start of 2009, their total number was 348. 'Kuntaliitto' looks after the interests of local authorities and provide them research, development and other expert services.

The Sport Board or Educational and Cultural Board of Local Governments are the responsible organisations to supervise the development and maintenance of public owned facilities and infrastructure, further provide the resources to the operation and follow the interests of the local citizens, within the accepted budget.

The final say has the Minister of Education in the applications, which need the state subsidy to finance. Regional and local scope developments are decided on the defined financial investment scale (up to 700 000 euro) Outdoor facilities (not designed for PA but suitable for it), are planned, financed, constructed and managed by authorities apart from sport administration. As they are listed above (Forestry, Road, etc).

Sport actors (clubs, business enterprises, and user groups without legal status) represent the demand which applies at local level for support. Small infrastructure are realised with local funds. When local funds are not sufficient to realise an infrastructure the application is put forward by the local authorities to regional and/or national authorities. Sport infrastructure investments, which cost more than 700 000 € (e.g. swimming pool, stadium, etc) are evaluated directly at Ministry level. These project applications do not have to go through all the steps of the local, regional and national decision making processes.

Representatives of local sport authorities are in daily contact with the actors (i.e. sports clubs, sport enterprises, legally unorganised sport practisers). The demand for sport facility and infrastructure development of these actors appear to be satisfied. Local authorities do not press the public to do something with sport if there is no demand, therefore no active initiative comes from the local authorities. In recent years local infrastructure for physical activities are in the focus of the policymakers. School yards became one target to utilise for local public's use.

Description of collaborating partners

All initiatives (demand) are born at local level. Applications for development are submitted either by private person /people or formally organised groups (clubs, federations), or private entrepreneurship. In Jyväskylä town for example, in Central Finland, a parkour centre is recently build for serving the rapidly growing demand in this urban sport. Parkour is a new urban sport, where sportsman jump, run, climb, on urban structures like houses, rails, balconies, roofs, stairs, lamp poles, etc. The sport develops acrobatic skills and muscle fitness. The user group are not part of a sport club or any association. Yet they meet regularly and do practices with the leadership of some young adult. There is also a company limited (Ltd), which provides skiing facilities in this town. The local government has a contract with this company, and annually allocates money to the possession of the company for the maintenance of the cross-country ski tracks as a public service. It was reported by a number of interviewee that private investors' involvement would be a good step forward in assuring funds for sport infrastructure developments. It must be noted here that private investors carefully investigate the possible return of their investment. Therefore existing and solvent demand must be present to convince a private enterprise to risk investing money on any kind of sport facility.

Benefits and downfalls of existing policies (national, regional and local level)

The main strengths of the existing policy is the open discussion among different stakeholders and the end user involvement. Through this system every citizen may submit a development idea or plan to local governments and they are all evaluated in equal terms among all other applications.

The two major hindrances in this system were found that the participation of private organisations is low and the economical shortage of public funds. Public - Private collaboration could bring capital to power LTPA and other sport related infrastructure development.

Conclusion

In Finland state, regional and local governmental layers are all involved in the development of sports infrastructure. This is due to the fact that policy makers decades ago already understood and recognised the benefits of an active lifestyle, as a possible contributor to savings in other social expenditures such as less absenteeism from work and a longer active life of elderly people. School yards are recently recognized as a potential mean for public use after the educational use. Schools are always placed close to people, and the schoolyards are large but they are empty, when people have free time. By developing their equipment to the existing demand of the local people, potential user group can be reached and encouraged for a physically active lifestyle. The project received the name "Movement to the Scholl Yards!". Even though the project is national, there is no central design, what equipment should be put into each schools yard implemented, but local authorities, civil societies and users them selves can make the decision. There are totally different demand in Helsinki, metropolitan area, for example than 1200 km norther in the smaall town of Utsjoki.

With the help of the working groups of different organisations, such as the Ministry of Education, Sport Council of the State, SLU (Finnish Sport Federation), Nouri Suomi (Young Finland) the expert and user's viewpoints are represented throughout the whole process of sport infrastructure development. With the help of non-governmental national organisations, such as the Nuori Suomi (Young Finland) or SLU (Finnish Sport Federation) local level interest groups can be supported at national level administration to satisfy their special needs for a certain infrastructure or facility. For example in one

town parkour is largely practiced, so a parkour sport facility is built. In another town parkour is not practiced at all so there are no national plans to build parkour facilities all around the country. These intermediate organizations act also locally with the access to national level resources. The policy of supporting demand initiatives ensures, that local authorities' investment will not be lost or wasted, but possible highest user's group will utilise it.

3.6 France

Background information policy system

France consists of four levels of territorial administration: state (n = 1), region (n = 26), department (n = 100), municipality (n >36 000). French politics is representative and democratic. It is built on a semi-presidential platform. In this, there are two senior roles: the President of the Republic, who is the Head of the State (highest status of executive power) and the Prime Minister, who is the Head of the Government; his role is to conduct the action of the Government which determine and leads the politics of the Nation. The Government is in charge of the executive power. The members of the Government are the Ministers or Secretary of State and they are placed under the authority of the Head of the Government; the President of the Republic is having the highest status of the executive power. Beside the executive power, the Parliament is responsible for the legislative power and can partially control the activity of the Government. The Parliament consists of the Senate (Upper House) which involves senators and of the National Assembly (Lower House) which involves deputies. The Senate is the representative of regions, departments and municipalities and the National Assembly is the representative of the French citizens. The third power is the judiciary power which is independent.

Recent developments

For fifty years, the French sports movement has changed very little. There are many people who think about the reform. But for the moment, there is no recent development in the field of infrastructure for LTPA.

Selection of experts

In total, 14 organizations were approached and 6 interviews were conducted (3 at the national level and 3 at the local level). Two organizations answered negatively and 6 organizations did not answer. The main reason for non-participation was a lack of interest in the questionnaire. Some organizations did not give any reaction at all.

National level:

1. Ministry of Health and Sports. We conducted an interview with two representatives, from the State Secretariat for Sports, Sports direction, Sports facilities office (the director and an assistant)
2. State Secretariat for Tourism. We conducted an interview with a representative from Atout France, a national agency for French tourism.
3. Ministry of Ecology, Energy, Sustainable development and Land planning. We conducted an interview with the interministerial coordinator for the development of the use of cycle. He was considered as the representative of the different State Secretariat of this ministry. It is interesting to note that this expert is an interministerial coordinator which means that he works with the different ministries

potentially concerned with cycling. It is an example of an intersectorial collaboration approach.

Local level:

4. The Large urban community of Nancy. This community was chosen because it is an example of intermunicipal public institution of cooperation (Etablissement public de coopération intercommunale, EPCI) which gathered 20 municipalities. This organization is responsible for large infrastructure for LTPA and sport events with a communauteary impact. Each municipality involved in the EPCI has its own decision-making regarding the other infrastructure for LTPA.
5. Vittel (municipality). This municipality was chosen for its specificity regarding sport training facilities (Centre de préparation omnisport, CPO) dedicated firstly to the sport federations for the preparation of their athletes;
6. City of Paris. We conducted an interview with the Assistant of the Director of the mobility agency (Direction of the Public road).

National Policy

As an essential legitimacy of the sports public service, infrastructure for LTPA are the foundation on which the public policies are built. Moreover, at the moment, several ministries are interested in physical activity promotion and the question of infrastructure for LTPA is of major importance. On national level, a database of the infrastructure for LTPA exists. It is named the Inventory of the Infrastructure for LTPA (<http://www.res.jeunesse.sports.gouv.fr>) and contains sites, places, spaces for physical and sports activities practice. It is primarily a quantitative picture of the infrastructure described through fifty variables to identify its main features. It aims to provide knowledge on infrastructure but also to perceive inequalities in land distribution infrastructure for LTPA. It is the question of knowing if its infrastructure for LTPA are correctly dimensioned and located. This database was one of the priority actions identified in conclusion of the General States of Sport (EGS, December 7th, 2002). The updating of the database is possible because of the legal obligation of the sports facilities statement, article L312-2 of the Code of sport; which stipulate that every owner have to declare any creation, modification, change of affectation, transfer or abolition of a sports facilities.

Policy documents

1. Art R.411-2 Code of Sport (2007). The Code of sport gathers texts which create the CNDS (National Center for the Development of Sport). The CNDS is a public administrative institution (Establishment Public Administrative, EPA) created by the decree N°2006-248. The EPA has an administrative and financial autonomy to perform a mission of general interest, exactly defined, under the control of the State, and in the case of the CNDS, under the supervision of the State Secretariat for Sports. The CNDS allocate subsidies to local municipalities and associations approved.
2. The law of orientation N° 99-533 of June 25th, 1999 for the planning and the sustainable development of the territory (Voynet's law) established the master plan of collective services. From this text went out the master plan of collectives services of sport. This law aims at a more participatory democracy and a more sustainable

development. It complements existing texts on decentralization, urban planning and environmental law in rewarding or specifying the French law, for example:

- patterns of regional development and territorial development;
- patterns of utilities ;
- Regional Environmental Profile;
- the regional planning guidelines.

It introduces new concepts such as utilities, made by the environment, or more precisely by the "natural and rural areas." It contains original provisions such as the establishment of a national network of biological corridors.

3. The plan of collective services of sport is a tool of piloting sports policies. The objective of the policies is to answer the social demand by granting the priority to the accessibility to the sports practices, in particular to those who are excluded from it for social, economic or geographical reasons. It associates the State, the local authorities and the sports movement and each local authorities have its own plan.
4. Since July 1st, 2004, all the outdoor sports facilities exceeding 3000 spectators and the indoor sports facilities exceeding 500 spectators must be approved (article 42 of the modified law of July 16th, 1984). Any new constructions answering these criteria require, since the publication of the law of July 13th, 1992 (modifying the law of July 16th, 1984), a ratification (homologation) with the Departmental Direction of Youth and Sport, the institution representing the State Secretariat for Sports at the local level.
5. Law on air (December, 1996). This law insists on the necessity of taking into account the cycle traffic in the developments of public road networks in town.
 - Art 20 - "Since January 1st, 1998, on the occasion of the realizations or renovations of the urban ways, with the exception of motorways and freeways, must be worked out cycle paths with development of tracks, markings on the ground or independent corridors, according to needs and constraints of the traffic";
 - Art 28 - "The of urban transports plan (...) has for objective a coordinated use of all the modes of transports, in particular by an appropriate affectation of the public road network, as well as the promotion of the least polluting and the least energy-consuming modes (...)".
6. Article R. 110-2 of the Road traffic rules (Decree of July, 2008, Article 13) which established a principle of caution of the motorists towards the cyclists and the pedestrians and which also established a generalization of the double cycle directions in zones limited to 30 km/h.
7. To allow the accessibility of the disabled persons in all places of the public life was voted the law N° 2005-102 of February 11th, 2005 relative to "the equality of the rights and the chances, to the participation and to the citizenship of the disabled persons".

Policy documents for specific target groups

There are several national policies for ethnic groups. First, the **dynamics "hopes suburb"**: the National Center for the Development of Sport have to make efforts in terms of subsidies allocation to the sensitive districts to build infrastructure for LTPA.

Second, The policy of the Secretariat of State of Sports promotes the sports practice among women. It is also compulsory for the federations, in agreements of objectives, to have women represented within their leader authorities and in membership.

Third, the investment in sport is more important in the departments of besides sea (Martinique, Guadeloupe, Reunion, Guyane) because a lot of high-level athletes are coming from these departments are indeed superior physical capacities. By investing more money in those departments, France hopes to recruit good athletes and better results at major sporting events. Finally for the older people, the Secretariat of State for Sports works with federations and invests in research. The law of 2005 on the public access buildings (Etablissements recevant du public, ERP), for the accessibility of facilities to the persons with reduced mobility. All infrastructure built after 2005 must be accessible to persons with disabilities (with a wheelchair)

Policies on regional and local level

The policies for the development of infrastructure for LTPA are mainly conducted at the local level. The local authorities manage all the stages of the decision-making process whatever the type of infrastructure. At the national level, the State may contribute when sport facilities of national interest are concerned.

Tuning national policies with regional and local policies

There are no policies on national level communicated to the local level. It is mainly, the local authorities who decide on the opportunity to build, for who (targeted users), and how to manage the infrastructure. We did not identify formal communication tools. They receive help from the national level (from the ministry), departmental level from general councils (for the facilities which belong to schools, and more precisely "collèges" in French) and regional councils (for the facilities which belong to secondary schools, and more precisely "lycées" in French). Municipalities are 80 % owners of the sports facilities.

Description of policy makers (national, regional and local level)

Regarding the sport policy system/structure, the following actors are part of the French sports system:

The French State: the State is responsible for the sports policies through the Ministry of National Education for Sport at School and the State Secretariat for Sports. The Secretary of State of Sports is represented at the regional and departmental level through the Regional and Departmental Directorates of Youth and Sports. The Secretary of State of Sports delegates to the sports federations the power to organize and to promote the practice of their disciplines and supports them by means of agreements of objectives and the provision of technical executives. The National Center for the Development of Sport (CNDS) is a national public institution placed under the supervision of the Secretary of State of Sports,

The local communities (region, department, municipalities), except for sport at school, have no compulsory competencies but most of these municipalities conduct policies in this area.

The sports movement with both the sports federations and the French Olympic Committee (CNOSF). The sports federations are in charge of organizing and promoting the practice of their disciplines. The coexistence and the collaboration between the State and the sports movement supposes a permanent dialogue which is assumed by the State Secretariat for Sports, on behalf of the State, and by the French Olympic Committee, on behalf of the sports movement.

Regarding the development of infrastructure for LTPA the following actors are relevant:

At the local level, the municipalities are responsible for municipal sports facilities. The General Councils are responsible for equipments which depend on schools (i.e. collèges). Regional Councils are responsible for equipments which depend on secondary schools (i.e. lycées). At the national level, the State may be involved when sport facilities of national interest are concerned.

The local municipalities have the leadership of the decision-making process and have the last word. Their role is the same for the three type of infrastructure: The local municipalities are involved in the four stages of the process of developing infrastructure (1. planning, 2. financing, 3. building, and 4. managing). Europe is involved only in the financing. The State may be involved in the planning, the financing and the building. The federations are involved in the planning and the financing. Finally, associations and private companies are involved in building and managing of local infrastructure.

Description of collaborating partners

The sports federations, the associations (a federation is an alliance of associations) and the users are often involved (consultation, meeting, discussion). It may be possible for the Secretariat of State of Tourism and the Secretariat of State of Sports to collaborate in steering committees (advisory/executive committees). Besides, the collaboration between local municipalities and sports federations does not work very well. Both have to agree and it is not always easy, knowing that the municipalities finance the most part of the infrastructure. Finally, the university and the health sector are little implied but could be more often consulted to improve the decision-making of infrastructure planning. Indeed, they have important capacities of studies and analysis which could be useful.

Benefits and downfalls of existing policies (national, regional and local level)

The law helps to remind the local people in charge of infrastructure for LTPA the minimum rules (basic things as rules of safety, rules of accessibility) they have to verify and integrate into their decisions. The local actors can lean on support already created (as specifications for safety and accessibility) and just have to adapt it. The national policy also allows to justify a local policy which helps to convince experts and politicians at the local level.

In this way, the national policies are beneficial (e.g. regarding safety in the practice and the accessibility to the infrastructure for disabled or people with low mobility).

But municipalities have not always the human, financial and technical resources to be able to follow the national policies, indeed, resources of municipalities are limited and national policies are often expensive (rules mentioned above as rules for safety and accessibility).

National associations of directors/elected representatives of the sports services of communities have been created in order to discuss and exchange on their practices:

- National Association of Elected Representatives in charge of Sport;
- National Association of Directors and Stakeholders of Facilities and Sports Department).

These associations are now part of the process (advisory committee) set up at the national level in particular those of the State Secretariat for Sports. This allows taking into account the realities on the ground and to adapt laws and resources to these realities.

Conclusion

The policies for the development of infrastructure for infrastructure for LTPA are mainly conducted at the local level. Regarding national policies, the inventory of sports facilities is one of the main innovations concerning the infrastructure for LTPA.

The building and the realization of the sports facilities have to take into account numerous elements. Besides the complex evaluation of the quantitative needs, it is necessary to take into account the current rules (technical or relative to the security of the persons), the requirements of the sports federations, the needs of the users (clubs, schools, associations, individuals). In the associative and federal sectors, numerous studies showed that the maladjustment of equipments (if infrastructure are not correctly dimensioned and located) is one of the first causes of renunciation or decrease of sports practice. Today, the sports facilities are not just seen as places of sports practices. They are henceforth implanted/built in a way that they act on the attractiveness of the municipalities. The sports facilities may indeed structure a territory and strengthen its capacity of attraction.

3.7 Germany

Background information policy system

German policies are created within a framework of a national parliamentary representative democratic republic of sixteen states. The constitutional document (basic law/ Grundgesetz) divides powers both between the national and state levels and between the legislative, executive, and judicial branches. The Basic Law presumes that all legislative power remains at the state level unless otherwise designated by the Basic Law itself.

The municipalities have two major policy responsibilities. First, they administer programs authorized by the national or state government. Such programs typically might relate to youth, schools, public health, and social assistance. Second, Article 28(2) of the Basic Law guarantees the municipalities "the right to regulate on their own responsibility all the affairs of the local community within the limits set by law." Under this broad statement of competence, local governments can justify a wide range of activities. For instance, many municipalities develop and expand the economic infrastructure of their communities through the development of industrial parks. Local authorities foster cultural activities. Local government also provides public utilities as well as public transportation. The majority of the funding for municipalities is provided by higher levels of government rather than from taxes raised and collected directly by themselves.

Thus, nationalism and the principle of subsidiarity are defining moments of the general policy system in Germany. Sports (except for competitive sports under the

responsibility of the National Ministry of the Interior) and related policies in the area of development of local infrastructure (e.g. health, transport, education) for LTPA are under the responsibility of the states and carried out at local level (municipalities). Sports is a voluntary activity of politics and even more is the development of infrastructure for LTPA. Neither aspect has to be regulated by law.

Recent developments

Relevant developments regarding the research issue mainly deal with the aspect of planning. Starting in the 1960s, the so-called "Golden Plan" was used for planning infrastructure for LTPA. The Golden Plan concentrates on inventories and standard values for needs assessment. The Golden Plan mainly refers to population numbers and the inventory of sport facilities in a municipality. This squaremeter per inhabitant-approach does not consider actual sport behavior of the inhabitants.

In the late 1990s, the guideline of the German Institute for Sport Science (BISP) was published and recommended for use by the common conferences of state sport ministries. The BISP guideline, originally developed since 1985, focuses on a complex mechanism for needs assessment and considers the actual physical activity behavior of the inhabitants of a municipality. Both concepts virtually exclusively refer to sport facilities and neglects facilities designed for LTPA or urban/rural spaces that could be used for LTPA. As a consequence, the concept of cooperative planning was introduced in the 1990s. Cooperative Planning focuses on planning and implementing of concrete measures regarding development of LTPA infrastructure. It builds on the inhabitants' broad perceptions of physical activity.

The most recent concept of Integrated Planning of Sport Development, aims at integrating the advantages of the different concepts - the technological competence of the Golden Plan, the systematic methodological approach of the BISP guideline and the integration of the relevant perspectives with a focus on implementation as accomplished by cooperative planning.

Concerning building, German Industry Norms (DIN standards) have been the main reference for the development of infrastructure for LTPA. Recently, there are attempts to consider technical innovations and harmonize existing regulations in European standards (European Norms).

Concerning financing and management of infrastructure, trends appear to go from local responsibility for facilities towards municipal facility management, public-private-partnerships and outsourcing of management processes. Historically, municipalities had the responsibility for financing and managing infrastructure. The district or state level provided funding and managing for infrastructure that were linked to schools and physical education. The national level mainly provided funding for infrastructure that were connected to competitive sports. Local public administration was responsible for managing the majority of infrastructure. Currently, there is a trend among municipalities to establish municipal facility management structures, i.e. independent companies, owned by the municipality. Additionally, municipalities make use of public-private-partnerships to finance and manage infrastructure for LTPA or they completely outsource these processes to private companies.

Selection of experts

We approached 9 different organizations. Partly the experts were selected by personal network. The others were selected by knowing the missions of the organizations in which the experts work and cold calling to find someone, who seems to be able to

answer our questions. In the end, the number of conducted interviews amounted to seven. Non-availability were reasons for non-participation, so that we did not interview the expert from German Institute for Urbanistic and the Federal Ministry of Transport, Urban Planning and Infrastructure.

National level:

1. BISP (German Institute for Sport Science): BISP is a national agency of the German Ministry of the Interior whose first and foremost responsibility is to identify need of research in sport science, to initiate, promote and coordinate research in sports, analyse results and transfer the results into practice. BISP is particularly interested in competitive sports - as this is national responsibility - including encouraging young talent, doping analysis, questions in sport development with national significance. BISP is also involved in building of sport facilities and sports equipment as well as international norming in these areas. The interviewee from BISP is responsible for scientific consultation in the field of sport facilities.
2. AG dt. Sportämter (Working group of German local sport authorities): The working group of German local sport authorities is a national association that represents the interest of local public administration concerning sport. It is responsible for the distribution of information at national level and deals with issues of sport development, development of sport facilities including building and management, environmental issues and others. It aims at promoting sports through close cooperation with the association of municipalities. The interviewee is the current chairperson of the organisation.
3. DOSB (German Olympic Sports Federation): The German Olympic Sports Federation is the non-governmental German umbrella organisation for sport associations and clubs. It represents 27,5 million individual members in 91.000 sports clubs across Germany. It consults its members and provides a wide range of services to them. The interviewee serves as director of non-competitive sports and sport development.
4. Dt. Städtetag (German Association of Cities): The German Association of Cities actively represents the cause of local self-government. It upholds the interests of the municipalities in their dealings with the national government, the parliament, the European Union and others. The interviewee is the operation manager of the association.
5. ADFC (general German bicycle club): The national Germany bicycle club is both: a service organisation for individual members (115.000 members) and a lobbying organisation in the fields of consumer protection, environment and transport policy. The interviewee is operation manager.
6. Dt. Alpenverein (German Alpine Association): The German Alpine Association has about 815.000 members, which makes it the world's largest Alpine sports association. It is also one of the main sport and nature protection associations of Germany. The interviewee is the representative for artificial climbing arrangements.

Regional level:

7. MBV NRW (North Rhine-Westphalian Ministry of Transport and Urban Planning):
The North Rhine-Westphalian Ministry of Transport and Urban Planning is a state level ministry. The interviewee is the contact person for bicycle infrastructure.

National Policy

According to the information provided by the interviewed experts working on a national (=national) level or on a regional (=German Länder) level, four national policy documents (see next paragraph) explicitly deal with planning of infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity. The national papers are recommendations and action plans that are not mandatory to fulfill. Two documents are published by non-governmental actors, German federations of the sport sector, and two by governmental actors, the conference of state sport ministries and the national ministry of transport.

Additionally, there are several policy documents or regulations that deal with issues regarding building of infrastructure for LTPA. Generally, the development of infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity takes place at regional level (=state, German Länder) and at local level (= municipalities). The experts identified regional policy documents, but no local policies for the issue.

Policy documents

Planning of LTPA infrastructure:

The so-called "**Golden Plan**" is a planning instrument used widely in Germany in the 1960s and 1970s. It concentrates on inventories and standard values for needs assessment. The Golden Plan mainly refers to population numbers and the inventory of sport facilities in a municipality. This squaremeter per inhabitant-approach does not consider actual sport behavior of the inhabitants. It was amended by the so-called "Golden Plan East Germany" after reunification in 1990.

The guideline for sport facility planning was published by the national agency for sports, the German Institute of Sport Science, in 2000. The BISP guideline, originally developed since 1985, focuses on a complex mechanism for needs assessment and considers the actual physical activity behavior of the inhabitants of a municipality. It virtually exclusively refers to sport facilities and neglects facilities designed for LTPA or urban spaces that could be used for LTPA.

The national conference of the 16 state ministries responsible for sports recommended to use the **guideline of the German Institute of Sport Science (BISP)** as up-to-date mechanism for the development of sport facilities. **The resolution (1999)** argues that population-based guide values are no longer appropriate to measure demands of sport facilities when a minimum of sport facilities is provided. The conference therefore recommends planning procedures and instruments that consider the current and in the future expected local sport behaviour. It calls the guideline by the German Institute of Sport Science for use. The **1999 resolution** was published by the International Association for Sports and Leisure Facilities (IAKS), a non-profit organization operating in the field of sports and leisure facilities.

The national Ministry for Transport, Building and Housing (now: National Ministry of Transport, Building and Urban affairs) published a **National Cycling Plan** (2002) for Germany including measures to promote cycling in Germany. In its May 2000 report on measures to promote cycling (parliamentary report 14/3445) the National Government

presented a comprehensive review of the status of cycling in Germany. This report formed the basis for the parliamentary Transport, Building and Housing committee's public hearing in 2001. Here the experts acknowledged the progress that had been made in promoting cycling, but at the same time indicated that the bicycle's potential was only being partly exploited in terms of transport, environment, health and economic policy. Against this background, the German parliament passed a resolution calling on the National Government to back a "cycle-friendly Germany" and to document it by presenting a National Cycling Plan. The plan defines objectives and sets guidelines, it summarizes the benefits of cycling, deals with cycling in everyday traffic, cycle tourism, linking transport systems, efficient coordination of cycling promotion and much more. The national cycling plan defines as specific measures to double the budget for building and maintaining cycle paths on national highways in the 2002 national budgets, to optimise the legal framework and to start a campaign for improved road safety and a better transport climate, aimed at all road users.

Policy documents for specific target groups

There are no specific policies or notations in national policy documents dealing with subpopulation subgroup's access to infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity. There are German laws dealing with antidiscrimination in general e. g. against discrimination of gender or against discrimination of handicapped people. The latter e.g. involves parts that deal with access to public buildings.

Policies on regional and local level

Concrete development of infrastructure in all steps of the development process takes place at the local level. Concerning the three facility types, outdoor activities are more influenced by the national level than the other types of facilities. The reason for this is linked to the national responsibility for protecting the environment. The national level sets the policy frameworks (ranging from noise protection to regulations concerning material use in construction) within which the local level can operate. However, other experts argue that the national level has a major influence on the development of classical central/national sport facilities because of their potentially nation-wide significance (e.g. national or international sport events like Olympic Games or world championships). The identified policy documents first and foremost deal with the planning of infrastructure, therefore they do not explicitly elaborate on the other steps of the development process.

Tuning national policies with regional and local policies

Regulations regarding building of infrastructure are binding and therefore distributed via law to all levels of governments. However, there is no national binding overall policy for the development of infrastructure for LTPA and therefore there is no official procedure how to distribute and communicate to other levels of government.

When there are national action plans like the National Cycling Plan, they tend to be accompanied by corresponding regional and local guidelines. State ministries adapt national action plans to their specific needs (e.g. cycling in metropolitan regions or in rural areas) and deal with funding aspects.

The national government also uses its spending power to distribute certain policies to local governments - via calls for funding, grant programmes, loans or subsidies. The national ministry of research and education, for example, has initiated a research programme that aims at supporting demonstration projects that deal with cycling in rural areas.

Description of policy makers (national, regional and local level)

Concerning sport facilities, different policy sectors might have a say on national level but so far only the conference of the state sport ministries has made a decision on a policy in this area by recommending the BISp guideline to municipalities as up-to-date mechanism for the development of infrastructure for LTPA. Furthermore, at national level, the ministry of transport has initiated a national policy dealing with bike lanes (Nationaler Radwegeverkehrsplan) that has been adopted and adapted at state level. At national level, there is no concrete policy that deals with the PA-friendly creation of urban spaces or the environment.

On regional/local level the main governmental actor is the municipality. Depending on whether to deal with sport facilities, facilities designed for LTPA or urban spaces, different policy sectors are involved in and lead the decision-making on policies, ranging from sports to building, transport, financing, education to public health.

For sport facilities the municipalities are the main actor in the development of local infrastructure for LTPA. Potentially, they also develop policies like local sports development plans including short- and long-term goals for the respective municipality. Concerning financing and management, there is a shift from municipal responsibility of sports department towards public-private-partnerships as new management concepts. Several experts highly welcome the establishment of local facility management authorities and the outsourcing of management to private companies. They argue that this trend leads to much more professionalism.

With regards to non-governmental actors, the sports federations at regional level are very often involved in decision-making. This is reflected by the fact that two relevant policy documents (Golden Plan and Golden Plan Ost) for planning are published by national federations of sports, the German Olympic Society and the then German Sports Federation.

At local level, the sports clubs of a municipality are the key non-governmental stakeholder in decision-making about the development of infrastructure for LTPA. They take part in the development of public infrastructure (like the location and design of a local gym) and they own sport facilities (soccerfields, gyms, tennis courts etc.) by lobbying local politicians, being represented in the municipal sports committee (the main decision-making body regarding sports development in municipalities) by the local sports association and public hearings. Sport Clubs are often included in concrete planning processes, round tables etc.

The broader the understanding of infrastructure for LTPA gets, i.e. from classical facilities to facilities not designed for LTPA, the more sectors get involved (e.g. transport, forestry, environment with regard to urban spaces) in decision-making.

Description of collaborating partners

Due to federalism and the responsibility of different sectors for the different types of facilities, several parties are involved. There is, though, no formal regulation concerning collaboration and thus, it depends on the individuals involved in the process. Therefore, it is hard to indicate levels of collaboration. Concerning sport facilities, several experts argue that no additional parties should be involved but intersectoral collaboration needs improvement. The experts long for a continuous and improved exchange within public administration (e.g. local sport authorities, education department and finance

department) on the one side and between governmental and non-governmental actors on the other side.

The most important group that is currently not involved refers to non-organised sporters: Non-organised LTPA that takes place outside of normed sport facilities gains importance (e.g. running, skating). However, the interests of endusers engaged in that kind of PA are seldomly considered in the local development of infrastructure due to historically close cooperation between local sports departments and sports clubs. Assuming, that the trend of non-organised LTPA continues, these groups have to be considered. If this group has to be considered, some experts argue that decision-makers who are confronted with non-organised sports (e.g. in forests), also have to be included, e.g. foresters. Apart from these, the experts did not make any suggestions for the involvement of other groups. Several experts did not answer the question, though.

Benefits and downfalls of existing policies (national, regional and local level)

Several experts argue that comprehensive policies on LTPA infrastructure could contribute to health benefits. They would like to link LTPA much more to health promotion and prevention than it is currently done. Other experts argue that the mere existence of a comprehensive national policy (independent from any concrete content) would result in action regarding the development of infrastructure for LTPA. It would be an initiating factor for activities in the local arena.

Main problem areas are seen in:

- 1) the "German bureaucracy" and the high amount of regulations, especially concerning building (DIN standards/German Industry Norms), that prevent innovative and creative ways of developing infrastructure for LTPA.
- 2) the lack of political commitment for sports in general and infrastructure in particular. This lack of commitment also contributes to underfunding of both development processes and maintenance of sport facilities.
- 3) the lack of intersectoral collaboration. Although several sectors are involved (due to shared or diverging responsibilities for the different types of facilities), that does not necessarily lead to collaboration, e.g. bike lanes tend to be developed quite independently from other recreational areas for LTPA.

Two non-governmental actors work to address current shortcomings and challenges - the German Institute of Sport Science and the German Olympic Sports Federation. Both organisations currently aim at initiating national policies on the development of infrastructure for LTPA and feed such policies into other relevant sectors (health, transport, education).

Conclusion

Due to the national character of German politics and policies, the development of infrastructure for LTPA mainly takes place in the local arena. Development is a voluntary activity of municipalities. There are no laws or regulations with binding character that issue development, e.g. the existence of a specific amount of squaremeters of sport facilities per inhabitant. Therefore, only few national policy documents explicitly deal with this issue or they do not exclusively discuss the development of infrastructure for LTPA. Existing policy documents apparently deal with specific regulations (like standards how to build artificial rocks in gyms or aspects of noise prevention) or recommend specific mechanisms rather than providing nationwide overall strategies to promote physical activity via infrastructure for LTPA. The

expert-based assessment of national policies for the development of infrastructure for LTPA clearly shows the complexity and divergent perceptions of the issues. We as researchers perceive a development of the approaches and policies for the development of infrastructure for LTPA expressed in few but explicit policy documents. Concerning planning, the development started with a squaremeter sport facility per inhabitant approach in the 1960s, oriented on standard values and population numbers, went to sport behavior-based calculations and currently goes towards the inclusion of non-standardised facilities and opportunities for PA as well as relevant perspectives from organised and non-organised PA. This trend is represented in policies like the resolution of the state sport minister conference in 1999 to recommend the BISP guideline instead of the Golden Plan or in action plans like the National Action Plan on PA and nutrition that calls for improved access to sport facilities for underrepresented population subgroups. Concerning building and financing, public-private-partnerships gain importance. With regards to management, we understand a trend from municipal administration towards the establishment of local facility management authorities and outsourcing of management activities. The majority of interviewed experts, on the other side, do not see any overall policies and strategies in this respect. For them, national policies, if any at all, deal with specific aspect of development, e.g. regulations how to build infrastructure.

The development processes in the local arena involves actors from different sectors within the municipality (e.g. sports, finances, education, cultural affairs, transport, urban affairs, building), governmental and non-governmental (e.g. sports associations), from different levels (mainly local). The interviews clearly revealed deficits with regard to collaboration of the different sectors involved in development processes. Due to the natures of the three types of facilities, different sectors and actors are responsible respectively involved in decision-making of development. However, this multiplicity of stakeholders does not necessarily result in common goals and action. At the same time, the experts underline the importance of intersectoral action as defining moment and prerequisite of "good" development of LTPA infrastructure. They argue that the consideration of all relevant sectors and actors fosters up-to-date and target-group adequate facilities.

The IMPALA objective to define good practice criteria for the development of LTPA infrastructure appears to be a very up-to-date issue in Germany. Several organisations (like the German Olympic Federation or the German Institute of Sport Science) currently work towards overall policies in this respect while few is known about the issue in public - even among experts in the field.

3.8 Italy

Results of the individual interviews in Italy were submitted to the work package leader only after the deadline had passed. Therefore, the national report for Italy was not edited by the work package leader and not included in the overall conclusion of chapter 3 and chapter 5. Italy's results of the individual interviews were included in the separate appendix to this report.

3.9 Lithuania

Background information policy system

The overall policy guidelines in Lithuania are formulated by the central governing institutions: Seimas (Parliament), President and Government (Council of Ministers). Local (municipal) authorities are responsible for implementation of the national policies in local areas. The role of regions (counties - apskritys) in policy making issues is rather weak. The parliament is the highest legislative authority in the country. All nation-wide policy documents have to be approved by the Parliament to obtain legal status.

Recent developments

Concrete development of infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity takes place at the local level in all stages of the process. National level institutions potentially have more influence on the development of infrastructure of national significance, and all kinds of infrastructure which are subsidized from the national budget and the European funds. Poor economic capacity of the local sports organizations, centralized management of the sport sector through centralized budget distribution and policy-maker's focus on high performance sport (representation of the country) are the most challenging factors for the policy development of infrastructure for LTPA. Consequently, public-private-partnerships as a potential means to overcome financial and managerial barriers are increasingly welcome by policy makers in the field.

Selection of experts

Seven national and three local (municipal) level experts (10 interviews in total) from eight governmental institutions and two non-governmental organizations were approached. The interviewees were selected following the matrix and collecting information about the mission and objectives of organizations as well as job responsibilities of the experts. A snow-balling method has been employed to recruit the most competent experts. Despite the fact that all selected organizations accepted invitation to participate in the survey, full-scale structural and personnel changes taking place at the national governmental institutions in some cases prevented from interviewing the top-level experts in the field. In addition part of the experts did not familiarize themselves with the questions of the interview beforehand. Taking into account these circumstances, the selection of the experts was rather successful talking in quantitative terms, since all sectors were covered in the study.

National level:

1. Lithuanian Department of Physical Education and Sports. The expert from Lithuanian Department of Physical Education and Sports is directly involved in planning, development and monitoring of the infrastructure for sport.
2. Ministry of Environment. Three senior specialists from different departments of the Ministry of Environment being responsible for the development of strategic guidelines for sustainable outdoor and urban planning were participating in the interview session.
3. Lithuanian Union of Sports Federations. The interviewee from Lithuanian Union of Sports Federations is responsible for the coordination of activities of its member organizations (64 national sports federations) in different developmental programs.
4. Ministry of Transport and Communications. The representative from the Ministry of Transport and Communications is involved in the development of policy documents related to transport, including cycling routes, walking paths and water routes.

5. Ministry of Education and Science. The expert from the Ministry of Education and Science has been interviewed to collect relevant information concerning the policy on the development of infrastructure at schools.
6. State Service for Protected Areas. The expert from the State Service for Protected Areas is involved in policy making regarding the development of infrastructure for recreational and educational tourism.
7. State Department of Tourism. The interviewed experts is involved in policy making regarding the development of infrastructure for recreational and educational tourism.

Local level:

8. Kaunas city municipality. Three experts with different job responsibilities were recruited from Kaunas city municipality. One is responsible for policy of the urban development, tourism and investments in the city. Another one is responsible for the youth affairs and sports. The third one as a head of the Division of Physical Education and Sports is concerned for the development of sports and physical in the city as well as on voluntary basis being a leader of the Lithuanian Association of Heads of Departments of Sport this person is a coordinator of efforts among the municipal Divisions of Physical Education and Sports in the country (NGO).

National Policy

The Department of Physical Education and Sports as a central actor in policy development for sport and physical activity aims (1) to create conditions necessary for the development of a healthy and physically active society, (2) to search for talented athletes and provide them with professional training for the representation of the country at major international sporting events. The answers of the experts suggest that the latter aim is perceived as more important for the policy makers in sport sector. The Strategy for **Development of Sport Facilities** in Lithuania for 2006-2013 developed by the expert group from the Department of Physical Education and Sports in cooperation with Vilnius Gediminas Technical University appears to be the only national policy document specifically and explicitly dealing with the planning of infrastructure for sports; however, legal power of this document is limited due to the fact that the budget for this strategic plan has not been approved by national government. However, the department is actively involved in the implementation of the sport facility renovation and building program, e.g. national stadium in Vilnius, modern training and rehabilitation centre in Druskininkai and multifunctional arenas in major cities of Lithuania have been designed and/or built; the latter ones are designed for hosting the European Basketball Men's Championship in 2011. On the other hand, the focus on such large-scale sports facilities does not always meet the expectations and needs of the local population since these buildings does not serve for health related leisure-time physical activities. According to the information provided by the experts working on national and/or local levels, there are a number of national policy documents implicitly dealing with infrastructure for LTPA within the limits of its competence, mostly in tourism, transport and urban planning domains. Experts from the municipal institutions identified that some LTPA planning documents (more specific or complex) potentially are developed at the local level as well, since municipalities are responsible for the local development plans of sports and physical education. For example, in Kaunas municipality the development strategy on the infrastructure for LTPA is a part of the general city development plan. On the other hand, due to limited financial capacity of

local authorities', solutions on the development of local infrastructure appear to be highly depended on central government's decisions.

Policy documents

Due to the weak preliminary preparation for the interviews only few experts were able to specify policy documents dealing with infrastructure for LTPA. Part of the experts, being familiar with the documents from their own sector or institution, were not able to specify policy documents developed by other sectors.

The Strategy for Development of Sport Facilities in Lithuania for 2006-2013 developed by Lithuanian Department of Physical Education and Sports in cooperation with Vilnius Gediminas Technical University in 2006 is a national strategic plan that sets priorities, specifies incentive measures to be taken and defines sources of funding for the development of sports facilities in Lithuania.

The National Tourism Development program for 2007-2010 developed by Lithuanian State Department of Tourism in 2007 among its strategic goals intends to develop public infrastructure for active leisure tourism and recreation.

The long-term (until 2025) Development Strategy of the Lithuanian Transport System developed by the Ministry of Transport and Communications in 2005 includes the objectives (1) to motivate people to choose alternative means of transport, modernise and improve infrastructure for non-motor transport, create systems of cycle paths and footpaths in towns and settlements and (2) to adapt public transport system for the disabled, including crossings and sidewalks, access to recreational areas, public transport stops and car parking lots.

The **Law on Public Procurement** approved by the Seimas Chancery in 1996 sets regulations and procedures on public procurement, including the rights, obligations and responsibilities of legal entities participating in public procurement, as well as the monitoring of public procurement process.

The **Comprehensive Plan of the Territory of Lithuania** prepared by the Ministry of Environment in 2002 is an obligatory policy document for state governmental institutions that defines planning conditions for national and regional level special plans, long-term programs and strategies.

Policy documents for specific target groups

All legal documents proclaim everybody's rights and equal opportunities for access to LTPA infrastructure (e.g. Law on Equal Opportunities). The law on Social Integration of Persons with Disabilities provides standards for accessibility of public buildings and public infrastructure in general. On the other hand, there are no specific policies dealing with the issues concerning the accessibility of different population groups or persons with different abilities to leisure-time physical activity infrastructure. Significant part of the local experts pointed out that they are not familiar with this kind of policy documents.

Policies on regional and local level

Lithuanian territorial-administrative structure comprises national, regional and local levels. Regional level, however, does not have a substantial administrative power, and has not been seriously discussed during the interviews. Concrete development of

infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity takes place at the local level in all stages of the process, unless the infrastructure itself covers an area larger than one local administrative unit (e.g. cycling, walking or canoeing routes in regional or national parks). In those cases, the State Service for Protected Areas and the directorates of the parks are the key actors in the development of this kind of infrastructure.

Concerning the three facility types, the national level potentially has more influence on the development of infrastructure of national significance (e.g. Olympic Training Centres or Sports and Entertainment Arenas), as well as, all kinds of infrastructure which is subsidized by national budget and EU funds. The degree of involvement and decision making power of national or local parties usually is directly concerned to financial contribution to the budget of the project. Different policy documents are applied in the development of LTPA infrastructure depending on which particular sector these infrastructure belong to: public or private.

Tuning national policies with regional and local policies

Environmental conditions, technical specifications and other regulations regarding building of infrastructure are prescribed by national legal acts and are, therefore, directly and mandatory transmitted to the local level. The law on Public Procurement defines mechanisms for the selection of contractors in all public projects.

However, there is no national binding overall policy for the development of infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity. Some project proposals, elaborated by experts from the Department of Physical Education and Sports have the character of recommendations for designing and building municipal and regional sport centers.

National action plans are usually realized through calls for funding, grant programs or subsidies. On the other hand, municipalities, being very much dependant on external funding, tend to match their own needs with the national guidelines. Negotiations and adjustment of interests between two administrative levels appears to be common and necessary practice. Most important channels of communication between national and local institutions are round table discussions and negotiations to reach mutually beneficial consensus. One of the arguments used by the central government in this communication often becomes its financial power.

Description of policy makers (national, regional and local level)

The Department of Physical Education and Sports is a national level institution responsible for the development of infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity in general and sport facilities in particular. According to the answers of central and local experts the focus of the Department is concentrated on the large-scale sports facilities and training of elite athletes. As the result, the major part of the budget allocated to sport and LTPA is spent on the construction of several large-scale sports facilities, at the time, infrastructure for health-related LTPA suffers from inadequate funding.

The Lithuanian State Department of Tourism and State Service for Protected Areas are the most significant actors involved in the development of LTPA infrastructure in recreational areas, national and regional parks etc. At the same time, the Ministry of Environment affects the development of LTPA (e.g. public areas, cycling routes and playgrounds in urban environment) as well as it sets a number of regulations for planning, designing and building facilities. The Ministry of Transport and Communications develop a national policy dealing with bike lanes, walking paths and water routes. The Ministry of Education and Science has only partial contribution to the development of LTPA infrastructure through the school renovation programs.

With regard to non-governmental actors, sports federations, even the Lithuanian Union of Sports Federations, have a little influence, if any, on the policy making process concerning the development of infrastructure for LTPA. The Lithuanian Football Federation is an exception; due to strong support from FIFA and UEFA, this organization is able to develop their own strategic plans for the issue. Lithuanian Golf Federation up to the economical crisis managed to attract private investors. An active role of Lithuanian Cyclists' Community and their impact on planning of a non-motorized transportation policy was pointed out by experts from tourism and transport sectors as well.

At the same time more and more significant actors of sport and recreation market become private investors and entrepreneurs. Up to 90 % fitness centres, dance studios, golf, martial arts and tennis clubs are private in Lithuania. An impact of the private sector on the policy making process has not been defined directly by any interviewees; however, presumably and potentially it should not be ignored since the public-private-partnerships is mentioned as a potential means to overcome financial and management shortcomings in the field.

On the other hand, one has to consider that private investors usually choose more commercially attractive activities and types of infrastructure, e.g. spas, fitness centres; golf fields etc., and increasingly influence the policy maker's decisions.

The main governmental policy making actor at local level is the municipality. Different departments and units of municipal administration, representing different policy sectors, are involved in the development of different types of infrastructure for leisure time physical activity. Municipal sport schools, local sports federations, clubs and local communities potentially are key stakeholders at the local level of decision-making process. However all strategic decisions are mainly made by the city/town council on the basis of agreement between leading political parties.

The party which has the final say concerning the development of all types of infrastructure, according to the local experts, is the city/town council; whereas, the experts on national level indicated that the final say belongs to the national government or responsible governmental institution (e.g. Department of Physical Education and Sports). All respondents confirmed that the final say usually belongs to the largest investor or allocation manager. For example, the nation wide policy documents are discussed and approved by the Seimas (Lithuanian parliament), the highest legislative authority in the country. However, even if positive decisions, made by parliament open the door for the development of infrastructure for LTPA, it does not guarantee that the budget for the plan is approved by the national government.

Description of collaborating partners

This question was probably the most complicated for the experts from both national and local levels. Due to rather broad concept of the infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity itself, a number of different parties from different policy sectors share responsibility for the development of different types of facilities.

Governmental sport organizations are primarily involved in the development of sports facilities. Municipalities in cooperation with different national governmental bodies (e.g. Ministry of Education and Science, the Department of Physical Education and Sports) are involved in the development of local infrastructure designed for sport and LTPA. Facilities usable for sports and physical activity like parks and beaches are under

the responsibility of the Ministry of Environment, the State Department of Tourism and State Service for Protected Areas in cooperation with local authorities as well.

Being convinced that the fewer parties participate in the decision making process the more efficient the process is, interviewees were not well disposed towards the situation in intersectoral collaboration as they have to meet the interests and requirements of other sectors. Narrowly perceived institutional interests and incompatibility between legal acts followed closely by different institutions are recognized as the biggest problem for cooperation in the field.

Regarding the parties that are currently not involved in policy-making process a number of experts, mostly from tourism and environment sectors, surprisingly referred to an insufficient role of the Department of Physical Education and Sports, the Ministry of Health and educational institutions. On the other hand, governmental institutions tend to complain about inactivity of NGOs and local communities, while, at the same time, the expert from the Lithuanian Union of Sports Federations argued that their opinions are ignored by the policy makers from governmental institutions.

Facing current economic situation and limited financial resources the issue of closer cooperation between different sectoral bodies involved in the development of infrastructure for LTPA has to become a key target for the policy makers in order to increase the efficiency of its implementation. However, the attempts to coordinate efforts have not been clearly reported by the representatives from different policy sectors.

Benefits and downfalls of existing policies (national, regional and local level)

Most of the experts from the sport and PE sector were sceptical about the benefits of existing policies on infrastructure for LTPA. Their attitude could be illustrated by the words of the expert from the Department of Physical Education and Sports: "... positive thing is that we have policy and, that some facilities are still being built following this policy ...". Although more optimistic references about comprehensive policies on LTPA were presented by the experts from tourism, transportation and environmental sectors, on the national level, their supporting arguments were presented in terms of general economical benefits or increased prestige and reputation of the country rather than health-related benefits.

The main problem areas defined by experts are:

1. the lack of financial resources;
2. public health issues appear to have a low priority in the list of benefits regarding sport and physical activity for policy makers and infrastructure developers for LTPA, and
3. practice in planning sport facilities related to special events: sport developing bodies much more easily receive funds from the central government in the eve of large sport events (e.g. European Basketball Championship), however this kind of investments work only for the high performance sport (the term "anti-sport" have been used by one interviewee) and not for the sake of health-enhancing physical activity;
4. the lack of inter-sectoral collaboration leads to inter-institutional competition, incompatibility of legal acts and bureaucratic procedures at all stages of infrastructure development;
5. poor economic capacity of sports organizations and civic inactivity of local communities potentially creates conditions for irresponsible cooperation between public and private sectors (e.g. private companies providing maintenance for public

facilities tend to increase participation costs and sometimes even change the purpose of the infrastructure) what in turn discourages public officials to protect public interest for LTPA.

Some intentions to eliminate shortcomings of existing policies were declared by the experts from tourism and transportation sectors through the improvement of existing policy documents. The representatives from sports organizations proved that discussions on the improvement of policy documents take place, but substantial outcomes are not expected.

Conclusion

Development of policies on infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity take place on both - national and local (municipal) level; however, concrete development of the infrastructure takes place at the local level in all stages of the process. The issue of accessibility to LPTA infrastructure for different population groups is not explicitly discussed in the national or local policy documents.

National action plans are usually realized through the calls for funding, grant programs or subsidies. On the other hand, municipalities, being very much dependent on external funding, tend to match their own needs with the national guidelines. Negotiations and adjustment of interests between two administrative levels appears to be common and necessary practice. There are no laws or regulations of binding character that specifically deal with development of infrastructure for LTPA; therefore, several national documents of general character set regulations and mechanisms for the planning or building issues. The infrastructure development processes in the local arena involve actors from different levels and sectors; however, approaches to synchronize efforts of different policy sectors have not been clearly reported. Due to a complex nature of infrastructure for LTPA and a wide range of policy sectors involved in planning of different types of infrastructure, some fragmentation of national policy in sectoral planning documents has been identified. However, approaches to synchronize efforts of different policy sectors have not been clearly reported. The promotion of health-enhancing physical activity appears to be of lower priority for the national policy makers; most of the efforts and governmental subsidies usually are oriented to the development of large-scale sport facilities rather than a wide range health-related infrastructure.

The lack of policy in respect to the accessibility of different population groups to the LTPA infrastructure, the policy issue networks between the public and the private sector and market oriented management of the facilities imply high fees for participation and contribute to the increasing social inequality in accessing sport and physical activity.

The IMPALA project, intending to define good practice criteria for the development of LTPA infrastructure, appears to be currently very important in Lithuania; all the experts participating in the assessment of the national policies for LTPA expressed high interest in the outcomes of the project as well as self-determination to contribute to the dissemination of this information to their colleagues and collaborating partners.

3.10 Norway

Background information policy system

Norway is a constitutional monarchy with a parliamentary form of representative democracy. All citizens are able to participate in the national assembly. The Government cannot govern without the confidence of the national assembly. State power is distributed between the national assembly, the Government and the courts of law. The public administration is viewed as a fourth state power as it may independently influence policy development. Political power is also distributed geographically into state, county and municipal levels. The population participates in the political sphere through direct elections and through memberships in organisations exerting influence on the authorities via the public administration.

Recent developments

Recent developments in national policymaking regarding infrastructure for physical activity are reflected in the national Action Plan on Physical Activity 2005-2009, the New Planning and Building Act, and the White Paper on the Planning and building Act (Ot.prp.nr 32 (2008-2008)). These documents emphasize the need to develop infrastructure for low threshold physical activity as well as universal access (universal design) to infrastructure to secure equal access for all. The New Planning and Building Act makes it compulsory for the municipalities to take into consideration the need to develop areas for physical activity and recreation in community planning. The National Transport Plan 2010-2019 (White Paper No 16, 2008-2009) [4] presents the Government's Bicycle Strategy, in which an accelerated rate of construction of pedestrian- and bicycle infrastructure is targeted.

Selection of experts

A total of 10 organisations/individuals were contacted, while 7 interviews were conducted of which two informants with different responsibilities represent one local administration. Some of the experts were selected on the basis of their positions in relevant Ministries and their involvement with policy formulation on the national level, while others were selected according to the snowball method. Reasons given for declining participation were non-involvement in actual policy formulation or inability to arrange a suitable time for the interview. Informant number 7 was included as this informant was the only representative for the regional level.

National level:

1. The Ministry of Culture and Church Affairs (MCC) is responsible for national sports policy in general, and responsible for administration of the National Lottery Fund in particular. The expert (1) interviewed is head of the department of sports, which is one of the six departments within the Ministry of Culture and Church Affairs.
2. The Ministry of the Environment (ME) The expert (2) interviewed holds the position as an advisor, and is involved in policy formulation regarding outdoor and recreation areas and urban planning, and is involved in the project "Cities for the Future". The Ministry of the Environment is responsible for national policy on environmental issues. Securing areas for outdoor recreation is one of the main objectives of this ministry.

3. The Norwegian Trekking Association (NTA) is classified as an NGO which main objective is to develop strategies for trekking-/cottage infrastructure in outlying fields/mountains. The expert (3) interviewed is the assisting secretary general of the association. The NTA is the largest outdoor life organization in Norway, with more than 210,000 members in 55 local member organizations across the country. The main objective of the organization is to promote trekking and improve conditions for outdoor recreation/attractions.

Regional level:

4. Regional Public Health Authority. The expert (4) holds the position as head of the institution. The institution is responsible for distribution of money to infrastructure for physical activity within the region, and for guiding municipalities during the application process concerning funds for infrastructure.

Local level:

5. Agency for Outdoor and Recreation and Nature Management in Oslo which is responsible for planning and administering green areas in the inner city. The expert (5) interviewed holds the position as head of the department for Parks and recreational areas within the municipal Agency for Outdoor Recreation and Nature Management. The overall objective of the agency is to secure a sustainable urban development, and the agency also has responsibility for improvement of issues related to health, environment and safety. The specific focus of the department headed by the expert interviewed is on parks and recreation areas in the urban areas of Oslo.
6. Office for Public Roads, Nature and Sports Facilities in the City of Drammen. The Office is responsible for planning, development and maintenance of public roads, parks, sports facilities, and urban/rural recreational areas. The office is engaged in development of the community plan for sports and recreational areas. The two experts holds positions as public landscape architect and public sports consultant, respectively. The landscape architect (6) is involved in planning of local environment infrastructure and play courts, and the application process concerning funding for these infrastructure. The sports consultant (7) is involved in planning and administration/maintenance of sports facilities, and the application process concerning funding for sports facilities.

National Policy

"Sports and physical activities for all" is the slogan and principal of the national sports policy and it signifies on the one hand the principal right of all individuals to participate in sports/physical activity according to their capacities, needs and interests. On the other hand, it signifies the responsibility of the State to secure each individual's right to participate in activities. The Ministry for Culture and Church Affairs is responsible for the national sports policy, and governs and administers a funding scheme in which money generated through the National Lottery (approx. 80 million Euro) is distributed via the regional authorities to support the construction and maintenance of local infrastructure for sports and recreational activity. Depending on the type of facility, different funding levels apply. Sports facilities are entitled to a maximum funding level of 30% of the total costs, while so-called local environment infrastructure may receive funding up to 50% of the total cost. There is also an arrangement for infrastructure in the alpine regions. The main target group for the lottery fund is children/youth between 6-19 years of age, but the national policy is also to support infrastructure stimulating

physical activity among large segments of the population. In the Action Plan on Physical Activity 2005-2009 the two main targets are to increase the number of children/youth who are physically active for at least 60 minutes per day, and to increase the number of adults/elderly who are moderately physically active for at least 30 minutes per day. In the Action Plan, it is stated that "...everyone shall have the opportunity of pursuing an active outdoor life (...) in the local environment and in the nature as such".

Policy documents

According to the informant representing the regional level, there are very few documents specifically focused on infrastructure for LTPA. However, policies and guidelines related to infrastructure for LTPA were identified by the different informants in various types of documents such as acts, white papers, budget papers, Norwegian public inquiries (NOU), and official (action) plans both at the national and local level.

White Paper No 14 (1999-2000) [1] reflects a political discussion of various conditions for sports, and according to the informant from the Ministry of Culture, the document is still central in sports policy despite its old age. **White Paper No 39 (2006-2007)** [2] refers to the National Lottery funding scheme for construction and maintenance of sports infrastructure as the most important tool in the national sports policy. The **National Action Plan for Physical Activity 2005-2009** [3] is the product of a multi-sectorial collaboration – in which 8 ministries collaborated - to increase the physical activity on the population level. The Action Plan is a central national document which was used to address the need to develop inter-sector strategies in order to improve conditions for LTPA. The process was led by the Ministry of Health and Care Services in co-operation with the Ministry of the Environment, the Ministry of Culture and Church affairs, the Ministry of Transport and Communications, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, the Ministry of Children and Family Affairs, the Ministry of Local Government and Regional Development and the Ministry of Education and Research. The four former ministries are traditionally regarded as being most proactive. The paper addresses factors impacting on physical activity and public health, priority areas, target groups and a number of approaches to reach the targets. Some of the approaches involve consideration of infrastructure. Policies concerning infrastructure are presented in relation to areas such as accessibility to active local environment, green areas, outdoor recreation, sports facilities, nurseries and schools, and bicycle lanes.

The National Transport Plan 2010-2019 (White Paper No 16, 2008-2009) [4] presents the Government's Bicycle Strategy, in which an accelerated rate of construction of pedestrian- and bicycle infrastructure is targeted. **White Paper No 26 (2006-2007)** [5] is the most recent of the Government's propositions on environmental policy, and a consideration of activity-friendly environments has become a more central issue in these propositions. **White Paper No 23 (2001-2002)** [6] includes consideration of urban living and physical structures impact on physical activity.

Public health has become a central issue in the new **Planning and Building Act** [7] (passed 1st July 2009). Integrated in the new Act is the criterion of universal design, i.e. infrastructure and buildings must be designed to enable access for "most people". The Act states that conditions necessary for improving population health must be secured through adequate community planning. Community plans are compulsory for the municipalities. A community plan consists of a section on area planning (duration 4 years) and a section on societal planning. The area section is a map which indicates

areas in which building is approved, and areas regulated for other purposes. The societal section describes long term challenges regarding the environment, public health, future needs, and strategies for development of the community. A program of action is agreed on annually, and the program is based on the societal section. In the program of action the local government defines concrete actions and prioritizations related to resource management and specific plans. The municipality is free to add sub-plans to target certain areas. One example is the **community plan on sport and physical activity**. The municipality is obliged, however, to produce a plan on sport and physical activity in order to qualify for funding of local infrastructure for sports or physical activity.

Universal design is enforced by law also in § 9 and § 10 in the **Act "Prohibition of discrimination against functionally disabled"** [8]. **The Outdoor and Recreation Act** [9] is unique in securing access to outlying fields and forests, whether it is private or public space. The Government's proposal regarding outdoor & recreation (**White Paper 39, 2000-2001**) [10] presents official views on the role of the natural environment as an infrastructure for physical activity and health promotion. A policy paper by the Directorate for Nature Management ("**Targets and guidelines for alpine trekking infrastructure**") [11] is defining for physical activity infrastructure in outlying fields. The National Trekking Association has also produced papers presenting the organisation's strategies and plans for the organisation's cottages [12] (which are natural pit stops for trekkers) and pathway infrastructure for trekking in Norway. The Norwegian State-owned Land and Forest Company presented a **strategy for 2007-2010** in which stimulation of outdoor activity is a central goal [15].

Municipalities are responsible for local plans for sports and physical activity and recreation in which they present the local strategy to increase physical activity, and prioritisation of infrastructure. **One example is Plan for Sports and Outdoor Recreation in Oslo 2009-2012** [14].

The operationalisation of policy and political vision is reflected in the actual budget allocations, i.e. the allocations over the National budget and the budgets of the respective Ministries. However, there are no allocations for sports facilities and local-environment infrastructure for physical activity in the National budget, as the national funding of these facilities is secure comes from the National Lottery Fund. Approximately € 78,000,000 was allocated to facilities for sports and physical activity in 2009. The resource distribution between ordinary sports facilities and local-environment facilities varies between counties, i.e. the funding level for sports facilities is approximately 6-25 times the spending level for local environment facilities.

Policy documents for specific target groups

Ethnic groups are subject to special consideration in the Government's Proposition on environmental policy (White Paper no 26, 2006-2007) [5] with respect to initiatives to stimulate outdoor activities. White Paper No 20 (2006-2007) [13] on social inequality in health addresses the need to investigate why youth from ethnic minorities less often participate in organised sport. The Action Plan for Physical Activity 2005-2009 [3] is explicit about the need to target ethnic minorities and develop mechanisms to better accommodate for minorities' participation in sports and active lifestyles.

Policies on regional and local level

Central authorities possess more powerful tools (laws, regulations, financial resources) to operationalise shifts in policy, and the interviews indicate that the framework, guidelines and target areas are developed on the national level. However, the national funding scheme for sports infrastructure is based on needs assessments and prioritisations on all three geographical levels of government, and the municipality is responsible for, and free to decide on the prioritisation regarding the different types of local infrastructure. In each municipality the local plan for sports and physical activity presents the local prioritisations. To qualify for funding through the National Lottery scheme, the infrastructure/facility for which funding is applied need to be prioritised in the local plan for sports and physical activity.

The policy document [17] developed to aid applicants through the application for financial support from the National Lottery Funding Scheme reflects that strategies regarding step 2 (financing), step 3 (building) and step 4 (managing), must be integrated in step 1, i.e. the initial building plan. Another criteria for the application is that Step 1 (design/initial plan) must also be part of a community sub-plan on sports and physical activity. In that respect, the municipality must show evidence of a holistic strategy to promote physical activity in the local community. In the application, the applicant must provide exact estimation of costs, and a payment plan must be presented. Criteria are defined for step 2 (Building), and the application must demonstrate that the facility will be constructed according to the Planning and Building Act, that the universal design criterion is met, that the facility design is functional in relation to the types of sports the facility is intended for. For more advanced infrastructure (indoor swimming pools, multi-function halls) the application for funding must also document plans for management and maintenance.

Application for funding for local environment infrastructure must be completed according of many of the same standards as the application for sports facilities. However, documentation of maintenance plan/costs is not required. For low cost local environment infrastructure, i.e. estimated costs < € 8,000, it is not necessary to prioritise the facility in the community plan for sport and physical activity, but the application must provide information on payment plan, cost estimation, technical specification, geographical localization, a legal paper do document the applicants right to use the specified area of land. Local environment facilities are entitled to a higher level of reimbursement (50%) of costs than sports facilities (30%).

Tuning national policies with regional and local policies

There are several channels of communication through which the Central Government interacts with the municipalities. One route is via the regional level. There are two regional institutions: The a) **County Governor** acts on behalf of the Central Government, and b) the **Regional Parliament** is given mandate through regional elections. The County Governor's office is involved in implementation of central government decisions, and translates central policy documents in the local context. The County Governor's office supervise, advice and instruct the municipal government, and acts as a guardian of civic rights. The Regional Parliaments are public, democratic agencies responsible for tasks related to public management and service production within their respective counties. As from 1st of January 2010, the Regional Parliaments will become responsible also for public health within their respective counties. The application process for funding for infrastructure is mediated through the regional level. The municipalities forwards applications for funding to the Regional Parliament of the

county. The Ministry of Culture and Church Affairs allocates money from the National Lottery to the counties, and it is the responsibility of the Regional Parliament within each county to make decisions on allocations to the municipalities within the county. The funding scheme thus function to secure that local policy is in accordance with national policy. A guideline has been published to aid the municipality in applying for funding [17], and another guideline [16] to aid the municipality in developing a community plan for sports and physical activity (which is required in order to qualify for funding through the National Lottery Funding Scheme). A circular paper containing information on the application procedure is sent to local and regional governments annually. The regional administration monitors, guides and approves/disapproves local plans regarding infrastructure for physical activity.

A third route from the national level to the local level is through The **Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities** (KS) which is the interest organisation for municipalities, counties and local public enterprises. The Ministry of the Environment is in dialogue with the Association on matters such as public health and promotion of outdoor activities. Furthermore, the Ministry of the Environment attempts to stimulate local initiatives by arranging conferences and producing accessible information for local organisations/voluntary sector. For example, the ME has launched a website specifically targeting planners at the local level (www.planlegging.no), through which relevant information and good examples are made accessible.

Description of policy makers (national, regional and local level)

The development of policies concerning local infrastructure for LTPA is influenced by actors on the national, regional and local level, and the process takes place in a context characterised by both democratic mechanisms and the presence of strong interest groups. The municipal authorities are responsible for the actual prioritisation and for securing correspondence between plans and community needs.

It is the responsibility of the regional authorities to prioritise among the local plans and different types of infrastructure in the region. The Regional Parliament has freedom to define certain regional criteria based on regional needs according to regional profiles concerning facilities and activity. In this respect, the regional policy serves both as a supplement to and a corrective of the national policy.

The interviews suggest that the ministries which are most explicit on policy concerning physical activity and infrastructure are the ministries of health, -environment, and, -culture and church affairs. However, other ministries formulate policies which also influence physical activity. The Ministry of Transport and Communication place the public health issue at the centre of the National Bicycle Strategy.

The Ministry of Culture and Church Affairs is responsible for the national sports policy, and it administers the national funding scheme (the National Lottery Funding Scheme) for sports facilities and facilities for physical activity and recreation in the local environment. The Ministry of Health is responsible for numerous initiatives to promote health enhancing and low-threshold physical activities particularly targeting inactive and socially disadvantaged groups. The Ministry of the Environment is responsible for area planning, and it promotes planning procedures in which public health issues are integrated, e.g. in order to secure access to areas suitable for recreational activities in the local environment. The Ministry of Transport and Communications is involved

initiatives to improve infrastructure for cycling and walking to reduce the need for car transport.

The Norwegian Public Roads Administration, the Directorate for Nature Management, and the Directorate for Health act on a more operative level on behalf of the ministries of transport, -environment, and -health, respectively. A new website (www.helseiplan.no = “Health in planning”) administered by the University College in Vestfold and supported by the Directorate for Health is intended as a tool to support the collaboration between several directorates in order to actively involve the new Planning and Building Act to promote public health in community planning. The Norwegian Public Roads Administration has responsibility for management and monitoring of the National Bicycle Strategy. The Directorate for Nature Management is involved in initiatives related to promotion of recreational activities. The Directorate for Nature Management has published a large range of information brochures on recreational activities.

Description of collaborating partners

As a rule, local plans concerning infrastructure for physical activity are developed by the municipality in collaboration with local actors and voluntary organisations such as the local Sports Council, local sports clubs, local residents' associations, schools and outdoor recreation organisations.

The informant representing the regional level emphasised the regional authorities' role in communicating to municipalities the need to advocate the segments of the population not represented by strong user groups (sports clubs etc.). The interviews indicate, however, that municipalities have not developed adequate mechanisms for assessing the need among the non-organised segments of the population. However, the informants representing the local level emphasised that dialogue with local organisations is crucial for insight into community need. Informants gave examples of hearings, community meetings and joint viewings of potential areas for development in which residents' organisations, nursery- and school staff, and sports clubs are involved. Two informants remarked that involving youth and ethnic minority groups in the needs assessment and planning process is a particular challenge.

The Regional Parliaments collaborate with a number of organisations. For example, they collaborate with Outdoor life Advisors and The Outdoor Life Association (FRIFO) and the regional sports confederations (i.e. County-level sports confederations). It is the responsibility of the Regional Parliaments to conduct regional needs assessments as part of processing and approving local applications for funding.

At the national level the collaboration between the Sports Department within the Ministry of Culture and Church Affairs, the Norwegian Confederation of Sports and the Norwegian Olympic Committee is strong. One of the informants was concerned that the strong alliance between the Ministry of Culture and Church Affairs and the voluntary sports confederation negatively impacts the influence of the organisations for outdoor and recreation. These organisations are traditionally tied closer to the Ministry of the Environment, which possess less financial resources for development of infrastructure. Over the last years there has been a reduction in the proportion of the Lottery fund allocated to infrastructure for outdoor and recreation activities. The National Trekking Association stress the need for central authorities to signal a need to give more priority

to typical outdoor/recreation infrastructure to influence the regional authorities approvals of applications for funding.

There are examples of private initiatives to build infrastructure for physical activity. For example, in the city of Stavanger, businesses have sponsored bike lanes between the business facilities and the housing estates. Private donators and landowners are at times involved in planning regarding the infrastructure for trekking maintained and administered by organisations for outdoor and recreation activities. The largest landowner is the Norwegian State-owned Land and Forest Company (Statskog), which declares in the strategy paper that one the main goals is to stimulate and enable public access to hunting, fishing and other outdoor activities.

The Planning and Building Act states, that it is the responsibility of the municipality to secure the involvement of affected parts in local planning processes (§ 64a). The informants' views on the level of collaboration during local processes were conflicting. Informants at the ministry level (Ministry of Culture and Church Affairs, and Ministry of the Environment) and the informants involved in local planning and administration of sports facilities and green areas in the City of Oslo and the City of Drammen reported that the level of collaboration was high. Examples given concern local processes such as planning of outdoor areas and applications for funding of facilities for sport and physical activity. During local processes, the local administration initiates a dialogue with the local population. During this process, the local population is often represented by organizations (e.g sports clubs). In contrast to a perception of a high level of collaboration, the informant representing the Regional Parliament perceives local processes as unbalanced. E.g. the process leading up to the formulation of an application for funding for sports facilities may easily become biased, as sports organizations easily come to dominate such processes. The informant representing the Regional Parliament argues the local authorities need to reflect and advocate the needs and wishes of the non-organised segments of the population.

Benefits and downfalls of existing policies (national, regional and local level)

A major benefit of the existing situation is that a consequence assessment has been included in the Planning and Building Act as a compulsory procedure in all planning processes in order to reduce negative impacts of infrastructure- and building projects. Assessment of consequences makes those involved in the planning process more aware of potential negative effects before implementation of plans, and in order to modify plans at an early stage. Public health is one of several concerns in such assessments. Other factors are, for example, need for protection of natural resources or vulnerable speices, financial issues etc.

Furthermore, the local community plans for sports and physical activity forces local administrations/politicians to approach city planning holistically. The Ministry of Culture and Church Affairs has decided that municipalities must develop local plans for sports and physical activity in order to qualify for funding through the National Lottery Fund Scheme.

The regulation of green areas in Oslo protects central green areas, and the forest border circling the city shall not be moved peripherally. Thus development and regulation of areas for housing estates in the city centre relies on re-development and transformation of former industry areas and vertical expansion projects to add floors to existing housing complexes.

Lottery funds (from the National Lottery) may cover up to 50% of the total costs for local environment infrastructure. Thus, the municipalities receive financial support to construct local infrastructure designed for physical activity such as play courts and recreational areas in the neighbourhood. In order to qualify for the funding, the municipality must secure that given criteria concerning the construction and planning process are satisfied (e.g. universal design, technical specifications, integration of projects in a community plan if costs are > € 8,000). There is reason to believe that the funding schemes facilitates the development of local infrastructure for physical activity as the burden on the municipalities' budgets are reduced.

Several problem areas were mentioned by the experts. First the definition of the National Lottery Fund as a "fund for infrastructure for sports and physical activity" limits the municipalities' strategies for utilizing these resources to invest in infrastructure for sports and physical activity, because other initiatives to stimulate physical activity does not qualify for consideration. One of the informants argues that alternative options would probably enhance the effectiveness of the Lottery Fund in reaching "new" groups. Such alternatives are e.g. education of exercise instructors, equipment centrals, and transport support to improve access to organized activities such as senior dance. The dominance of sports facility projects in the receiving end may also result in increased social inequality, as there are large segments of the population which the sport organizations do not represent.

Furthermore there is a lack of norms to govern the development of infrastructure in relation to the activity profile of the local population, and thus, no mechanism to prevent a mismatch between the number of facilities and the number of inhabitants who make use of the infrastructure. One informant gave examples of small communities which receive funding from the National Lottery to build an inappropriately high number of artificial turf football pitches for local football teams.

It has been politically decided to distribute 25% of the National Lottery Fund to recreational infrastructure in the local environment. However, due to the low number of applications only 10-12 % of the fund are canalised to such infrastructure. One informant believes this is partly due to lack of community enthusiasm, and biased national policies which favour partnerships between the municipalities and the local sports sector. Because the national subsidies to outdoor and recreation infrastructure has been reduced, the relation between funding to outdoor/recreation vs sports facilities does not match the activity profile of the population. The number of people who go mountain and forest trekking outnumbers by far the number of people who use specialised sports facilities.

The Nature Management Act represents a barrier to recreation activities in certain (alpine) areas. The National Trekking Association has experienced that the central authorities has demanded that trekking-pathways are moved out of certain areas in order to protect wildlife (e.g. deers) from disruption of foot tourists. The National Trekking Association does not oppose protection of wild animals, but believes animals' lives are disrupted more by roads planned to cross through habitats.

According to the landscape architect involved in planning of playcourts, the Norwegian Standard for Playground Equipment (based on the European CEN/TC 136/SC1 Playground equipment) create a barrier to set up simple interventions in the forest.

The demand for development of infrastructure by far outweighs the subsidies. The subsidy levels are probably too low, and the total fund is probably not sufficient. Sports facilities are currently entitled to subsidies representing 1/3 of the building costs, but a max limit is set to 7 million NOK (800,000 Euro).

Public health is one of numerous concerns politicians must deal with, and a number of societal concerns are in conflict with each other. There is, for example, an ongoing battle between different interests to occupy the inner city areas. The local environment areas for recreation decrease in size.

There are some plans to change the current situation:

1. The National Physical Activity Council intends to reduce the unbalance between the amount of money distributed to sports facilities versus outdoor and recreation facilities.
2. At the regional level, there are plans to increase the proportion of the funds intended for non-organised activities, e.g. infrastructure for low threshold activities in the local environment.
3. The National Trekking Association is in continuous dialogue with the Directorate for Nature Management in order to prevent the revised New Nature Management Act from becoming too strict regarding regulation of areas suitable for outdoor recreation.

Conclusion

The interviews indicate that infrastructure for LTPA is referred to in several policy documents, but no document focus exclusively on LTPA. Challenges associated with activity promotion among ethnic minority groups are discussed in very few documents. The local plans concerning infrastructure for LTPA are prepared and defined by the municipalities, but must be within the framework defined by the central authorities in order to qualify for funding. Informants representing the local level refer to informal meetings/dialogue and contact with voluntary organisations as their habitual method for assessing need for certain infrastructure. There does not seem to be widespread use of needs assessments involving also non-organised segments of the population. Involving non-organised groups, youth and ethnic minorities in the planning process is identified as particularly challenging. The municipalities limit the involvement to local organisations due to difficulties in recruiting non-organised individuals to take part in the planning of infrastructure.

The informants shared very conflicting views upon the level of collaboration in the planning process. Some informants feel that all stakeholders have an opportunity to participate, while others feel the sports sector dominates the process and consequently is granted a too large share of the resources for development of infrastructure for physical activity.

A future challenge is to involve certain groups more actively – i.e. ethnic minority groups and non-organised segments – in the planning process in order to develop strategies to increase physical activity among people in these groups.

3.11 Portugal

Background information policy system

Portugal is a Democratic Republic ruled by the Constitution of 1976. The four main governing components are the President of the Republic, the Parliament (Assembly of the Republic), the Government headed by a Prime Minister and Courts.

The Constitution grants the division of powers among legislative, executive and judicial branches. The Parliament legislates, the Government organs execute and the Courts assess and evaluate all the outcomes.

Recent developments

No recent developments were mentioned by the interviewees.

Selection of experts

The total number of approached organizations was 12 but the number of conducted interviews was 6. Experts were selected by their post in the contacted institution. For example, if we were contacting a city halls sports department we would try to conduct the interview with the director of such department. This decision was made, based on the fact that the higher the post the more holistic knowledge of LTPA infrastructure planning process the person would have. We also used the personal network method once we had few answers from institutions in which we had no personal knowledge. We also contacted 6 other entities but we have received no answer until now. Those entities were: the Portugal Sport Institute, the Lisbon Regional Commission of Coordination and Development, Lousã City Hall, Social Sport Association of Oporto's City Hall Workers and 2 Management and Construction of Sports Facilities Companies.

The Portugal Sport Institute did reply but it was not possible to settle a date for the interview due to their filled agenda. To all the other entities we have no justification to why they did not reply our request to collaborate in this project.

National level:

1. The PortoLazer Lda: a municipality company that was created with the aim of promoting and supporting leisure and recreation physical activity and sports as well as cultural animation in general. This company collaborates in the creation and provision of the necessary technical, material and logistics conditions for the development of active habits in the population. PortoLazer works at local level (municipality) although it also cooperates with regional initiatives. We interviewed PortoLazer President.
2. Geography Professor (Planning Process) in Coimbra's University and I&D Company Director ("PensarTerritório Lda." - ThinkTerritory). This company employees are master students whose research fields concerns urban planning and GIS experts that are constantly working on projects to several City Halls. Some of those projects deal with LTPA infrastructure though in a territory planning perspective. This company tries to balance peoples needs for these infrastructure with the geographic characteristics of the implantation local.

Regional level:

3. The Regional Commission for Coordination and Development of the North: that is a service of the peripheral administration under direction of the Ministry of Environment, Spatial Planning and Regional Development, endowed with administrative and financial autonomy. Its mission is to implement the policies for

the environment, spatial planning city and regional development in the respective area of action, it also promotes the coordinated action of the deconcentrated services of the regional and technical support to local authorities and their associations. We interviewed the Division of Strategic Planning and Regional Development director.

Local level:

4. Sports Department of Maia City Hall: this departments main goals are the development of coherent, integrated and endogenous growth. For Maia's Sports Department, sport is an important factor in human and social recovery as well as a healthy way of occupying the leisure and recreational time. The City Hall recognizes sports as one of the population main demands both in high competition sport and recreational activities. It considers that sports may act like an important social, cultural, political and economic factor for the whole municipality. We interviewed Maia Sports Department President.
5. The Sports Department of Oeiras City Hall has a very similar approach to sports and physical activity as Maia's Sports Department. This Department considers sport and physical activity a very important health determinant and seek to provide sports opportunities for all the municipality residents. We interviewed Oeiras Sports Department sport expert.
6. Sports Department of Tomar City Hall which has a quality certificate for all the work and projects it develops in this area. This department main concern are the facilities management and the programs or interventions to improve Tomar's population physical activity level. The majority of the work is done on the local level. We interviewed Tomar Sports Department director.

National Policy

The national political program enhancing physical activity closer to the population is called "Mexa-se: Desporto para Todos" (Move: Sports for All) and is promoted by Portugal Sport Institute. Its aims are to "...make people more active and generalize the idea that sport contributes significantly to the reduction of mortality, diseases (and its treatment costs) as well as it reduces the rates of work absenteeism and increases productivity." Portugal Sport Institute tries to achieve these goals by close "...cooperation with the associations and local authorities as well as other structures of central government". Unfortunately only two of the interviewed mentioned this program but could not explain what are the exact characteristics because each municipalities implement the program in a different ways. This might be due to the fact that the Portugal Sport Institute does not give enough information, i. e., it only presents the program in a quite broad way. The program's website was not available for consultation during the period of this reports elaboration.

Policy documents

The most important document related to LTPA infrastructure is the **Law on Physical Activity and Sports (Law n°5/2007 of January 16th)** which is a framework document. Regarding LTPA infrastructure one can read in this law: "The State, in close collaboration with the Autonomous Regions, local authorities and private entities, develops an integrated policy on infrastructure and sports facilities based on a balanced territorial distribution, urban and environmental recovery and economic and recreational sustainability aiming to create a diversified and quality sports park, consistent with a strategy to promote physical activity and sport, in its various levels

and for all ages and groups." It also legislate the Sport Associativism, Funding Grants and the People's right to have equal access to Sports and Physical Activity facilities and public programs.

Portugal also has the **Action Plan of the National Territory Planning Program** (December 2006) that, regarding LTPA infrastructure the main goals are to "Strengthen the provision of sports facilities, promote the role of sport and physical activity in improving the overall health status of the general population as well as the most vulnerable people, and promote social inclusion, including people with disabilities or some incapacities (2007-2013)."

There are several other laws that legislate the normal functioning of LTPA infrastructure such as the Law nº317/97 of November 25th that "...establishes the regime of installation and operation of sports facilities for public use, regardless of its ownership: public or private or non-profit aim." but in this law it can also be read that "These provisions do not apply to natural spaces for recreational sport, i. e., natural places with conditions for carrying out certain recreative and sports activities but without the need for special adaptation or material arrangements."

Law nº10/2003 of May 13th regulates the program on public usage sports facilities and Law-Decree nº274/2007 of July 30th, that monitors the LTPA and Sports infrastructure, facilities and other spaces related to physical activity.

Policy documents for specific target groups

At National level there are no specific policies on ethnic groups regarding the LTPA infrastructure. However there are some legislation on the right of access by handicapped people to Sports Halls such as: Law-Decree nº123/97 of May 22nd and Law-Decree nº163/2006 of August 8th on People with Conditionated Mobility; Law-Decree nº74/2007 of March 27th on Blind People Accompanied by Guide Dogs; Law nº38/2004 of August 18th on Prevention of Rehabilitation and Integration of Handicapped People and Law nº46/2006 of August 28th on Discrimination Based on Disability. All of these documents have some reference on the rights of handicapped people to access public sports halls, however these documents are not specific on LTPA infrastructure.

Policies on regional and local level

Policy of local infrastructure for LTPA is developed at, both regional and local level but it has to follow the rules settled by the all national laws and other national documents (mentioned earlier).

At regional level an instrument that integrates the LTPA infrastructure plans is for example the Territory Planning Programs of the Coastline. At local level all of the following programs might integrate a LTPA infrastructure plan: Special Territory Planning Programs, Urban Planning Programs and Municipality Territory Planning.

LTPA infrastructure plans have to distinguish the individual steps of the planning process but these steps are not the same as IMPALA's conceptualized. Each LTPA infrastructure plan has its own structural organization which is designed by the experts team that are drawing the plan. This situation is the result of the lack of the dissemination of specific information on LTPA infrastructure plan. Another reason can also be pointed: each different funding entity requires different design applications forms with different criteria.

All the facilities types (sports facilities, parks or cyclingpaths and other places in which is possible to be physically active) have in common the fact that they need to be integrated in one of the instruments of territory planning mentioned above, in order to be considered as a LTPA local/place. However the policies that rule sports halls is very

different from the one that rules open green spaces, like parks, for instance. Parks may have totally different types of usage from a sport hall and that is why the policies for both facilities is different.

Tuning national policies with regional and local policies

National policies are distributed/communicated to local governmental organs through planning program instruments like: National Territory Planning Program, the Regional Territory Planning Program. Nevertheless, these instruments are not sufficient to create a LTPA infrastructure plan or to manage it because it does not contain all the information needed. Experts have also to consult several legislation documents. The Republic Assembly website has also a very important role in the distribution and dissemination of all legislation. The "Republic Diary" (legislation daily journal) is released everyday in the website and its available to all.

Description of policy makers (national, regional and local level)

Relevant actors in the development of public policies for the creation of LTPA infrastructure are, as stipulated in Law nº 5/2007 of January 16th are (Article 6.º, 7.º and 8.º) the Central Government, the Autonomous Regions (Madeira and Azores) and Local Authorities. Is also important to point the role of Sports Associations, Sports Clubs and NGOs in the construction and management of LTPA infrastructure.

The Central Government is represented by Portugal Sports Institute (part of the Youth and Sports State Secretary) which mission is to "Support the definition, implementation and evaluation of public policy in the sport field, promoting the practice of physical activity and it also supports the regular sports and high performance through the provision of technical, human and financial capital." Portugal Sport Institute's powers are: a) Propose the adoption of programs aimed at integrate physical activity in daily habits of citizens life and technical, material and financial support for the sport development; b) to propose measures aimed at preventing and combating doping, corruption, violence, racism and xenophobia in sport; c) propose and implement an integrated program of construction and recovery of sports equipment and infrastructure, working in particular with local authorities, and decide on the safety rules to follow in its construction and licensing; d) promote the general sport-medical supervision when accessing and during sports activities; e) Ensure the development and qualification of sports agents; f) undertake surveillance activities, to issue permits and licenses that are committed by law and prescribe legal certifications; g) in collaboration with public or private institutions, promote and support studies and research on sport indicators and the different factors for the development of physical activity and sport.

Local Authorities are the "freguesias" (smaller administrative area) and the municipalities. Currently, there are 308 municipalities, of which 278 are in the Continental Portugal and 30 in the Autonomous Regions of Azores and Madeira. Portugal has 4 259 "freguesias" of which 4 050 are in Continental Portugal and 209 in the island territories. The powers of local authorities, the competence of its organs and associates, are connected to the needs of local communities, like the socio-economic development, regional planning, the public supply, basic sanitation, health, education, culture, environment and sport. Although the municipalities are the leaders of all LTPA infrastructure planning process the final say depends on Portugal Sports Institute.

Description of collaborating partners

As it was said before the entities involved are the Central Government, the Autonomous Regions (Madeira and Azores) and Local Authorities, as well as Sports Associations, Sports Clubs and sports related NGOs. These NGOs role is to increase the sports practice trough all the society. In the interviewed experts opinion there is no need for more partners collaborating in this process because it has already too many different relevant actors intervening. Instead of involving more parties in this long and quite bureaucratic process, some interviewed experts think that it would be more profitable to have a good network between the entities that are already involved by law.

Benefits and downfalls of existing policies (national, regional and local level)

There are many potential benefits of the existence of articulated policies on planning and building LTPA infrastructure. As an example, one can point that the current situation:

- allows an adequate availability of spaces, properly adjusted for LTPA practice and contributes to the welfare of the generality of the population by improving their levels of health
- allows, which is not negligible, implementation of investments, achieved by correct geographically establishment of the facilities, non-overlapping areas of influence of such equipment.

The most important finding was that not all the existing legislation is correctly followed. On one hand the Law on Physical Activity and Sports (Law nº5/2007 of January 16th) settles that both national and local level governments organs should work together regarding the LTPA infrastructure planning process but the Law nº159/99 of Septiembre 14th transfers all planning, managing and public investment of LTPA infrastructure to the municipalities.

Another downfall is that the implementation of public policies for development of LTPA infrastructure always depends on the linkage between all relevant actors during the process and, of course the ensurance of the financial capacity that can be channelled for the construction and management of LTPA infrastructure. A special reference to the current limitations in the management, operation and maintenance of LTPA infrastructure has to be pointed. This limitation is, in part, justified by poor regional coverage of qualified staff for this purpose, and the increasing awareness of its relevance to some developers.

Another finding is that at local level all LTPA infrastructure are integrated in larger planning instruments. These instruments are called "Plans" and may be projected at different scales: there is the National Territory Planning Program, the Regional Territory Planning Program and the Municipality Territory Planning Program (MTPP). The MTPP integrates Detail Plans, Special Plans and Urban Plans. In order to built a new LTPA infrastructure or to requalify an old one, this action has to be integrated in one of the plans mentioned above. The problem is that MTPP (and all other planning instruments) take more than one or two years to be approved and when they are finally approved, a whole review is needed due to the natural changes of setting.

The existence of so many ministries with some responsibility in LTPA infrastructure creates a lot of problems specially because the different ministries do not work together over these issues. The same LTPA infrastructure like a green open space with a sports halls in it, might be ruled by two ministries: the Environment Ministry rules the green

areas and the Portugal Sports Institute rules the sports hall. The lack of cooperation and communication between Ministries is a barrier to improve that space in any way.

The bureaucracy involved in LTPA infrastructure planning process is too much and the majority of the procedures is too antiquate. For example, all LTPA infrastructure plans have to be sent printed in paper and by regular mail to Portugal Sports Institute to be evaluated, including the architectural plants.

Plans to change the existing situation are:

1. to develop an ongoing dialogue among the relevant actors in the process;
2. to improve the sustainable management of national and EU funding;
3. to train qualified staff, especially at university level;
4. the dissemination and awareness of the problem to potential users.

Conclusion

Portugal can not ignore the fact that national and regional policies and legislation for LTPA infrastructure exists although some changes are needed. The document entitled "Guidelines for the Programming and Description of Public Equipment", produced by the Urban Development and Territory Planning General Direction (Part of the Environment, Territory Planning and Regional Development Ministry) must and have been taken as a reference in various planning processes of local LTPA infrastructure, especially when integrated in Municipality Territory Planning Program.

A Sports Atlas, as Art.9 of Law 5/2007 settles is mandatory because "...the registration and recording of data and indicators for the knowledge of the various development sports factors..." is very important "...in order to know the national sport situation...". This document does not exists yet and without this it, LTPA infrastructure planning is not optimized. It is extremely important to create an integrated informatic platform with all documents, data and other information regarding LTPA ifrastructures, that all relevant actors can use to communicate with each other. "Multimunicipalities" networks are the current practice for most territory planning so, it should happen in LTPA infrastructure planning process as well. Other services such as, education, culture or environment should also be part of those networks. This way it would be possible to manage all types of LTPA infrastructure in its diverse uses and by different entities. Lastly, the final good practice checklist for planning LTPA infrastructure should integrate reference values and selectable criteria that guide the individual steps of the planning process.

3.12 Spain

Background information policy system

Spain is a parliamentary democracy, because its Legislative Power (represented in the General Courts), has the greatest legislative responsibility and of the government. General Courts represent all citizens and it is made up for the Parliament and the Senate. In Spain the Executive Power is represented by the national Government. The National Government is distributed in Ministries, who has the main responsibilities in different issues. For example the Ministry of Education has the responsibility in all issues related to education. Political power is distributed geographically into regions and municipalities. Regions have some provinces, for example in health issues, and local government also has some provinces in other issues. The population participates in the political sphere by local, regional and national elections, and they have the responsibility to decide who govern in these spheres. In Spain, most of provinces are

implemented by regional administration and local level. National government gives some general rules and regional government control most of decision making, budget and policy development, but the local administrations increasingly manage it. For example in health or education, there are national laws that the Government pass them, but regional governments are responsible of development and performance of them.

Recent developments

No recent developments were reported by the interviewees.

Selection of experts

Fourteen of twenty-two eligible persons participated in the study. Five persons did not participate but referred us to other eligible participants with great expertise in the subject. Two persons refused because of a lack of time: a manager of a private large sport facility and one from a building department of the Town hall in Seville. All fourteen participants were referred by snowball, but four of them were recruited by personal network (subjects listed below as numbers 4, 6, 13).

National level:

1. Superior Council of Sports General Management of Sport Facilities in the Superior Council of Sports (SPC). One of its missions is to devise and to implement, in collaboration with the Regions and Local Organizations, the building and improvement of plans for Sports Facilities for the developing of High Level Sport. It is responsible for the development and maintenance of the National Census of sports facilities?. National level
2. Quality Tourist Area, General Sub department of Development and Tourist Sustainability. Its mission is to design strategies to the development and improvement of planning and managing of tourist sites with high quality of products and services.
3. Environment Commission of the Spanish Olympic Committee. President of Sport and Environment Commission of the Spanish Olympic Committee and member of the Technical Commission of provinces and municipalities Federation. President of Olympic Barcelona Foundation. The mission of the first commission is to collaborate in the organization of sports competitions and develop good practices of sustainability to improve the environment.
4. "Green-ways" Program. Director of "Green-ways" Program in Spain. One of their objectives is the promotion of a new leisure time and sport culture, using outdated railways by no motor vehicles, especially bicycles and it helps to design and planning new greenways in collaboration with local institutions.
5. Sports and coast Services of Ministry of Public Works. Head of Sports and coast Services of Ministry of Public Works. They have the responsibility of the planning, designing, studies of infrastructure in harbour and coasts.

Regional level:

6. University of Extremadura. Rector of Physical Activity and Sport Service in the University of Extremadura. Promotion, planning and organization of sports competitions for staff of the University. Management of sports infrastructure of the University.

7. Service of Tourism Promotion. General Management of Tourism of the Junta of Extremadura. Planning and improvement of tourist services by guidelines and plans.
8. City council of Madrid. Head of Services and Facilities in Area of Government of Work and Public Spaces of city council of Madrid. It has responsibilities in the construction, maintenance repair of urban infrastructure like car parks, cycle path, land communications lines, urban equipments, etc.
9. Coordinator and collaborative member of Sports Infrastructure of Junta de Extremadura. They are responsible of development and implementation of collaborative agreement among local institution and Junta de Extremadura.
10. Company of leisure time activities and management of swimming pools. President. He is responsible of human resources in local swimming baths and they plan, manage and develop leisure time activities.

Local level:

11. Sport Center of Merida. Technical Director of Sport Center of Merida. He's responsible of the planning, design and management of facilities and activities in this center.
12. City of Seville. Specialized Architect in sports facilities of the city of Seville.
13. Town of Don Benito (Extremadura). Sport City Councilor of the town of Don Benito (Extremadura). He is responsible of the planning, design and management of facilities and sports activities in this town.
14. Local company of environment activities and risk sports. Director. They organize leisure time activities and risk sport like gorge walking, climbing, etc.

National Policy

Mainly, policies of local infrastructure for LTPA are developed at local level, but the local institutions or municipalities have to obey to the general regulations or rules of the national government concerning housing, building, safety, accessibility, sport-specific rules of federations, etc. For example they have to obey the HISF Project, Sport Law, LASFR rules (see next paragraph). Only facilities for high performance events are mainly developed by national government. The projects of municipalities have to agree with regional policies or agreement with regional government when they are searching for co finance, but these rules varies among the different regional governments.

In the framework of sports, the most important institution related to sports facilities and infrastructure for high performance or international events is the Superior Council of Sports (SCS), which recently belongs directly to the Presidency of the Spanish Government, not to any other National Ministry. The following kinds of infrastructure are considered as conventional sport spaces (football, basket, athletics, handball, etc.). But in Spain there are also non-conventional sport spaces (parks, beaches, pathways, etc.) which people use for doing sport and physical activities in their leisure time.

Policy documents

The **Sports Law 10/1990** which has 13 titles that describes for example the policy and rules of the major national actors (clubs, associations, championships, etc.). It also describes and regulates sports competitions, Spanish Olympic Committee (it representatively in the International Olympic Committee, etc.), high performance sports, control of violence in sport competitions, doping, sport education, and related to sports facilities it has the title number 10. This title makes appointments about accessibility to sports facilities, intake of alcohol and tobacco, visible information, minimal fitting-out, safety, etc. In this law there are no differences among sports facilities and facilities designed and non designed for sport and physical activity for LTPA.

Another important law or rule regarding to planning/design and building sports facilities is called the **Leisure Activity and Sport Facilities Rules (LASFR)**. This is a national rule for all conventional sport facilities that are built and designed partially or totally with funds of Superior Council of Sport and sport facilities for official competitions. This rule has two types: 1. Statutory rules, that is referred to dimensions, light, sport material, surfaces, spectator areas, etc. 2. Project rules, with the objective of establish a framework in designing of sport facilities: uses, types, field of uses for each one, etc.

Another rule is called the **Harmonization and Improvement of Sport Facilities (HISF Project)**. The main aim of this project is to harmonize and to improve the managing of the sport facilities with the objective of control and improve sport services offered in them. Specifically, actions are related to strategic designing and planning of sport facilities; buying and resources of materials and equipments; assessment, inspection and vigilance; replacement and maintenance of these infrastructure. Is a project focused on private and public sport infrastructure (including schools facilities).

This project is based in European building rules, National laws (sport Law, accessibility), Regional laws (directorate plans). But there is no distinction among sport facilities and designed and non designed for sport and physical activity for LTPA.

The **“Contract with Public Administrations Law”** regulates the general policies for contracting or receiving grants from the government. The regional government ask the national government for grants to build new infrastructure for sports or LTPA. The problem appear when the Superior Council of Sport wants to organized an international competition of some high performance sport, sports facilities have to be adapted to International Federations Policies and regulations and most of them are not adapted to these international rules.

The Superior Sport Council also developed the **major rules for building (NIDE)** "Normativa sobre Instalaciones Deportivas y de Esparcimiento (NIDE)" (Leisure Activity and Sport Facilities Rules: LASFR). Is a national rule for all conventional sport facilities that are built and designed partially or totally with funds of Superior Council of Sport and sport facilities for official competitions. This rule has two types: 1. Statutory rules, that is referred to dimensions, light, sport material, surfaces, spectator areas, etc. 2. Project rules, with the objective of establish a framework in designing of sport facilities: uses, types, field of uses for each one, etc.

But this rule is only for sport facilities, it doesn't regulate the building, designing, managing of facilities designed or not designed for sports and physical activity for LTPA.

Technical Building Code is the framework in Spain that regulates basic needs of quality that all buildings (there are no differences among sports facilities, facilities designed or not designed for LTPA and other edifications like floor, apartments, etc.) must to fulfill when they are built. These basic needs are related to structural safety, safety against fire, safety of use, hygiene, health and environment protection, energy saving, etc.

The **International Federations Codes** refer to specific regulations that sports facilities and facilities designed and not designed for LTPA have to fulfill to organize international competitions. A lot of times, these infrastructure obey all the regulations regarding to building or safety, but they are not adapted to International Federations Codes and they cannot organize international events.

The **Green Network Plan**, it a rule that was created to rebuild some old-fashioned rail roads into green paths for physical active tourism or leisure named Greenways. As far as some Greenways cross several natural environment and several municipalities. This plan is what regulates how to build a greenway, how to develop and manage it. According to these regulations the Minister of Environment and other institutions developed the Greenways and natural pathways Program, with the objective of use the old and not used railway to promote physical activity, tourism and environment respect.

The **Coast Law** regulates the uses of the sea, it water and their spaces like beaches, shores, etc. Only specially to build sport facilities is allowed in these areas, and for public uses reasons is allowed to develop some activities and infrastructure.

Policy documents for specific target groups

There are two specific laws that deal with specific target groups. The 51/2003, 2 of December Law, is based on equality of opportunities, not discrimination and universal accessibility for handicapped people. It has two specific points related to building and designing of infrastructure and environments. All of them must be accessible for everybody. Secondly the 556/1989, 19 of mayo Real Decree regulates the accesibility to all buildings for handicapped people. All of infrastructure (sport facilities, facilities for LTPA) and their equipments have to be adapted and be accessible for using of these people. There are no differences among sport facilities and facilities designed and not designed for LTPA.

Policies on regional and local level

At regional level, majority of Regions has a General Directorate of Sports included in other Regional Ministries (Culture, Education, Health, etc.). For example Castilla y León, Comunidad Valenciana, Madrid, etc. The Region of Extremadura has recently formed a Regional Ministry focused on Sports, that it has all responsibilities in sport mainly by General Directorate of Sports, but is an independent Ministry at the regional Government. Therefore, the political relevance of sports is increasing in this region, and other regions say that is very important for physical activity and sports. The regional governments has most of competences (planning, most of financing, etc.) for building new facilities for non-high performance or non-international events, and the local administrations for managing them. Nowadays, few regions have comprehensive policy documents for making decisions for building or financing sport facilities. Regional ministries usually have a plan including the sport facilities required in each part of territory, but not for facilities designed or not designed for sport and physical activity for LTPA. For example Catalonia has recently developed a Director Plan including a

system to evaluate and include proposals of municipalities for further development and updating the plan. Furthermore, the regional co-finance has to be fitted to this plan. However, in Extremadura (another region in Spain), there are regulations for developing non-conventional sport facilities linked to new social demands, especially for young people, such as Young Factories that are facilities including the use of walls or non-conventional parks for new tendencies proposed by local youth and associations, who had looked the possibilities that the environment offer them to practice physical activity and sport. This initiative links local and regional government in Extremadura. In other areas, the co-finance requires informal and formal meetings with major stakeholders.

Most of the content of the planning and managing of the infrastructure for LTPA at local level depends on specific-case agreements between partners who finance the facilities or partners who will manage them. Inexperienced stakeholders, especially in small municipalities, ask for good practice guides or examples (agreement forms, etc.) to the most experienced managers or private consultants. These stakeholders are lacking preparation to write and manage proposals for local facilities. However, they have to obey to the national basic or minimum rules (accessibility, safety, etc.) of designing/planning and building. Specific rules for each facility are established in individual contracts by the local administration depending on a lot of factors, for example environment, local budget, funding, personal networks, etc. There is a lack of rules for the managing, financing of sports facilities, facilities designed and not designed for sports and physical activity but usable for LTPA. It depends on local factors (co-specific funding, partners, number of inhabitants or potential users who will pay the fee, etc.) or collaborative agreements among different institutions. This lack of rules enhance the relevance of decision-makers.

Tuning national policies with regional and local policies

National policies are mainly published in official bulletins and there are usually web-links in the websites of the different ministries or presidency of government in case of the Superior Council of Sports. National government sends advices of new information to the Sport General Directorates of every region. The person responsible for sport within municipalities could ask for information at regional level. However, there are few new national policies.

Description of policy makers (national, regional and local level)

Within the governmental sector the relevant actors are sports departments of city councils, regional ministers of sport because these institutions usually finance and design/plan the local infrastructure for LTPA. The facilities for international events are mainly managed by national responsible, Superior Sports Council, and the regional counterpart, the Sports Departments of the government.

However, as far as private companies are increasingly managing sport facilities they are influencing the specific-case agreements of the new facilities, but they do not generate sport policies.

In all facilities for LTPA (so many for sport facilities and facilities designed and not designed for LTPA), other relevant actors usually are sports associations or clubs, community associations, sports federations, professional colleges (professional college of sport graduated), school associations, private companies, etc. that could propose the planning, building or managing of sports facilities like a private company or social group (asking for new services).

It is very common to organize commissions within local or regional government to plan/design and build infrastructure for LTPA, but the final decision concerns to the local or regional governing party.

Description of collaborating partners

Almost all social networks could opine and send proposals to the regional governing party. The governing party or social group who promotes the new facility usually announces the preliminary project (mass media, etc.) and persons could contact with the responsible. The final decision is made by governing party at regional or local level according to level of co-finance, except for international or high performance facilities where Spanish National Superior Council of Sports are the usually the major actor.

The proposal usually comes from local level to regional level for asking for financial or consulting collaboration. In some regions, such as Catalonia, local proposals have to be fitted to the Director Plan that has a map of sport facility needs. This plan could be updated by presenting a study and proposal to the regional government. If this proposal is approved at local and regional level the local governing party could ask for funding and compete the infrastructure with other local initiatives. This proposal has been usually presented and discussed at local council with representatives of all parties. However, it is not unusual that a representative of a local governing party directly asks for regional cooperation (assessment and financial help) to the regional stakeholder. The informal networks of governing parties are relevant for promoting new facilities. Recently, there is a emerging market for private assessment for developing studies about marketing plan, needs, sustainability of new proposals

Architects, engineers, graduated in physical activity and sports facilities, sport managers, politicians should be involved more. All of them have an important role in the making and development of general plans for local infrastructure. Sports managers are important to create guidelines of sports facilities and facilities management for LTPA. Politicians are very important to get economic resources and to reach agreements with national or international governments or institutions.

Sport managers or experts in physical activity should be involved in the urban plan to design the urban areas (sports facilities, but also informal areas such as parks, riversides, etc.), and they should be more involved in the proposals for making more evidence-based or expertise-based decisions taking into account the sustainability (economic, etc.).

Benefits and downfalls of existing policies (national, regional and local level)

A benefit of the existing situation is that there are few policies, so there is the possibility of testing several ways of working (agreements between private and public sector, etc.). Some experiences in Catalonia bring the way to update the Director Plan of needs by submitting new local proposals based on studies. It gives more transparency and promotes local initiatives.

A couple of problem areas exist:

1. The weight of informal relationships among actors is discouraging participation of new actors or consultants. Political parties sometimes do not reach agreements because they have different political signs, however, sports for health is well received by voters so parties usually do not stop projects.
2. Some local governments promote non-professional associations to manage sport facilities because they are cheaper at local level, but they are discouraging professional companies, and reducing taxes at regional and national level.
3. There is usually a relevant knowledge disbalance between expert consultants and council sport representatives. These expert consultants could obtain very good agreements for managing institutions (e.g., contracts for managing public sport facilities for more than 20 years).
4. The co-financing by private sectors requires further policy development to avoid: disbalanced agreements (lack of minimal control of sport facility, etc.) and inequality in poor areas or small municipalities because the amount of fees are low, etc.
5. There are lacking guides and best practices for helping small-medium size local administrations.

In Spain, there are some proposals to change the existing situation from institutions and participants in the current study:

1. Superior Council of Sports is developing an Integral Plan for Promoting Sport at National Level including a chapter for developing infrastructure. This Plan has stimulated most of regions to develop its own plan with new policies.
2. The new policies at regional level. For instance Catalonia and Extremadura have developed a Director Plan and wants to update and fit it to new local proposals by approving proposals based on studies of needs and sustainability.
3. There are new initiatives for developing non conventional sport facilities such as Greenways and the establishment of the so called 'Young factory' for gathering the local proposals of persons to built new sport environment. For instance, in the framework of Young Factory, the young people of a city bring proposals to an local official paid by regional government (e.g., urban skating park, urban speleology area, etc.), and the government prioritize and fund some of them promoting initiative, and physically active leisure social areas.

Conclusion

In Spain there are three major types of sport facilities: sport facilities for international competitions or events (they have to obey to international sport federations), classical-conventional sport facilities (for example pavilions, hand ball, tennis track, etc.), non-conventional sport facilities (pathways, parks, snow tracks, etc.). The high performance facilities are mainly funded, planned and developed by the National Superior Sports Council, but it collaborates with regional and local level. The other facilities are planned, funded and managed by regional and local level. There are scarce regulations to plan, design and build other types of facilities. Furthermore, there are no specific regulations for the financing, managing and development of local infrastructure for LTPA (especially for facilities designed for sports and physical activity (e.g. playgrounds, cycle paths) or facilities not designed for sports and physical activity but usable for LTPA nonetheless (e.g. forests and beaches), neither at national level nor at local level.

There is a great variability in the development and management of LTPA among regions in Spain. To date, there are few policies but regions are preparing new regional policies for updating the plan of sport facilities building and managing. This scenario promotes new markets for public and private institutions or companies for developing assessment of new proposals, monitoring the impact of facilities and managing the sport facilities. There are some new initiatives for linking the well-studied based proposals from local level to regional level stakeholders in Catalonia or Young Factory for linking population-based proposals to experts, professionals and stakeholders at regional and local level. There are some challenges for the regulation of market: a) to provide a guide (recommendations, policies, etc.) for the non-conventional sport facilities, b) to promote the sport consultant in the urban plans for promoting physically active leisure in parks, active transport, use of new formats, etc., c) to reduce the disbalance of knowledge between some sport responsible at local level and other agents by promoting standard agreements forms, policies to avoid abusive agreements, monitoring committees, etc.. There are few regions with specific sport policy for managing the relationships between local governments and other governments (regional nor national) or private institutions or companies.

To date, not all regional stakeholders prioritize the development of comprehensive sport policy for developing LPTA, but national, regional and local actors (public and private) agreed with the need of writing national or local good practice guidelines for developing local infrastructure for LTPA.

3.13 The Netherlands

Background information policy system

Together with the Queen, the Council of Ministers forms the Government, which makes all the major decisions. The cabinet consists of the ministers and state secretaries. The cabinet is led by the Prime Minister. There are 16 Ministers, most of whom are also heads of specific government ministries (13 in total), although there are often one or two ministers without portfolio who have areas of responsibility inside one or more ministries.

Regional government in the Netherlands is formed by twelve provinces. Provinces have responsibilities in many fields. Concerning the infrastructure for LTPA they are responsible for land-use planning, health policy and recreation, within the bounds prescribed by the national government. Furthermore they oversee the policy and finances of municipalities. Land-use planning is one of the most important of the provinces' tasks. The Netherlands is a dense populated country in which every scrap of land could be used in many possible ways. The provinces draw up regional plans demarcating broad zones for housing, agriculture, wildlife areas, office accommodation, industrial estates and roads. Where transport is concerned, the province is responsible for constructing roads, cycle paths, bridges and viaducts, and managing and maintaining them. The provinces are also responsible for conserving areas of outstanding natural beauty like the coastal dunes.

Local government in the Netherlands is formed by 458 municipalities. Municipalities are responsible, among other areas, for education, spatial planning and social security, within the bounds prescribed by the national and provincial government. They are governed by the College of Mayor and Aldermen. The Mayor is appointed by the national Cabinet and responsible to the Minister of the Interior and Kingdom Relations. The Aldermen are appointed by, and responsible to the Municipal Council, which is elected by direct suffrage. Municipalities derive more than 90 per cent of their income

from central government. Some of it comes from the Municipalities Fund, supplied by central government from tax revenue and divided between the municipalities. The municipalities are free to use this money as they see fit. They also receive grants for specific purposes, like public transport or youth social work. How much they get depends on population and local circumstances. Municipalities also have the power to charge taxes.

Recent developments

Central governments' tasks are more and more decentralised to local authorities. This affords local authorities to adopt a more integrated approach to sport and exercise, education, youth and health policy. This integrated approach is promoted by the national government. There is, for example, a wide public interest in projects at the interface of education and sport. National incentives and projects like 'Young people on the move', 'Sport for All' and 'Neighbourhood, Education, Sport' have facilitated this collaboration. However, the effect of school and sports projects on the exercise patterns of young people as a whole is minimal because of the ad-hoc character and the fact that partners do not always see the benefits (Report on Sport, 2008).

More people are taking part in sport in the Netherlands than ever before: 71% of the population participated in sport at least once in 2007, compared with 53% at the end of the 1970s. Although participation in sport is still growing, the number of sports facilities is failing to keep pace or is even falling back in relative terms. The main areas of growth are in the number of Cruijff Courts (playing fields established in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, sponsored by the Johan Cruijff Foundation) and Krajicek playgrounds (a similar project involving the creation of sports fields and playgrounds for young people in disadvantaged areas, sponsored by the Richard Krajicek Foundation), and commercial sports organizations (horse riding schools, sports academies, fitness centres). The trend towards moving open air sports facilities out of central urban areas to peripheral municipalities, has been under way for some time and has continued in recent years. Residents of these peripheral municipalities relatively frequent practice sport in a green environment. The routine of the working day means that sport and associational life only really get going after 5 p.m. This offers opportunities for utilising empty sports facilities during work and school hours. The growing interest in health, both among the population and from the perspective of policy and related sectors (wellness, hospitality industry, leisure) is likely to generate further growth in the sector (Report on Sport, 2008).

Selection of experts

We approached nine representatives of relevant organizations for an individual interview. Most representatives were contacted through the personal network but we also applied the snowball method when we did not contact the right person at once. We finally conducted six interviews. For three organizations the representatives did not participate. Reasons for non-participation were no time, no interest in the subject and no availability of the right person within the approached organization.

National level:

1. VNG, Association of Netherlands Municipalities. Policy Officer Sport and Public Health. The VNG is the organization for municipalities (interest group). Consultation with the two layers of government (provinces and municipalities) takes place on a regular basis. There is also regular consultation with nearly all ministries of the central government in The Hague. The tasks of the Association of

Netherlands Municipalities is representing the members' interests, provision of services, providing information and facilitating the exchange of knowledge and experience. Tasks of the VNG and expert concerning Sports:

- Representative of municipalities concerning policy making on national level
- Knowledge transfer between the national government and local governments
- Initiating and managing projects concerning sport and public health together with local governments and the national governments.

2. NISB, Netherlands Institute for Sports and Physical Activity. Senior Advisor Space. The aim of NISB is to make the best possible use of the positive social values of sport and physical activity. NISB works for governments, sports organizations and other organizations that are either directly or indirectly involved in sport and activity.

NISB is known as a knowledge and innovation institute that is well informed about important developments and trends. NISB also has the knowledge and skills to help direct innovation, the improvement of expertise and support in the area of sport and physical activity. The job responsibility of the expert is to set up a policy agenda concerning space and infrastructure for physical activity. This is a new policy area within the NISB. The following issues initiated this new initiative:

- The goal of the NISB is to stimulate people to be physical active, which is connected to a well organised physical infrastructure. In research about effective interventions several bottlenecks appeared concerning the design of the space/environment.
- Furthermore, several parties asked: what is a physical activity friendly environment? More knowledge is needed about the criteria.
- NISB is involved in several projects of the Ministry of Housing, Spatial planning and the Environment concerning the design of healthy neighbourhoods. The question is how can physical activity in the neighbourhood be stimulated?
- Finally, NISB is joining a network to think about a Durable and Healthy City in 2040, Sports and Physical Activity is part of it. More knowledge about design of space and infrastructure for physical activity is useful for this initiative.

3. National Government, House of Representatives. Member of the House of Representatives (MP) and member of the committees: Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality Transport, Public Works and Water Management, Education, Culture and Science, European Affairs Health, Welfare and Sport and the Dutch Group at the Interparliamentary Union Economic Affairs. MPs discuss issues in standing committees. A number of MPs, in most cases the spokespersons on the subject in question for each political group, discuss the Government's policy with a Minister or State Secretary in a committee meeting. The work of MPs largely consists of attending meetings and voting on political issues. These activities are preceded by the necessary preparations, such as the close examination of documents, working visits, opportunities for the public to make their opinions heard, consultations with the voters and the general public. Important issues are almost always dealt with in plenary sittings, for instance general (political or financial) considerations, debates about important topical issues and the deliberations on bills and budgets. Final decision-making also takes place in plenary sittings, e.g. voting on bills, amendments and motions.

4. State Forest Service (national level). Senior Policy Officer. The State Forest Service is an independent administrative body whose principal is the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality. Since State Forest Service's independence, annual agreements have been made with the ministry which list the objectives and the price at which these are to be realised. The State Forest Service annually reports to the Ministry of LNV and to the parliament in the so-called Verslag Doelrealisatie [Objective Realisation Report] on the results achieved. Their mission is to work towards a sustainable living environment for man, plant and animal. As a social organization the State Forest Service is there for and on behalf of society. We cooperate actively with Dutch citizens and the organizations and institutions that represent them. Their objectives are:
 1. maintaining, restoring and developing woodland, natural heritage, landscape and cultural-historical values at the sites of the State Forest Service;
 2. promoting outdoor-recreation at as many State Forest Service sites as possible;
 3. contributing to the production of environmentally-friendly, renewable raw materials such as timber.

Local level:

5. Municipality of The Hague. Head of the Sector Sport. The Hague is the third largest city in the Netherlands with a population of around 483,000. Within the municipality three departments are involved in the infrastructure for sports and leisure time infrastructure:
 1. Department of Education, Culture and Welfare
 2. Department of Urban Development
 3. Department of city supervision

The interviewee is working for the department of Education, Culture and Welfare and responsible for the sports sector. The sector sports is involved in the planning, realisation and management of sports accommodations, facilities, sports activities, life style activities, top class sport and sports events. Furthermore this department thinks along with the department for spatial planning about the public space in the city. The department of city supervision supervises the public accommodations. The sector sport also works together with schools and education organizations in order to realize and use sports accommodations.
6. Oranjewoud. Senior Advisor. Oranjewoud is a stock-noted leading consultancy and engineering firm. They consult municipalities and provinces about the feasibility of realisation and management of sports accommodations, particularly outdoor facilities, multifunctional buildings, water sport facilities, cycling paths etc. There is less emphasis on indoor facilities. Furthermore Oranjewoud provides technical and legal advice to local governments.

National Policy

The national government is responsible for the national policy which includes the LTPA infrastructure. While the national government sets out a vision, the policy goals for the coming years and some minimum requirements, provinces and municipalities have a high degree of local autonomy and they are responsible for the content of the policy of local infrastructure for sports and recreation (planning, financing, building and managing). There is no specific legislation on national level concerning the spatial planning for the LTPA infrastructure, there are no formal planning norms. Neither are there policy document only focussing on the infrastructure for LTPA. It is usually one of the subjects addressed in a national policy document. Nevertheless there are legal

rules, directives and norms concerning the physical characteristics of buildings and other infrastructural objects and spatial planning in general. Also informal directives, and handbooks are available. These are described in the next section.

Policy documents

We made a distinction between national policy documents, norms/directives and legislation and other reports/documents. Some documents include only sports while others also take facilities designed for physical activity and facilities not designed for physical activity into account. Here we give a short description of the most important policy documents.

The basis for the national sport policy is formed by three core themes: 'exercise', 'taking part' and 'performance', laid down in the **Time for Sport policy document** and the **Together for Sport** implementation program (Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sports, 2005/2006). In line of these documents a Sports Policy Letter was written in 2007. In the **Sports Policy Letter** (Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sports, The power of sport, 2007) the Cabinet announces a number of objectives: involving sports clubs in education, increasing the impact of sports and physical activity on the health of the population and the participation and integration of, and establishing equal rights for, disadvantaged and vulnerable groups in sport. The government provides funds to local municipalities in order to set-up projects that fit in the national policy programme. An example is the National Action Plan Sport and Exercise. Money is made available in order to increase the number of people doing the recommended amount of exercise a day.

Policymakers see sport as an important means of contributing to improved public health and social cohesion. This vision is expressed in different documents:

The **Policy framework sport, physical activity and education** (Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sports, 2008) sets out how to improve the connection between sport and education. The overall goal is to improve the sport participation and physical activity of schoolgoing young people. Special attention is paid to sport facilities. One of the bottlenecks is a lack of a sufficient number of proper sport accommodations. The available accommodations are often not multifunctional or are not optimally used. There is also a lack of facilities in old neighbourhoods in urban areas. The innovation of sports accommodations is one of the ways to improve the situation. Furthermore, the importance of integration of school and sport facilities is emphasized. Therefore the government made funds available to stimulate municipalities make schools more multifunctional. In the policy framework a link is made to the **Olympic Plan 2028 (NOC*NSF)**. This plan is under construction. In order to stimulate top sport, stimulation of sport in general, especially among young people, is very important. Therefore young people should get the possibility to discover and develop their talents. This plan specifically deals with creating new and/or upgrading existing infrastructure for physical activity and sports.

In the **National Plan Environment and Health 2008-2012** priorities are set out concerning the connection between health and the environment. One of the priorities of the government is to design and manage the environment in a healthy way. Especially the nature can improve the physical activity of people and can reduce stress. The government will incorporate this topic in existing projects and programs, for example within the strong communities program. The Ministry of Housing Spatial Planning and

the Environment selected 40 socially deprived neighbourhoods (strong communities) and made plans to make improvements on the topics living, working, learning, growing up, integration and safety in these communities. Special attention will be paid to vulnerable groups. It is a joint initiative of the Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and Environment, the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality and the Ministry of Transport Public Works and Watermanagement.

Finally we would like to mention some other relevant documents. At first, the **Handbook Sports Accommodations**. This is developed by the Netherlands Olympic Committee/ Netherlands Sport Federation (NOC*NSF). This organization is formed by ninety sport organizations representing the sport clubs in the Netherlands. The handbook is published on a website and provides an overview of information about sports, building of sport accommodations and related legislation. Specific norms and directives for sport accommodations and sport fields, for different sports, can be found here. Sport clubs have free access to this website. On national level several manuals are developed to help municipalities to build up a new neighbourhood by taking into account aspects like the safety, environment and health. An example is the **Manual Promotion of Physical Activity and Safe Neighbourhoods** (RIVM, 2005). For every step in the planning process tips are provided.

A **Guideline for area development** is developed by the Rural Area Service (Dienst Landelijk Gebied), an Agency of Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality. The instrument helps parties involved in area development with the process of policy making. The process exists of 5 stages: pre-exploration phase, exploration phase, realisation, exploitation, management.

As there are no formal planning norms for the infrastructure of LTPA on national level, it is possible to make informal norms. Parties involved in the use and management of playgrounds (NUSO, Jantje Beton, they stands up for the chance to play for all children in the Netherlands) developed the **Handbook Playground Policy** (Handboek Speelruimte Beleid). The handbook provides an advisory norm of 3% room to play per hectare. The municipality of Rotterdam developed a **playgrounds norm** for the city. It contains some basic requirements for playgrounds, schools and the social environment which should be taken into account when (re)building a new neighbourhood. Every two years is tested whether existing neighbourhoods comply with these norms.

The topic of recreational areas is addressed in the **National Spatial Strategy, Spatial Planning Act** and the **Agenda for a Living Countryside** (involved Ministries: Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and Environment, Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality, Ministry of Transport, Public Works, and Watermanagement).

The Dutch Government has recently adopted the **National Spatial Strategy**. The most noticeable adaptation in National Spatial Strategy is its governance model, or 'steering philosophy' - the way national policy will be further elaborated at the regional and local levels through the participation of a range of actors: the public sector, private firms and the community of voluntary and non-governmental organizations. Central government does not want to be involved in all planning matters and is decentralising responsibilities to other tiers (provinces and municipalities) of government; it intends to give strategic guidance on spatial development. Of course, central government will determine the direction to be taken on matters involving the national interest, but where

regional interests are paramount, regional parties will be given greater freedom to determine their own course of action. The provincial and municipal councils - and let us not forget civil society organizations and interested citizens - know what is needed. That is why central government will allow different regional and local approaches and policy interpretations. These basic requirements apply in the first place to nature, landscape, cultural heritage and water management.

The national government of The Netherlands, provincial authorities and municipal authorities determine by means of spatial plans the Dutch landscape of today and tomorrow. The **Spatial Planning Act** (Wet op de ruimtelijke ordening, WRO) regulates how those plans are drawn up and amended. Citizens experience the impact of the Act when undertaking a building and conversion project or when they disagree with a decision of municipal authorities, provincial authorities or national government.

In the **Agenda for a Living Countryside** a new management model is described for rural areas. The principle is that the government will enter into agreements with individual provinces for a period of seven years, in which measurable performance targets will be set for each national objective. The government will make financial resources available in order to help the provinces. One of the targets is to make the Netherlands more attractive for recreation. The government aims to create more recreation around towns and wants to make an agreement with provinces about the land to be acquired for this purpose. More 'green' in cities will be established by treaties with the 31 largest cities (G31). The accessibility of rural areas will be reinforced by creating and maintaining footpaths, cycle paths and recreational routes.

In the **Policy Nota Green and Health** (concept, 2009) the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality lists a couple of goals in order to improve the positive effects of the nature on human wellbeing and health. The ministry has a facilitating role in the realisation of the objectives in collaboration with other relevant parties. The goals are:

Knowledge development and use of good practices to stimulate the link between spatial planning and the health sector;

1. Stimulating more nature in the living area;
2. Stimulating green areas that stimulate physical activity;
3. Stimulation green areas for young people;
4. Stimulating the improvement of green resources in the health care sector;
5. Supporting initiatives in this area of citizens.

Policy documents for specific target groups

Special funding programs were set up to improve physical activity among young people (Alliance school and sport, together strong) and young people from ethnic minorities (Participation of foreign youth by sport).

In 2007 the **Social Support Act** (Wet Maatschappelijke Ondersteuning: WMO) came into force in order to give an impulse to municipalities to stimulate active participation of all inhabitants in the society. Municipalities have to make a policy document (with consultation of the citizens) and have to publish the results every year. Access to sports facilities for disabled people is one of the points of interest.

The **Action plan neighbourhoods** of the Ministry of Housing Spatial Planning and the Environment describes how 40 socially deprived neighbourhoods can be improved on the topics living, working, learning, growing up, integration and safety. Sport is

acknowledged as a topic that can help to tackle problems in deprived areas. Therefore municipalities are asked to pay special attention to communities that do not have (enough) sports clubs. Municipalities can include sports in their action plan with the aid of the Community Schools, Sport and Culture initiative, which provides funding (The Power of Sport, 2008)

The technical building regulations in the Netherlands are laid down in the **Building Decree** (or Building Code; Dutch: Bouwbesluit). The Decree contains the minimal technical building requirements which are deemed necessary from a public viewpoint and have to be complied with by any one undertaking construction activities in the Netherlands. These requirements concern among others the usefulness of buildings (e.g. access for disabled people)

According to the interviewed expert from the municipality of The Hague individual municipalities pay attention to the access of accommodations for specific target groups (young people, older people, foreign people, disabled etc.) in their policy. They collaborate closely with schools to achieve their goals. Specific projects are financed by the municipality itself and by national funds.

Policies on regional and local level

Sport and related infrastructure is an autonomous policy area for municipalities. Municipalities are responsible for the policy making process concerning sports and leisure time facilities in their region: planning, financing, building and managing. According to one expert we should add policy making before above mentioned sequence of planning etc. municipalities have a wide variety of sports and leisure time facilities including: swimming pools, sports halls and fields, skating rinks, playgrounds, private fitness centres/sports schools and cycling paths and recreational areas (e.g. beach). Some municipalities have special sport facilities, like Cruyff Courts and Krajicek playgrounds. A special initiative was taken in the municipality of The Hague with the so called The Hague Sports Park. Many deprived neighbourhoods lack facilities for sport. A solution was found for one specific neighbourhood. They built-up a sports complex with multifunctional sports fields in the neighbourhood which is used by five primary schools and sports clubs.

The interviewed experts globally described the policy making process concerning different facility types within a municipality. According to one expert most projects are started when there is a real need for a new facility. Furthermore most projects are not very frequent. For example a sport hall can exist for 40 years. Municipalities are sometimes supported by consultancy firms for specific projects. They perform policy advise, feasibility studies and research phased before the actual realization of new facilities, but they also take the management and exploitation of the facilities into account. Furthermore they can support municipalities in the realization phase of a new facility.

The first step is to define the needs for the future within the municipality. Relevant questions in this stage are: which accommodations and facilities do we need in the future? for which groups? etc. In practice there is a trend to integrate these topics with topics related to e.g. education, and spatial planning of urban and green areas. The municipality of The Hague performs monitoring research to get better insight in the sport behaviour and attitude of the inhabitants and their renting behaviour of facilities (e.g. sport halls and sport fields) in order to be able to plan their activities. Recently

they developed, together with an external party, a planning instrument to give a prediction of the future sports and playing facility needs.

Different parties are involved in the planning process (see 2.5). Sometimes an advisory board/group is set up consisting of relevant interest groups to guide the process.

When the decision is made to build a new facility the plan has to be approved by the Municipal Council. The Council grants a sum of money to the project. If the development of a new infrastructure is part of project related to a national action plan municipalities have to apply for a sum of money to finance the project for a part.

Next the municipality will start the realization of a project. In this stage architects and building companies are involved. Furthermore a plan of wishes and requirements is made. There are no policy document that prescribe how to execute this phase, however, there are several norm and procedures municipalities have to take into account (e.g. rules and norms related to contracting and building).

Sports facilities, like swimming pools, sports halls and fields are owned and managed by the municipality itself. Usually sports halls are rented out to schools, sports organizations but are also used for events. Sport fields (e.g. hockey, football) are rented out to sport clubs (associations). Playing fields, and multifunctional sports field in neighbourhoods are accessible to everybody and are also used by welfare organizations in neighbourhoods and schools. The representative of the municipality of The Hague mentioned that within some municipalities the development and management of sports and playing facilities is outsourced to a private organization. A reason for doing this is that it is more efficient, according to some municipalities.

In general provinces do not develop a policy but help municipalities to implement the national policy and provide support for the local policy development. Most of the money for sports of the provinces is passed on to the Provincial Sport Councils which has the task to support municipalities and sport clubs. However provinces do have an important role the development of cycling paths together with municipalities and other organizations. The so called provincial groups for recreation 'recreatieschappen' are responsible for the development, design, financing and management of the infrastructure for leisure time (e.g. cycling paths, day recreational areas, recreation cycle, walking, skeeler and horse riding paths). A 'recreatieschap' is a collaboration between a couple of municipalities and financed by its members.

According to the representative of the consulting firm there are some differences between the policy steps of the three types of infrastructure. Usually there are more parties involved in the planning phase when it concerns sport facilities, because the end-users are organised in e.g. sport clubs. For playgrounds and cycling paths less parties are involved in the planning phase, because the users are less organized according to the experts. In general it depends on the project which parties are involved.

There are different policy documents/instruments that are related to individual steps in the planning process. For example policy plans should be in line with the zoning plan of the municipality or province. For characteristics of buildings the national legislation applies (Building Act). Furthermore municipalities use internal planning mechanisms concerning the consultation of citizens. Also internal work processes of municipalities are sometimes formalized in documents.

Tuning national policies with regional and local policies

The major way to distribute the national policies to individual municipalities is through policy documents and related documents (research documents, good practice and tools/guides). The Association of Netherlands Municipalities is playing a major role in the communication between the national and local government through official letters, the platform Sports Councilors and their website and newsletters.

There are several national action plans in which the government makes funds available to individual municipalities. A municipality can choose to participate in a program by handing in a policy plan. In return they get a certain amount of money to perform the plan. Usually the municipalities have to co-finance the plan.

Municipalities are also exchanging information through workshops organized by the Netherlands Association Sport and Municipalities, and through meetings between municipalities.

Furthermore knowledge networks are formed. They have an important role in informing municipalities about policy topics related to the infrastructure for LTPA. Existing networks are:

- Kopgroep (goal is to foster innovate facilities and properties with a social purpose)
- Platform Green and City (Platform groen en stad)
- Space for Young People (Ruimte voor de jeugd)
- Network Integral Health Policy (Netwerk integraal gezondheidsbeleid)
- Network the Living City (Netwerk de levende stad)

The common goal of those groups is to support policymakers within municipalities concerning spatial planning from different points of view (sports, health etc.). Their websites provide relevant contact persons, project examples, publications and announcements of meetings.

Description of policy makers (national, regional and local level)

On national level the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sports, the Ministry of Education Culture and Science, the Ministry of Housing, Spatial planning and the Environment, the Ministry of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality and the Ministry of Transport, Public works and Water Management are relevant actors for the infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity (LTPA).

The Ministries of Health, Welfare and Sports and Education Culture and Science are mainly involved in the policy making concerning the sports infrastructure (sports facilities and playgrounds) while the Ministries of Agriculture, Nature and Food Quality, Housing, Spatial planning and the Environment and Health, Welfare and Sports are connected to urban planning (recreational areas) in rural environments. However, the Ministry of Housing, Spatial planning and the Environment is also indirectly involved in the policy area of sports and playground facilities in neighbourhoods.

The national government is usually not involved in the planning and realisation of the three types of infrastructure. However when it concerns large sport facilities, for example a national swimming pool used for international competitions, the government has a stimulating role.

The so called provincial 'recreatieschappen' are responsible for the development, design, financing and management of the infrastructure designed for leisure-time physical activities (e.g. cycling paths, recreation cycling paths, walking, skeeler and horse riding paths) and not designed for physical activities (e.g. day recreational areas) in collaboration with the province. The State Forest Service is concerned with the forests and natural areas.

Within a municipality the local/city council takes the final decisions. The civil service supports the council members responsible for topics related to the infrastructure for LTPA. Depending on the size of the municipality different departments are involved. For example in the municipality of The Hague it concerns three main departments who are working together. They all have their own tasks. Furthermore there can be collaboration with departments working on e.g. education, health and traffic. In some municipalities the planning of new sports and leisure time facilities is integrated in the planning of other facilities (integral policy making). In the municipality of Amsterdam for example there is a large department focused on social development in general. Sports is one of the policy areas.

According to the representative of the municipality of The Hague there are differences between big and smaller municipalities. In smaller municipalities the departments are less focused on sports in general.

There are several parties who can take the initiative to develop a new sports accommodation/object. Projects can be started by the government because they provide funds, municipalities but also by other organizations. According the representative of the Lower House, sport clubs are the main initiators for sport facilities. A skeeler club for example takes the initiative to build a skating rink. The sport club will take care of the maintenance of the facility. However, when the club stops to exist, it is the question who will take over the maintenance of the facility (e.g. soccer fields). On the other hand, according to the representative of the municipality of The Hague most initiatives come from the national government and national sport organizations, sport clubs do usually not show much initiative. According to the experts there are differences between municipalities on this issue.

Description of collaborating partners

Which partners are involved depend on the character of a project. For the planning and design of sport facilities sports organizations such as sport clubs and riding schools, are relevant stakeholders on local level. Sport clubs are united in Municipal Sporting Commissions to better represent the sport clubs within a community. Other supporting organizations for sport clubs are:

1. Provincial sporting commissions (provinciale sportraden)
2. Provincial sport service organizations (they support sports organizations with administrative work)
3. Sports federations (organization of sport clubs on national level)
4. The Netherlands Olympic Committee/ Netherlands Sport Federation (NOC*NSF) (is formed by ninety sport federations representing the sport clubs).

Furthermore municipalities are supported by the Association of Netherlands Municipalities and the Netherlands Association Sport and Municipalities. Private initiatives (fitness clubs and sport schools) do usually not have a link with the sport policy of the municipality. Last but not least, citizens are an important group to involve.

On local level different participation instruments/mechanisms are used (e.g. surveys, hearings).

Depending on the project more parties can be involved. When it concerns for example a sport accommodation in a neighbourhood or an accommodation with a combined function (school and sport function, etc) housing associations, public health services, schools, wellbeing/community organizations and local entrepreneurs can be involved. Commercial project developers are usually not involved according to the experts, except if it concerns the planning and construction of a completely new neighbourhood. Private project developers are involved in the preparation and implementation of large building projects. However, according to the experts, private project developers do not have a social interest. Their main goal is to make profit by selling the final results of a building project.

The Dutch Cyclist Union campaigns for better cycling conditions, and therefore is a relevant stakeholder for the development of new cycling paths. The NUSO is an important stakeholder when it concerns playgrounds. NUSO's aim is for children and young people to have enough and good quality space for playing and sports.

The State Forest Service collaborates with local sports organizations (mountain bike clubs, horse riding clubs), representatives of cyclists and walkers and the organization who is responsible for long distance walking and cycling routes, to realize new sport facilities in their area. NOC*NSF is a partner of the State Forest Service when it concerns the development of golf courts. Furthermore, the State Forest Service recently developed a program, together with the NISB and Jantje Beton, to stimulate children to play in the nature after school. This initiative is promoted by local health services, sport clubs, community centres and schools.

As outlined before the 'provincial recreatieschappen' and the State Forest Service play an important role in the development and management of recreational areas. However in practice more organizations are relevant. Landscape foundations (Foundation for Nature Monuments (Natuurmonumenten) and landscape foundations (landschapsstichtingen)) play an important role in the management of natural areas. The aim of the Foundation for Nature Monuments is to improve the quality of life in the Netherlands by preserving nature, landscape and cultural history. This foundation works together with other conservation organizations, provinces, municipalities, water authorities and local residents to create links between people and nature. There are several landscape foundations, related to regional areas. Their goal/task is to manage, preserve and develop the nature, the landscape and cultural heritage in a regional area. The Dutch Farmers Organization (LTO Nederland) is an stakeholder when it concerns de development of recreation in rural areas.

According to the experts it is not easy to describe the role of each party in the policy process since it depends on the content of a specific project. In the sports infrastructure the so called 'polder model' applies, which means that usually a project group is formed with important stakeholders and meetings are held with a wider target group. However, there are no rules/directions which organizations should be involved.

There are some parties which should be involved more. First inhabitants of urban and rural areas could be involved more. In urban areas sometime a bottom up strategy is applied, organizations of inhabitants are asked for their opinion on the realization of a

new facility, for example a sport field. When it concerns rural areas organizations for farmers are sometimes involved in case of projects in their working and living area, however, this is not always the case according to the representative of consultancy firm. The public health service within the municipality has an important role in the health promotion of citizens. However they are insufficiently involved when it concerns the development of new infrastructure/facilities.

According to several experts, private sports organizations (e.g. fitness centres) should be involved more in development of infrastructure for LTPA. Those organizations can use already existing facilities. This is even more important since there is an increase in private sport schools and fitness clubs. Finally also health care organizations (e.g. revalidation centre) are often neglected, while this is an important party when it concerns the use of facilities.

According to the representative of the NISB different departments within a municipality, like sport, recreation, the department responsible for green areas, transport, education and the public health service should collaborate more in order to improve the local infrastructure for LTPA.

Benefits and downfalls of existing policies (national, regional and local level)

The major benefit of the existing structure/policy model of the infrastructure for LTPA is that municipalities have a substantial amount of autonomy. Consequently there possibilities for creativity and custom made solutions. Furthermore it creates room for negotiation between different stakeholders because not many things are laid down in binding documents. Secondly, in the Dutch model, relevant stakeholders are involved in the policy making process and consequently there is a high level of commitment among the different parties.

However, the interviewed experts mentioned also couple of problem areas. At first, since a lot of stakeholders are involved in the policy process, the realisation of facilities can be time consuming. Furthermore, the experts mentioned a couple of bottlenecks related to the different interest of parties involved. First the issue of the scarce outer space. In urban areas the free space is scarce, consequently there are a lot of parties who are interested in using it. However, there are conflicting interests between the different groups concerning land use. For example between the local economy and enterprises, project developers on the one hand and sport organizations on the other hand. Enterprises have commercial interests which can conflict with social interests of sports organizations and schools. Consequently parties who are involved in the infrastructure for LTPA have to stand up for their plans. It is a challenge to integrate the different interests in order to stimulate physical activity of people. The Netherlands Organization of Sport and Physical activity is, together with other parties, working on this topic. The representative of the Association of Netherlands Municipalities mentioned a contrasting point of view between NOC*NSF and municipalities. The aim of the NOC*NSF is to increase the amount of sports facilities, especially in the neighbourhood of people, since a lot of facilities are build outside the city or village. But, municipalities are bound to their budget. It is easy to say that there is a lack of sport halls, however it is very expensive for a municipality to build a new hall.

Also between municipalities conflicts can appear according to the representative of the Lower House. He mentioned a 'prestige conflict' concerning the realisation of new sport accommodations (e.g. tropical swimming pools, football stadion). It can be favourable for a municipality to build a new sport accommodation for economic

reasons, for example a new football stadium. According to the expert there is a lack of tuning between municipalities and consequently facilities are not equally spread in a specific region. This needs improvement. A guideline or handbook can probably solve this problem according to one of the experts. Also sport unions (e.g. football union) can play a role. They can make a policy document about the distribution of facilities and can contact municipalities about this topic. The overall goal should be to reach an equal distribution of facilities, accessible for all people.

Another topic is the pro-activeness of municipalities. According to one expert a lot of policies for LTPA are developed when there is an urgent need. Most municipalities do not have a vision, or this vision is already quite old. There is need for more pro-active behaviour of municipalities. The activity of a municipality depends to a large extent on the alderman responsible for sports. Especially in smaller municipalities sport might not have high priority since the aldermen have responsibility in several policy areas. However this differs between municipalities.

Although politicians and policymakers sing the praises to integrate different policy areas related to the infrastructure for LTPA, according to the representative of the Lower House there is a lack of integration between different policy areas on local level. Some municipalities decided to make a integral department concerned with different policy areas. However still the integration of the different types of infrastructure is not always optimal according the interviewee. There is no integrated vision on the local level. For example the responsible person for sports is working for an other department than the responsible person for recreation or housing. One of the consequences is lack of use of facilities. Some sports facilities are out of use for a great deal of the time, while it is possible to use those facilities for other groups and purposes. The issue of the use of facilities was mentioned by two experts. There are plans, together with the VNG, to improve use of those kinds of facilities. A possibility is to rent facilities to private organizations, like fitness clubs.

Another mentioned bottleneck is the funding of facilities. According to the representative of the Municipality of The Hague the money flow is not well structured within municipalities. For every new project, when it concerns a new facility, a new procedure is started to finance the project. There are no planning norms, like there are for the education sector. Especially, when money has to be saved in times of less favourable economic circumstances, there is less money available for sports and related infrastructure.

Furthermore, when municipalities take part in a funding program they have to co-finance the other part for a certain period. This can be a problem in less favourable economical circumstances. The representative of the Association of Netherlands Municipalities mentioned they would like to get a better insight in the financial aspects of the activities related to the planning, building and management of infrastructure for LTPA in order to improve the situation.

Finally, the accessibility of recreational areas is not always optimal for slow traffic (people who are walking or cycling) according to the representative of the State Forest Service. It is not very clear who has the responsibility for this issue. The provinces or the municipalities. According to the representative of the State Forest Service, provinces are not concerned about this topic and do not take action. The representative

of the Netherlands Organization of Sport and Physical Activity said that they are working on the improvement of the accessibility of natural areas for citizens.

The general opinion of the interviewees is that the current situation is acceptable. In general the level of the infrastructure for LTPA, and the investment on local level, is high in The Netherlands compared to other countries where they apply a more top-down approach, according to the experts. More norms and legislation on national level will not solve the existing bottlenecks, however a better collaboration between relevant parties is necessary.

Conclusion

The national government sets out the overall goals in several policy documents. Infrastructure of LTPA is usually one of the topics addressed in a national policy document. There is no specific legislation on national level concerning the spatial planning for the LTPA infrastructure and there are no formal planning norms. Nevertheless there are legal rules, directives and norms concerning the physical characteristics of buildings and other infrastructural objects and spatial planning in general. Also informal directives and handbooks are available to support municipalities.

Policymakers see sport as an important means of contributing to improved public health and social cohesion. This vision is expressed in different action plans. The plans are developed to stimulate municipalities to develop policies related to the infrastructure for LTPA for specific target groups and areas (young people, deprived neighbourhoods etc.). Funds are made available for this purpose.

Sport is an autonomous policy area for municipalities. The interviews revealed that there are differences between municipalities concerning the extent they pay attention to planning of new infrastructure projects. According to one expert within many municipalities there is a lack of integration between different policy (e.g. sport, health, transport) areas related to infrastructure for LTPA.

A lot of parties are involved in the policy making and execution process, inside as well as outside a municipality. The experts talked about a dense informal network of national and local organizations (e.g. sport clubs/organizations, user organizations, community organizations, schools, knowledge institutes, supporting organizations for municipalities, consulting firms, house building organizations etc.). This creates a high level of commitment among the different parties. On the other hand the development of a new facility can be time consuming because of a large amount of parties involved. It is very difficult to get all parties on one line since they all have their own priorities. Another area that needs improvement on local level is the lack of use of sport facilities. Some sports facilities are not used a great deal of the time, while it is possible to use those facilities for other groups and purposes. There are plans to solve this issue. Another mentioned bottleneck is the funding of facilities. According to the representative of the Municipality of The Hague the money flow is not well structured within municipalities. For every new construction project the funding has to be granted again. Furthermore, when municipalities take part in a funding program they have to co-finance the other part for a certain period. This can be a problem in less favourable economical circumstances or when sports and physical activity are not among city councils' top priorities.

Provinces (regional level) play a minor role in the policy making process of the infrastructure for LTPA, however they have a responsibility when it concerns transport between municipalities (e.g. highways and cycling paths). A major bottleneck, on regional level, is a lack planning of infrastructure between municipalities. Consequently facilities are not equally spread across regions. This needs improvement. Furthermore the accessibility of recreational areas is not always optimal for slow traffic (people who are walking or cycling). This should be improved. There is already an initiative to work on this issue.

The general opinion of the interviewees is that the current situation is acceptable. In general the level of the infrastructure for LTPA, and the investment on local level, is high in The Netherlands compared to other countries where they apply a more top-down approach, according to the experts. More norms and legislation on national level will not solve the existing bottlenecks; however a better collaboration between relevant parties is necessary.

Interviewees are interested in how the policies for LTPA are developed in other countries but question if this information will be used to change the situation in the Netherlands.

3.14 Overall conclusion

This final section of this chapter compares the national reports and presents the main findings.

Recent developments

In the interviews, the experts were asked to identify recent developments and trends in the field of LTPA infrastructure. Some similar developments were mentioned by several countries:

(1) an increase in people participating in self-organised sports, as described in the reports of Austria and Denmark, and (2) the possibility of using existing sport facilities during the day (not only in the evening) and for purposes other than sport (mentioned by Finland and the Netherlands). There is a trend in Germany towards facility management by independent companies for infrastructure owned by municipal authorities. These "public-private ownerships" aim to finance and manage facilities efficiently and to outsource the management process. While this type of arrangement is already in place in Germany, the interviewees said it is totally absent in Lithuania, but that it would be welcome to overcome financial and management barriers. The other trends mentioned were not found in, or mentioned in the reports from, the other countries. They comprise a rise in needs assessments for different interest groups when planning new infrastructure (Austria), the compulsory incorporation of the stimulation of physical activity and recreation in community planning (Norway), an increase in commercial sports organisations (such as fitness clubs) and an integrated approach to sport, exercise, education, youth and health policies (Netherlands). Some countries stated no recent trends relevant for IMPALA (France, Portugal and Spain).

National policy

The majority of the country reports mentioned a general government vision relating to physical activity and the related infrastructure. For example, the various French ministries acknowledge the major importance of promoting physical activity and developing the infrastructure for physical activity. In Finland, the constitution

recognises the right to sport and physical activity. In the Czech Republic, the government aims to promote health by providing the social and material conditions for physical activity. In Lithuania also, the government aims to create the conditions for a physically active society. The government of Denmark wants to increase the number of physically active people and to make physical activity a natural part of life. The slogan of the Norwegian government is 'sports and physical activity for all'. In Portugal, the government aims to bring physical activity closer to the population because of the health benefits. The Dutch government intends to promote physical activity to increase its impact on health, participation and integration. The healthy design of urban space, which includes the improvement of LTPA infrastructure, was mentioned as a way to achieve these policy goals in the Netherlands.

A few country reports describe more specific visions of, and concrete action with regard to, the improvement of LTPA infrastructure. However, these mainly target sports facilities. In Spain there is a government initiative for the Harmonisation and Improvement of Sports Facilities. As the name implies, the main aim of the project is to harmonise and improve the management of sports facilities. Specific actions target strategic design and planning for new facilities, the purchase of new equipment and materials, and the maintenance and replacement of infrastructure. In Norway, there is a focus on incorporating physical activity in community planning. Municipal authorities who apply for funds from the lottery have to demonstrate that new infrastructure is part of a community sub-plan for sports and physical activity and that it is part of a holistic strategy to promote physical activity in the local community.

Germany and France focus on the planning of sports facilities (with the initiative at the national level). In France, for example, a national database for LTPA infrastructure is being developed. The aim is to establish a quantitative picture of infrastructure and to solve inequalities in the distribution of infrastructure throughout the country. In Germany, the government promotes planning instruments that take into account current and future sporting behaviour. The development of all three types of facilities for LTPA ([1] sports facilities (i.e. public and commercial facilities); [2] facilities designed for sports and physical activity (such as playgrounds and cycle paths); [3] facilities not designed for sports and physical activity but usable for LTPA nonetheless (such as forests and beaches)) is promoted by the Austrian government using a cooperative intersectoral method. Two Austrian pilot projects investigated the needs of local people with respect to the future development of LTPA infrastructure and got different policy areas to work together (sports and landscape planning, for example).

Policy documents

The national policies of the participating countries are expressed in several ways. A distinction can be made between legislation, vision documents, action plans and tools/guides to help regional/local governments.

No legislation is mentioned that specifically deals with infrastructure for LTPA. Some countries have legislation that deals with sport. In Portugal, the Law on Physical activity and Sport promotes an integrated policy for sports infrastructure. Spain has a Sports Law that addresses, among other topics, the structure of the organisation of sports in the country, the accessibility of sport accommodation, safety etc.

The majority of the country reports mention legislation that may be related to LTPA infrastructure. This may be urban planning legislation, building legislation, or legislation about the allocation of financial resources for the building of facilities (distribution of subsidies, lottery money, public procurement). In addition, some reports

also mentioned legislation relating to the allocation of responsibilities relating to the planning and building of LTPA infrastructure (Denmark, Czech Republic). Legislation on other issues can be also indirectly related to LTPA infrastructure. For example, France has a Law on air quality, which promotes cycling for environmental reasons by stimulating the construction of more cycling lanes. Norway has legislation about access to outdoor areas. The act secures access to outlying fields and forests, whether they are private or public spaces.

A majority of the national reports (for example, those from Austria, Finland, the Czech Republic, Lithuania, Norway, Portugal and the Netherlands) state that the promotion of physical activity is expressed in vision documents.

Several reports mention action plans relating to physical activity. Sometimes, the national governments make national funds available for local activities. For example, the Czech Republic has ten programmes in which the state provides support for sport in the form of the development and renovation of sports facilities. The Netherlands has several action plans that provide funds for projects to foster physical activity among vulnerable groups and schoolchildren by improving the physical environment (including sports facilities or play areas). Portugal has an action plan with the aim of taking sport into account in urban planning. Norway and the Netherlands have National Action Plans on Physical Activity which aim to foster physical activity among all inhabitants of the country. These documents emphasise the need to develop LTPA infrastructure. The greenways and natural pathway programme in Spain promotes the transformation of old railways into green paths for recreational use.

Finally, some national reports mention specific tools/guidelines for guiding/helping regional and local authorities in several areas such as safe road construction, sports facility planning and area development. The government or other national organisations initiate the development of these tools. In Denmark, for example, the national government developed tools based on the Act on Urban Renewal and Urban Development to help develop urban initiatives. A guideline for safe roads was also developed. In Germany, guidelines for planning were made at the national level to help local authorities. In the Netherlands, a handbook was developed to help sports organisations with all kinds of legislation, as well as legislation relating to the building and management of infrastructure for sport facilities. Furthermore, a guideline for area development is available for municipal authorities and other relevant stakeholders.

Policy documents are also prepared at the regional and local levels. Some reports gave examples. For example, Austria has policy documents at the regional level that deal indirectly with the development of LTPA infrastructure. Examples are the urban development plan for Vienna, criteria for cycling paths in Lower Austria, and a document about playground subsidies in Upper Austria. In Denmark, the municipality of Odense developed a vision for the city which aims to improve the quality of life and to develop of a sustainable and healthy city. One of the goals is the creation of space for physical activity. Given the scope of this project, it was not possible to give a comprehensive overview of documents at the regional and local levels.

Policy documents for specific target groups

All the policy reports mentioned general anti-discrimination legislation and legislation relating to equal access to buildings for handicapped people. However, none of them mentioned specific policies for the development of LTPA infrastructure for specific

target groups. Only the reports from France, the Netherlands and Norway mentioned initiatives to promote physical activity in, and the building of facilities for, deprived neighbourhoods/areas/groups of people (low socio-economic status, ethnic groups). However, these initiatives did not specifically target LTPA infrastructure. Some countries target specific age groups (children and elderly people). For example, some municipal authorities take gender and family factors into account when planning LTPA infrastructure (in Austria, Finland and the Czech Republic, for example).

Policies at the regional and local levels

All the country reports say that policy development and the actual development (planning, building, management) of LTPA infrastructure in all three facility categories are usually located at the level of municipal authorities. Most of the country reports explained that municipal authorities in particular enjoy a high level of autonomy in the area of sport and LTPA infrastructure. However, the activities at the local level have to be in line with the more general guidelines set out in national legislation or policy. Major projects of national importance are mainly initiated and financed at the national level. Regional authorities are less involved. Facilities located in several municipalities are usually the responsibility of the regional government. In general, we conclude from the country reports that regional governments do not have a large role in the development of LPTA infrastructure.

At the local level also, several policy fields and municipal departments are involved. All the country reports said that policies and activities are highly dependent on a specific project/type of infrastructure. Different parties are involved. There is no overall policy for planning, building and managing LTPA infrastructure at the local level and no systematic integration of the three types of infrastructure. However, LTPA infrastructure is usually part of a spatial plan.

The type of funding depends on the kind of infrastructure. For some projects that are in line with government policies, municipal authorities can apply for funding. Other facilities, mainly the smaller ones, are funded by the municipality/region. Furthermore, EU funds are sometimes available. Several country reports said that there is a strong focus in local policy on sports facilities compared to the other LTPA facilities.

Coordination between national policies and regional and local policies

The national reports mentioned a wide range of possibilities for communicating national policies to the regional and local policy levels. Communication through legislation and other policy documents (action plans, calls for funding) was mentioned most often. Several reports also mentioned websites, leaflets, papers and letters. Meetings between representatives of national, regional and local governments were mentioned less often. These include workgroups working on a certain topic related to LTPA infrastructure, round table discussions and knowledge networks. National associations of municipal authorities (who represent the authorities at the national level) also play a central role in communications and support in some counties (Netherlands, Norway, Denmark). France and the Czech Republic reported no systematic provision of information by the national government to the local level.

Description of policymakers (national, regional and local level)

All the country reports described policymakers at the national, regional and local levels. At the national level, several ministries are involved. In general, the ministries involved cover the following areas: sport, education, youth, health, transport, tourism,

environment and spatial planning. Other national organisations were also mentioned: sports associations/federations and the National Olympic Committee (France and the Netherlands). The main actor is the municipal authority, which also has the final say. However, this depends on the funding level/share in the funding of a project. Within the municipalities, City Councils have the final say in new plans/decisions. Several municipal departments are involved (such as sport, culture, transport, planning etc.). The role of the regional level differs from country to country, but is usually limited to the development of LTPA infrastructure.

Description of partners

The majority of the country reports say that the kind of partners involved depends on the project. There is a wide range of different stakeholders at different levels.

At the national level, knowledge institutes or institutes for sports, forest/nature organisations (management of natural areas, lobby groups for nature conservation etc.), associations of municipalities and interest groups (for cycling, outdoor sports etc.) were mentioned. At the local level, interest groups, community organisations, sports clubs/associations, private entrepreneurs, construction companies, architects, engineers, housing corporations, health services, landowners, schools, private investors and fitness clubs were mentioned.

In some countries, public hearings/meetings and joint viewings are organised to involve local residents.

Some interest groups should be involved more. Several country reports said that non-organised end users (such as people engaging in sporting activities they organise themselves) needed to be involved more. It is difficult to reach these groups because they are not represented by an organisation. However, this area is gaining in importance because of the increase in non-organised sports (Germany, Austria). Other parties that should be involved more are local residents (present and future), private sports clubs/fitness centres, landowners, healthcare and health insurers, and universities and other knowledge institutes since they can give relevant input for the development of LTPA infrastructure. Norway and Finland reported more involvement of private investors. This can help to fund local projects, but it is important to ensure that the investors can benefit from their investments, and this not always the case. Some reports reported more involvement of ministries and politicians at the local level. The interviews in Portugal revealed that there is no need there for more stakeholders but that an improvement is required in the quality of the existing networks at the local level.

Benefits and drawbacks of existing policies (national, regional and local levels)

Municipal authorities enjoy extensive autonomy when it comes to the development of, and policy for, LTPA infrastructure (with the exception of legislation). A major benefit of the current situation is the flexibility and creativity at the local level. The extensive autonomy fosters self-governing. Furthermore, different parties initiate projects. This possibility encourages new initiatives since everybody can come up with a new idea. In several countries, the open discussion between the different stakeholders is seen as a benefit. Furthermore, each municipality can set out its own priorities in accordance with local needs.

Other benefits mentioned related more to specific policies within a country:

For example, in the Czech Republic, certain areas are reserved for sports/leisure purposes. At the local level in Norway, there are regulations for preventing green areas

being placed outside the cities. In Germany, national visions are transformed into action at the local level. In the Lithuanian report, some experts pointed to the general economic benefits and prestige associated with existing LTPA facilities.

Although a few benefits were mentioned in almost all countries, far more drawbacks were reported. A few themes can be identified.

First of all, there were several drawbacks in terms of the *available resources* for sports and other facilities for LTPA. Several country reports found that the lack of financial resources and public funding was a drawback of the present situation (Finland, France, Denmark, Germany, Lithuania, Norway). In Norway, demand exceeds the available resources, and the number of areas for which public funding from the lottery can be used is limited. In Lithuania, there is a strong focus on the financing of national sports events, while the majority of people do not benefit from these events. In the Netherlands, an expert at the local level said that the funding of facilities for LTPA is not planned. A decision is required for every new facility about how it should be funded at the local level. By contrast, in education, there are standards for the number of facilities and funding. The French report also reported a shortage of qualified staff.

The lack of resources could be related to the lack of *priority given to sports and physical activity* by policymakers. The German contribution, for example, reported a lack of political commitment to sports and related infrastructure. The Austrian report also said that some political actors are not committed to sports. The Lithuanian report stressed that public health issues have a low priority, and so there is no extensive promotion of physical activity. The Czech report mentioned that plans/policies depend on the election cycle, and that this precludes long-term strategies. These issues are also mentioned in the Dutch national report: there is sometimes no long-term vision relating to the LTPA infrastructure at the local level and decisions are made on an *ad hoc* basis. The promotion of physical activity among specific target groups (young and older people, groups with low socio-economic status) also requires more attention. In the Czech Republic, for example, care for young and older people is not a priority; in Denmark, a lack of government interest (at the local and national levels) in groups with low socio-economic status is seen as a bottleneck.

Secondly, several drawbacks were reported in terms of *collaboration between different parties*. The majority of the country reports reported a lack of intersectoral collaboration between organisations involved in the three types of infrastructure. This is true of the national government (different ministries) and of local government (different departments within a municipality). Furthermore, several reports complain about the large number of parties involved. As a consequence, the implementation of new plans can take a relatively long time. Finally, parties' conflicting interests are seen as an obstacle to developing and managing infrastructure. For example, the report from Norway mentions conflicting interests between nature conservation organisations and outdoor-sports organisations. The 'nature' organisations try to protect natural values, whereas outdoor-sports organisations want to use nature for several sports activities as much as possible. The Austrian report also addresses this topic. ATB cyclists and ramblers sometimes use vulnerable nature too intensively. In Norway, there is an initiative to improve the dialogue between nature and outdoor-sports organisations about the new nature management act, which takes into account both points of view. Within urban areas, there are reports indicating competition for land use (Germany, Netherlands). In urban areas, land is scarce and this leads to competition between

different parties who are interested in using the land for several purposes, including physical activity. The Dutch report describes conflicting interests between municipal authorities and the sports sector. While the sports sector struggles to obtain more sport facilities, municipal authorities have to make choices and they do not always have adequate funding to develop new facilities. Intermediary organisations (such as the Netherlands Institute for Sports and Physical Activity) try to improve the integration of the different interests of collaborating partners. The French report describes plans for improving the exchange of information between municipal authorities through the national association of municipal representatives. In the Czech Republic report, experts suggest the creation of working groups within municipalities to foster collaboration between the different departments. In Germany, there is an initiative at a national level (from the German Institute of Sport Science and the Olympic Committee) to develop policies that integrate the promotion of physical activity with other sectors (health, transport and education).

Another topic is the '*distribution*' of facilities at the national level. The Danish report describes an imbalance in the distribution of sports facilities across the country, which leads to certain areas in the country having less access to certain sports facilities. In other areas, sports facilities are too concentrated. The Dutch report a lack of coordination between neighbouring municipal authorities in the building/planning of new infrastructure, resulting in the uneven distribution of facilities. The Norwegian report describes a mismatch between the activity profile of the people and the available facilities. There is no mechanism to prevent the mismatch between the number of facilities and number of inhabitants. However, there are plans at present to establish a balance in the distribution of funding between outdoor facilities and sports facilities in Norway. The report from the Czech Republic says there is no clear overview of facilities at the country level at all. In Austria, an instrument is being developed for cooperative facility planning in order to enhance transparency and congruence in the planning process for the three types of facilities.

A topic addressed in several country reports is the *large amount of legislation* and bureaucracy, especially for the building of new infrastructure (Denmark, Lithuania, and Portugal). The large number of rules, for example, means that it can take a long time before a new plan is approved (Portugal). Furthermore, the reports from Denmark and Lithuania report conflicting national policies/legislation.

Finally, several drawbacks were reported that cannot be classified under one of the topics listed here. The most important are:

- The inefficient use of sports facilities (Austria and the Netherlands); most of the sports facilities are used in the evening, and not used at all for the rest of the day. Consequently, in Austria, there are some initiatives to open school sports facilities (after school hours) for other purposes.
- Poorly qualified staff for the management/maintenance of existing facilities (Portugal).
- Poor accessibility to outdoor areas for slow traffic (Netherlands).

Most country reports describe concrete actions that have been included above. Some country reports do not mention any plans for change (although there are sometimes discussions about improvements). In other reports, it remains unclear whether any plans are being developed. This applies to Finland, the Czech Republic, Lithuania and Portugal.

4 Results per country: focus group interviews

4.1 Introduction

A focus group interview was organised in the participating countries to collect experiences on the policies regarding development of LTPA infrastructure. Following paragraphs describe these experiences. The experts further discussed issues regarding the maintenance, accessibility, and quality of communication between local officials and end-users. The participants were asked to think of possible recommendations and advice to the discussed issues.

4.2 Austria

4.2.1 *Selection of experts*

In Austria 15 organisations were contacted in three federal states. Four organisations from local municipalities were contacted (three in Vienna, one in Burgenland). Three organisations were NGOs coordinating land use for recreation or sports (two in Vienna, one in Lower Austria). Two organisations were commercial contractors with regional coverage (one in Vienna, one in Lower Austria). Two organisations which administrate larger local sports facilities/complexes housing more than one type of sport in Vienna were contacted. Four larger sport clubs were contacted (Two in Vienna and two in Lower Austria). Most of them were contacted through personal network, only some organizations were new contacts. The responsible persons for discussing issues on the development of infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity were found through the snowball method.

Finally seven interview partners were discussing at the focus group meeting on 28th of May 2008. The most frequent reason for non-participation was that the persons had other appointments or meetings on this day. Three of the potential interview partners cancelled only one day before the meeting. Another reasons for non-participation was that the person who is responsible for the development of infrastructure within the organisation could not be found or did not answer after several attempts getting in contact.

The following seven experts were consulted for the focus group interview:

Representing local municipalities:

Head of the department, Municipal Department of Leisure-Time Enterprises, Eisenstadt, Burgenland. The aim of this municipal department is to administrate all issues concerning leisure-time facilities owned by Eisenstadt municipality. It administrates a swimming hall, a multisport complex, a cinema and a historic pavilion from the Esterhazy castle, which is restaurant and seminar and exhibition hall.

Projectleader Park Care Service („Parkbetreuung“), Municipal Department 13 – Education, Out-of-School Activities for Children and Young People, Vienna. The aim of this municipal department is to administrate and the sector education, out-of-school activities for children and young people. One division organises the park care

service (“Parkbetreuung”) to guide and manage activities by young people in Viennese parks.

Head of the planning department (attended the focus group only short), Municipal Department 42 - Parks and Gardens, Vienna. The aim of this municipal department is to administrate all issues of parks and gardens in Vienna. The municipal department consist of 9 subdivisions; one of them is the planning department. Many of the parks in Vienna are designed by this department.

Representing NGOs involved in coordinating land use for recreation or sports:

Trainer and member of the department for alpine activities, Austrian Alpine Association, Vienna. The Austrian Alpine Association is the biggest club for alpine sports, has 360.000 members and 197 sections in whole Austria. Among others one of their duties is the maintenance of hiking paths.

Representing commercial contractor:

Management Assistant, Beer’s Vienna Health and Dance Club. Beer’s is a fitness club in Vienna offering a high quality programme and special programmes for managers. It has 1300 members with 3 studios.

Representing local sports complexes housing more than one type of sport:

Architect for sports facilities and member of the steering committee of the sports association „Sportunion Vienna“. “Sportunion” is one out of three major sports associations in Austria. The “Sportunion Vienna has approximately 200 member clubs and 100.000 single members. They provide access to 8 sport facilities and complexes housing more than one type of sport.

Representing sport clubs:

Head of the sports association „ASKÖ Vienna“. The ASKÖ (Arbeitsgemeinschafts für Sport und Körperkultur / Consortium for Sports and Body Culture) is one out of three major sports associations in Austria. The “ASKÖ Vienna” has 650 member clubs offering a high range of sports types. They provide access to 10 facilities and complexes housing more than one type of sport.

4.2.2 *Experiences with policies regarding development of LTPA*

In the federal state of Burgenland, the municipality Eisenstadt is the capitol city and has various problems with the development and maintenance of infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity. The municipality owns a swimming hall and a multisport centre which were not renovated the last 30 years. A newer infrastructure is an ice skating facility. The responsible politicians did not enhance the sports or physical activity issue in the municipality the last decades. All those infrastructure cause high costs to the commune and run a deficit. There are no clear subsidies by the state or the federal state. Especially swimming halls in whole of Austria need help in financing by the communes or federal states. One lack in Eisenstadt might be the absence of marketing strategies for the existing facilities. In comparison, the city of Vienna could increase their public bath users by 15% after starting advertising campaigns and combining their swimming halls with other facilities like fitness centres or wellness and spa activities. In general Eisenstadt found out that the importance of organised sports is declining while self organised physical activity is increasing. Therefore Eisenstadt started in 2008 to work out a cooperative sports development plan which will succeed into an action plan to

improve the development of infrastructure for sport and physical activity for the next 10 to 15 years.

The two communal experts from Vienna are in charge of public space and parks. The density of activities in parks changed a lot within the last decades. Nowadays many people use parks for physical activities. Officially to use the lawn in Viennese parks is allowed since July 2007, but it was used as play ground and recreation area much earlier. The head of the municipal department for urban parks explained that parks in Vienna are made as user-friendly as possible. This means a potential for conflict especially in living areas because physical activity and the high usage of several parks, playgrounds and street ball facilities, etc. cause noise. There are regular complaints about this. Therefore some parks stay closed in the evenings and only street ball facilities which do not disturb the neighbourhood have a light system so that they can be used in the evening hours. The spatial situation differs within the city and therefore problem areas are hard to generalize. A big park in a living area with inhabitants of higher income has different problems than most of the small parks in dense city quarters where people with lower incomes live.

The expert involved in coordinating land use for recreation or sports sees problems especially in the financial area. Most of the duties of alpine associations are done unsalaried. This voluntary work is important for the tourism sector, but there are few subsidies or regulations for renovating hiking paths. At the moment this voluntary system still works but is depending on the local commitment. A recent trend in the field of alpine sports is bouldering. This sport which was traditionally done outdoors is nowadays additionally practiced indoors. Some bouldering halls were built but there is a lack of facilities in the east of Austria. In Vienna there is one big bouldering hall but there could be even three more halls. At the moment the different Austrian alpine associations try to work together in developing new facilities.

The expert representing commercial facilities explained that fitness centres are more flexible in finding suitable estates and their gyms are multifunctional in general. If new trends occur the fitness equipment is changed. Infrastructure is not a very important issue more important to them is the qualification of their trainers. Therefore further education is compulsory once a year. For some programmes they use public space (jogging or other outdoor fitness) because this is the most inexpensive space. Although the costumers wish to have a swimming hall or spa area, this fitness club does not run this additional infrastructure because they know from other clubs' experiences that it is not profitable.

The two experts from sports clubs which both run complexes housing more than one type of sport noted that in Vienna, like in other municipalities, sports facilities are run by the commune and are rent to sport clubs. The rules to rent the faculties are rather restrictive. Vienna has a special situation for financing sports because it is federal state and municipality at one time. Therefore it is harder to receive subsidies. In other federal states sport clubs are funded by the federal state and by the municipalities where they are located. In many sports clubs people work voluntary. A master plan for running sport facilities is missing. Due to the experts of the sports club a lot of money is invested in professional sports, leisure-time physical activity is neglected. There is no needs assessment done at the moment. The sports clubs are not involved in the cities development of sport infrastructure. The sports clubs stressed that they are important "social profit organisations" which means not only the need for physical activity and

being healthy is fulfilled in their clubs but also social networks are created. Especially at core hours between 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. there is a lack of sport facilities. At other times the facilities still have capacities. One expert stated that two thirds of the sports activities in their clubs don't need standardized sport fields or halls (e. g. gymnastics, yoga, ...). On the other hand there is a lack of facilities for competitive sports like swimming (only one 50m swimming pool in Vienna) or athletic sports. One expert gives the example that an older multisport centre should be closed but the options of rebuilding it at a new location are insufficient. He claims that there is no proper alternative estate in reach of public transport is offered at the moment.

All of the experts agreed that a lot of knowledge is kept by each sector represented on the table, but there is no network or exchange of knowledge was established yet.

4.2.3 *Issues regarding maintenance of facilities*

The communal expert of Eisenstadt stated that the maintenance of the sport facilities has been neglected in the last decades. No renovation of the swimming hall has been done in the last 30 years. Also the multisport center could be run more economically. The future concept of maintaining the facilities will probably be public private partnerships. In the swimming hall additional offers like a fitness centre or wellness and beauty offers like massage and hairdressers could make the swimming hall more attractive. Another idea to maintain the facilities more economic would be to invest in alternative energy, so the energy cost would decline. At the moment the city fights to preserve their big facilities and to alternatively offer attractive public outdoor areas for cycling and hiking.

The communal experts in Vienna suggest investing in qualitative better and maybe more high-priced new public infrastructure. Parks in Vienna provide special equipped areas like playgrounds, streetball facilities or skate facilities as well as multifunctional areas as lawns or unpaved areas that can be used for jogging, ball games, badminton. The combination of both is important to cover many aspects of physical activities. Within the planning process later costs of maintenance are already considered. Other good examples of public facilities in Vienna are outdoor swimming pools for children, which are free of charge for them. Those pools were established in the 1920ies. After a period of closing some of those pools, the city and districts of Vienna started to invest in the renovation of those facilities. This means a public pool for children in many central districts of Vienna. In general the maintenance of public space in Vienna works very well.

In case of recreational area in the open landscape mostly alpine associations are in charge of the maintenance of hiking tracks. This maintenance for the path network is done voluntarily, and differs from region to region if only private person or the commune helps to keep the infrastructure in shape.

As mentioned before, the maintenance of the facilities is not a strong issue for the owner of the private fitness centre. More important is the investment in new equipment or in further education of the trainers.

The two participants from sports clubs which both run complexes housing more than one type of sport noted that their facilities are generally in good shape. Smaller renovations are usually done by the sports clubs running the estates themselves. Overall renovations are done by the municipality. Many courses take place in schools which are

rented in the evening hours. In case of damage most of the renovation work is done by the school administration. Who pays the costs depends on the case of damage and is clarified by the insurances. In most cases the school administration pays the costs.

4.2.4 *Issues regarding accessibility of facilities*

All of the focus group members answered that their aim is to provide access to a broad public, except the representative for commercial contractors. Their private fitness centre has rather high membership fees so people (from different nationalities) with higher incomes find their offer attractive.

In the swimming hall of Eisenstadt core hours are often used by sport associations or baby swimming courses which receive subsidised entrance fees by the city. This limits other costumers, who would pay full entrance fees, to use the swimming hall. In general the admission charges for private persons in relation to members of associations are irreproducible. Therefore the access to the swimming hall and its prize system has to be better organised there.

The focus group participants named two projects how migrants were attracted for sports clubs. One project of a sports club offered a summer programme for migrants where German courses and sport courses were connected. Another project is swimming courses for Islamic women. Unfortunately there are only two courses at the moment although the demand is bigger, but in Vienna there are too less female pool attendants employed.

The amount of female members in the two sports association is less than the amount of male members. There are no special offers at the moment to attract more women.

Other difficulties occur in public open space. In theory this space is accessible for everyone, but especially in urban areas some groups are more dominant in parks than others and it differs from district to district. E. g. streetball facilities are more frequented by boy groups. The office where the focus group expert for adolescent people works prepares street work for public parks called “Parkbetreuung” (Park Care Service). Within this “Parkbetreuung” programmes are worked out e. g. where some hours in the streetball facilities stay reserved for girls. In general the parks are equipped with different spatial offers so everyone can find attractive space. Urban public space has a bad image for middle class inhabitants, the expert for adolescent park users told us. Mostly people with low incomes (often with immigrant background) use this space, others who can afford memberships in a sports clubs for themselves or their children don’t find public space attractive. Still there is a good social mixture of park users in Vienna: Joggers, old and young users, male and female. Within a new guideline for planning parks in Vienna, participation of neighbourhood inhabitants and non-governmental organisations is compulsory for new planning processes. This guarantees that different user groups can propose their needs.

4.2.5 *Issues regarding quality of communication between local officials and end-users*

The quality of communication by some of the focus group members was described as rather insufficient. One representative from the commune emphasised that he got most assistance by the ÖISS (Austrian Institute for School and Sports Facilities). All of the representatives from the sports sector explained that there is no intense contact or assistance by the federal states in developing infrastructure for sports and physical activity. They furthermore explained that responsibilities – if the development of

infrastructure is a matter of the federal state or the federation – are sometimes not clear. None of the participants of the focus group interview knows of any meetings to exchange experience in the field of infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity which involves different levels.

Within the commercial sector our representing participant told that networks of certain interest groups exist in Austria, but the content is e. g. about trainers' further education and does not concern any infrastructural issues.

The two participants from the Viennese municipal departments have different experiences than the participants from the sports sector. They reported that exchange in their sectors take place in committees. They meet on a regional level to discuss recent issues. E. g. within the committee for adolescent and youth aspects physical activity is a topic sometimes, but the municipal department for sports is only rarely at the meetings. Sport clubs don't take part in those committees because they are only for municipal departments.

4.2.6 *Advice and recommendations*

The focus group participants in the end agreed on all of the key advices given in the end of the interview. The key advices are as follows:

1) Building Networks:

All organisations and actors in Austria involved in developing infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity should start an exchange of experiences e. g. at conferences. There is a lot of knowledge that is not brought together yet. Planners, pedagogues, sports scientists, people working in the municipal or other governmental administrations, and non-governmental organisations should work together closer in this field. An example was given by the representative from the Alpine Club: The different alpine Associations in Austria started to work together to built new boulder halls; before every association built their own estate. A better regulation and coordination of the development of infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity means to exchange experiences from different sectors. Among others an important aspect of this network would be that organised sports and self organised physical activity are not seen as concurrence any longer but try to develop synergies.

2) Initiating a coordinated infrastructural development for leisure-time physical activity: Master plans like cooperative sports development plans, that are orientated on the needs of every party (inhabitants, politicians, investors, non-governmental organisations etc.) and that are valid in the long run, should be a condition for public funds and subsidies. A criteria system based on this type of master plan should be worked out on all levels – national, federal state and municipal level. To bound funds to a master plan for infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity would guarantee an improvement of transparency in allocation of subsidies. Through this measure the value of leisure-time physical activity and popular sports should be better acknowledged. Therefore the existing situation in developing infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity should be analysed more detailed.

3) Participation of the population and interest groups in the planning process:

To participate inhabitants and interest groups (e. g. cycling associations, park care service, NGOs, etc.) who are relevant for the development of infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity should be enforced. This would prevent politics from critique

after the building of facilities. The development of infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity should involve interest of all population subgroups (e. g. gender, age, ethnicity, etc.) The municipality, federal state and federation should understand themselves as partners of the population and non-governmental interest groups in the planning process.

4) The development of leisure-time infrastructure should be sustainable:

New facilities should be multifunctional and developed with ecological standards (energy-efficient, use of ecological materials, durability of equipment etc.) This probably means higher cost to invest in building the infrastructure (indoors and outdoors) but the maintenance will be easier and the equipment will last longer. The design of the facilities should create a good, warm atmosphere and should be user-friendly.

5) More efficient organisation and management of existing facilities / concerted multi-shift usage:

Existing halls and outdoor sports facilities administrated by sports clubs or schools should be easier to use also for groups who are not part of the maintaining institution. The criteria and price system for using a facility should be clearer. Regular controls if the usage and timetable of the facility is still up to date should be done. If permanent sports groups temporarily don't use the facility, there should be the chance for temporary use to other groups. The permanent group should have the right to come back. This rule would encourage to temporarily share facilities. The experts noted that multi-shift and temporary use would mean a higher administrative effort. The usage of halls without additional employees should be possible e. g. in schools without the attendance of a concierge. Another advice was that sport facilities in parks which are closed for the public should be opened if they are not used by the schools or sports clubs. The multi-shift usage is most important outside the core hours (approx. 5 p.m. to 9 p.m.) when facilities are used intensively.

4.2.7 *Conclusion*

The experts of the focus group meeting stated that there are different situations and problem areas in the different work fields but also common aspects in developing infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity. An important problem area is that an overall perspective for the infrastructural development for leisure-time physical activity is missing. There is no network of people working in the field and there is no instrument at the moment to coordinate the development of infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity. Therefore a platform like a regular conference or other forms of networks might be established.

Other improvements of the local infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity could be better timetables and multi-shift and temporary usage of the facilities and master plans of coordinated development of the local infrastructure as a criterion for the allocation of subsidies. The participation of the population and non-governmental organisations in the planning process should not be neglected.

Compared to the Austrian summary of the individual interviews the Austrian focus group meeting reveals a similar picture of future improvement of infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity: Establishing a network of people working in the field, recommend a coordinated master planning for those infrastructure and participate the population.

4.3 Czech Republic

4.3.1 *Selection of experts*

There were 10 organizations, associations or institutions which participated in focus group interviews. The sample represented a wide range of organizations, associations and institutions connected with the area of urban planning and planning of the construction of the infrastructure for leisure-time physical activities. The following participants attended:

- Representatives of the municipal council of the city Olomouc: secretary of the City Council for the sport development and Physical Education
- Head of financial department
- Representatives for the Czech Sokol Organization (COS) - exactly for the Sokol division Olomoucká - Smrckova
- a representative for the HEPA in-line school Olomouc,
- an architect of the Atelier Bonmot,
- a manager of the swimming pool of the city Olomouc,
- a manager of the Aquacenter Dolphin,
- a manager of the Omegasport center Olomouc,
- the assistant coach of FC SIGMA Olomouc
- the president of the Sports Club of Palacky University (SK UP Olomouc)

Other representatives were invited but did not attend. Those were: a manager of the GEMO group and Aquapark Olomouc (reason - finishing with Olomouc Aquapark because they prepared opening for the public) and the president of the association Olomou?ti kola?i - cycling association (reason - they were not interested). The sample of the representatives was contacted and gathered through individual contacts on the basis of personal networks or the contacts were made during the course of the IMPALA project.

Background information on the organisations in which the experts work (i.e. size, mission, objectives, etc.):

1. The municipality of the city Olomouc
Olomouc is one of the most important cities in the Czech Republic, due to its rich history, long established university, culture and crafts traditions. It has also been an attractive location for tourists, merchants and businessmen in Central Moravia. As for the size, according to the number of citizens, Olomouc is the 6th in the nation. The municipal council of the city of Olomouc is responsible for the management and development of the city. There is 19 departments and 83 sections. The major political parties (ODS, ?SSD and KDU-?SL) have made coalition for the years 2006 - 2010 in order to cooperate. The Committee for Sport and Physical Activities is responsible for sport and physical activities and cooperates with sport clubs and other sport organizations and associations (Czech Sport Association, the committee of municipality council for education and leisure-time). They also determine the distribution of finance into the area of sport and physical activities. There are 4 sections in the financial department: 1. the section of building preparation, 2. the section of building realization, 3. the section of public orders and 4. the section of implementation. More information about the municipal government of the city Olomouc and its

departments and sections are available on their website:
<http://www.olomouc.eu/phprs/view.php?cislocclanku=2002070102>.

2. Czech Sokol Organization (CSO) - Olomouc Division (Olomoucka-Smrckova)
 Czech Sokol Organization is the fourth largest civil association in the Czech Republic, whose 180 000 members participate in sports, physical activities in Divisions of Sokol Versatility and cultural activities, mostly in folk and marionette groups. CSO is one of the oldest organizations of this type in the world. CSO is organized in 43 districts covering the whole Czech Republic.
3. HEPA in-line school Olomouc
 HEPA in-line school was founded in 2007 in the city of Zlín. Since then, more than 7 branches have been established. It is concerned with the optimalization of products. HEPA in-line school is the largest in-line school in the Czech Republic. They attempt to establish 15 branches until 2010. HEPA in-line school cooperates with HEPA Europe, which is the European network for the promotion of health-enhancing physical activity. It is an international collaborative project which works for better health through physical activity among all people in the WHO European Region, by strengthening and supporting efforts to increase participation and improving the conditions for healthy lifestyles.
4. Atelier Bonmot
 The main activity of Atelier Bonmot is constructional designing, landscape architecture, constructioning and projectioning. There are 2 co-owners of this company - 2 architects: engineer architect Žerava Stašek and engineer Miřola Petr.
5. Olterm & TD Olomouc (joint-stock company) - swimming pool Olomouc and Aquacenter Dolphin
 Olterm & TD Olomouc runs a LTPA in the area of swimming and bathing. They own the only swimming pool in Olomouc city center (till 1st of June 2009 when new Aquapark was opened for the public it was the only swimming pool in the city) with inside swimming pool (50 x 20m), diving tower, outside swimming pool (50 x 20m), sauna, children's swimming pool (10 x 3,5m) and fun attraction (whirlpool and a water slide). Aquacenter Dolphin runs special swimming courses for toddlers and children until the age of 7, but also aquaerobics sessions and other fitness activities.
6. Omegasport Olomouc
 Omegasport center was founded with the ambition to create a facility providing wide spectrum of activities for relax, sport and other social activities. It was opened in 2008 in the center of Olomouc. There is a customer service for support of the public health education and for the fight against many kinds of civilization diseases (stress, poor nutrition, poor immunity). There are many kinds of possibilities for LTPA such as: tennis, squash, table tennis, badminton, fitness, swimming and water attractions and massages.
7. FC SIGMA Olomouc
 FC Sigma Olomouc belongs into our elite football clubs. FC Sigma also prepares and trains young football players, many of them are playing for elite clubs in whole Europe. Despite of the fact that their budget is on the average level among Czech clubs, they are modernizing their stadium (Andruv's field) and whole area of the

club's infrastructure. FC Sigma has 14 football teams (A-team, B-team, 4 junior's teams, 4 teams made up of elementary school pupils and 4 teams made up of children from kindergartens) and it is a joint-stock company. The stockholders of FC Sigma are: The city of Olomouc, FC Olomouc, civil association, engineer Josef Lébr and První olomoucká investiční, a. s.

8. The Sports Club of Palacky University (SK UP Olomouc) The sport club supports "university sport activities" and represents Palacky University and the city of Olomouc on the national and international level. There was its 50th anniversary in 2000. There is more than 2,000 members in this sport club. There are more than 22 clubs in many sports such as aerobics, athletics, badminton, basketball, frisbee, handball, mountain climbing, judo, canoe, skiing, archery, orienteering, swimming, recreational sport, self-defence, extreme sports, sport gymnastics, water polo, volleyball and sport for visually impaired people.

4.3.2 *Experiences with policies regarding development of LTPA*

The biggest problem is the lack of finances that are invested into building of the infrastructure for LTPA or their maintenance. Especially, the representatives of swimming pool and Sokol organization have complained about this aspect. Another problem is the old and bad technical condition of the facilities and equipment (e.g. swimming pool, ice hockey stadium). Finances are aimed mainly at small reconstructions or repairs instead of one major reconstruction in one period (e.g. this is the case of the swimming pool, which is almost every summer season closed to public due to minor reconstructions, and it is the only swimming pool in the town center). Further, there is a number of groups and sports clubs that are interested in using the swimming pool and ice-hockey stadium, however, the facilities cannot serve all of them. Another issue is the environment around the sports facilities that is often dirty, polluted or inhabited by homeless people. E.g. the manager of Dolphin aquacentre pointed at this problem. This problem is often a result of unsolved property rights for land around the areas, as was suggested by the representative of town authorities. The manager of the Dolphin aquacentre also stressed lack of sports facilities and programs of non-performance character for children aged 4-6. The architect reminded of the change in society after the revolution which brought changes in lifestyle that include also the need of people to relax actively after work. According to the architect, the problem is the construction of new residential areas without any compact and overall concept in cooperation with the developers (mainly foreign). According to him, the construction should come along with the construction of all infrastructure including the infrastructure for LTPA.

Another aspect mentioned, is generally low knowledge about health and healthy lifestyle issues. The manager of a private sports centre finds ineffective the cooperation between commercial and non-commercial centres including insufficient involvement of the Palacky University in these activities. The representative of the in-line school believes there is lack of public sport facilities (playground, game fields, etc.), which would support individual sport areas (e.g. in-line skating areas, etc.). The president of Sokol organization sees difficulties in fundraising of money for construction and maintenance of sports facilities and the approach of people themselves who tend to inactive lifestyle. Moreover, he regards the grant policy of the state complicated since it is not easy for applicants to meet the criteria. The representatives of the town spoke about difficulties to find new space for construction for the infrastructure for LTPA (e.g. cycling routes, in-line paths, etc.). They regard the role of state in planning and

contruction of new infrastructure for LTPA as insufficient as well as the supervision of the whole process. The participants also see difficulties in self-financing of particular facilities. It has been a trend in recent years that there is a significant discrepancy between what had been planned and what was built afterwards.

4.3.3 *Issues regarding maintenance of facilities*

The manager of the swimming pool points at the fact that difficulties in maintaining the facilities are also connected to vandalism. Good maintenance requires sufficient finances that are however missing (this applies to swimming pool, Sokol facilities, etc.). The insufficient maintenance of the areas around the facilities, as mentioned by the manager of the Dolphin aquacentre, makes the centres unattractive for potential clients. The representatives of the city believe that the maintenance of sports facilities should be provided primarily by the city, or individual city quarters, which should at the same time enhance the local people's interest in these facilities and enhance their individual responsibility in taking care of them.

The manager of a sport centre suggested there could some fees (very low) charged for the use of the facilities that would be automatically transferred to their maintenance. The president of Sokol stated that their organization is not concerned with building new facilities, but only with the maintenance of the current ones due to their age. The representative of the SK UP mentioned that their organization only rents the facilities. The representatives of the city authorities mentioned that politicians both on the national and regional level often prefer to have their names connected with the construction of new facilities rather than the maintenance of the current ones since it is more medialized.

4.3.4 *Issues regarding accessibility of facilities*

The access to facilities for LTPA is generally very good. They are accessible by public transportation, cars, by walking and cycling. There is a newly built cycling path in the north of the city. It would be, however, good if there could be a new parking lot built and refreshment areas so that it could be used also by in-line skaters more. Number of sports facilities are also accessible for the handicapped (barrier free facilities). The LTPA facilities are often limited by regulations and hygienic norms as was remarked by the manager of the Dolphin aquacentre. According to the norms, it is not possible e.g. to combine sauna and activities for children and infants at the same time, therefore sauna is not used almost at all in their case. According to the architect, free accessible playgrounds and sport fields should be built closer, ideally in immediate neighborhoods, to residential areas so that they are easily accessible by parents and children. In case of children playgrounds, it is not easy to obtain certification for the individual items (chutes, carousel, etc.). The architect believes that politicians should introduce norms giving the ratio how many facilities there should be for a certain number of people. In case of Sokol, this is not the issue. Due to historical reasons, all towns and even villages have their gyms and other facilities. However, the increasing cost for maintenance and functioning is then apparent in increasing the registration fees, which then has a negative impact on the number of people who sign-up for Sokol physical activities or become members of Sokol. The representatives of the city authorities have mentioned that the construction of LTPA infrastructure is an important part of land planning. Some facilities such as in-line paths are not accessible by public transportation, and generally there is a lack of them. They also mentioned that once planning these infrastructure for LTPA, the city should also consider the seasons and times when such facilities are used

the most and possibly adopt the surrounding environment to that i.e. consider parking lots, refreshment areas, etc.

4.3.5 *Issues regarding quality of communication between local officials and end-users*

Generally, the cooperation between the representatives of the city and individual sport organizations (Sokol, FC Sigma Olomouc, Hepa In-Line School) is very good since they share mutual interests. Their aim is to promote sport and physical activities of all kinds. E.g. the HEPA In-line school cooperates well with city police in Olomouc which assists them e.g. with securing safety movement of in-line skaters in city in evening hours. However, the managers of swimming pool and the Dolphin aquacenter have both agreed that "I can't communicate with local policy officials so well because I have our (organization) management above me".

Often, there is misunderstanding of our goals on the side of the executive officials (city representatives, politicians) who do not understand our needs since they are sometimes too detached from praxis, which was claimed by the architects. If the city owns or co-owns some sport organization or a club (e.g. FC Sigma Olomouc), then the cooperation is usually very good. It is all based on people and in case both the sides i.e. the representative of the city and the representative of a sport organization, share the same goals, usually there is very good chance that the communication and cooperation work very well (e.g. they are able to agree on financial aspects). The representatives of the city claim that a lot of things regarding the infrastructure for LTPA depends on the decisions of the city council members (planning, construction, and finances), but these can be often under the influence of a certain political party which they represent (and were elected as such).

4.3.6 *Advice and recommendations*

- The manager of swimming pool, Olterm company advised to vote the people with relation and personal attitude to sport, they will help us more with constructing and financing of our plans.
- The manager of Aquacenter Dolphin, Olterm company would like to see urban planning and planning of the infrastructure of LTPA from the women perspective - gender problem (do more things for women).
- The engineer architect from Atelier Bonmot gave two pieces of advice: 1) sport facilities should be situated close to the places of residence; 2) university should more promote the results of research and support active and healthy lifestyle.
- The manager of Omegasport centrum felt that there is a need for more effective public health education and information for people about the impact of physically active lifestyle.
- The president of Sport Club of Palacky University felt that there should be some similar debate held in the building of municipal authority: "I was participating in a similar interview 20 years ago - if you find it, it can help you."
- The secretary of Sokol Organization - Olomouc-Smrckova wanted us to work against the fall (ethical) and to increase the broadcasting of the positive behavior and decrease the broadcasting of the negative events and behavior.
- The assistant of the coach in FC Sigma Olomouc would solve this problem with some kind of law about sport where we should set barriers, limits and norms for everything in order to create better conditions so that everything would be easier.
- The instructor from HEPA inline school would like to work on the development and construction of sport facilities for LTPA: "...it is the most important point". Moreover he wanted to do the public health education through each organization:

"... it should be their own goal, how to reason people into the healthy and active lifestyle".

- The responsible person in the municipal council for the sport development and physical activities viewed the development of the legislation in this aspect as the most important point. And he advised us to vote people according to certain plans, not only according to their promises.
- The head of the financial department of the Olomouc city wanted to improve the system of the health service in the Czech Republic. He felt that there is a need of quality and strong groundwork from the university and that officials should follow the concept.

4.3.7 *Conclusion*

The focus group meeting helped us to uncover the situation in urban planning and its policy. The main and the biggest problem is in the financial sphere. Strategy and policy of urban planning does not have any kind of compact procedure. The older LTPA facilities, which need extensive maintenance, do not have enough money resources for sufficient maintenance. There is insufficient supervision of the Czech government in the urban planning and people participating in the focus group suggest creation of a professional institution in leadership of society (not elective). There is missing compact and cohesive system of promotion of public health education. There is misunderstanding of our thoughts and ideas by policy officials and government. The role of the university has to be increased and sport faculties should communicate with government and policy officials much more.

4.4 **Denmark**

4.4.1 *Selection of experts*

We took contact to ten different institutions and organizations and ended up with seven participants joining the focus group interview. The experts were selected by a combination of network and snowballing. The purpose with the recruitment was to have a variation of end-users representing different types of infrastructure for Leisure Time Physical Activity and at the same time representing different areas of responsibility in relation to designing, planning, financing, building and managing infrastructure. The dropout of three persons had different reasons. One private company would not define itself as end-user, one deputy director in a semi-private company was caught in traffic and one project manager never showed up to the focus group interview.

The following experts participate as end-users representing the following institutions and organizations:

- Head of Department of Culture and Leisure Administration, Municipality of Copenhagen. The objective of the department is to create social and built environment enhancing culture and active living. The department's leading role is financing and managing infrastructure
- Sports counsellor, Municipality of Roskilde. The objective is to facilitate settings for organized and unorganized sport. Focus on planning, financing and managing infrastructure
- Program Manager, The Danish Cancer Society. The objective is to facilitate built and natural environment encouraging people to outdoor life. Focus on planning and financing infrastructure

- Campaign Manager, The Danish Cyclists Federation. The objective is to make awareness of the positive aspects of cycling and policy-making for better cycling conditions. Focus on designing and planning bicycle infrastructure
- Landscape architect, Architect Company Kraugh & Berglund. The objective is to develop innovative built environment for recreation and physical activity. Focus on designing infrastructure for leisure time physical activity.
- Sports Counsellor, Frederiksberg Sports Union. The objective is to mediate needs of sport clubs in relation to municipality and other public authorities. Focus on building and managing infrastructure for organized physical activity.
- Administration Manager, Corporate Sport Union. The objective is representing interests of company sport clubs. Focus on building and managing infrastructure for unorganized and organized physical activity.

4.4.2 *Experiences with policies regarding development of LTPA*

The group found several problem areas and limiting factors. Overall a kind of conservatism in planning discriminate in favour of traditional sport facilities and standardized play grounds with traditional play equipment. Especially public authorities tend to make "safe moves on confident ground" confining new innovative initiatives. In comparison private foundation is more willing to take risk giving "more room to manoeuvre". The representative of the architect company addressed the conservatism as a sluggish discourse in planning and designing: "It is not only a "matter of blaming the politicians and municipalities - also the sport clubs is narrow minded giving traditional thought on sports facilities".

On top of mental barriers the local district plans hinder progress in developing infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity. "For example", - as the sports counsellor in Roskilde Municipality mentioned: "you can't integrate sport facilities and recreational areas in industrial areas." Another example is The Heritage Agency of Denmark. The agency is responsible for preserving the historic buildings, sites and monuments, and museum collections that are part of Denmark's cultural heritage. The Program Manager employed in the Danish Cancer Society gave an example of the binding in legislation on land use. "The agency can be a partner but also opponent in efforts of making progress." The same role plays the act on youth and adult education, a law dictating the municipalities to support local sports activities to local sports associations. "The act gives preference to organized sport excluding facilities for unorganized sport and active transportation".

Despite the good condition for organized sport it is a very limiting factor that the sport facilities are spread out geographical unequally. Especially in the capital areas of Copenhagen "you may get lucky if you can get access to a sport centre late Friday night". In circumstances like these children and youth have first priority due to the act but makes it very difficult for adults to get access. The urbanization of Copenhagen and other major Danish cities put the infrastructure for organized sport under pressure since the building of new facilities is far from meeting the demand.

4.4.3 *Issues regarding maintenance of facilities*

In general the experiences were that most of resources were used on establishing new infrastructure for LTPA. Maintenance of facilities had a lower priority and this often ended up with a cost "two-time the start-up expenses trying to get the facilities back on foot" stated by the administrator of Cooperate Sport Union. The participants agreed on that running and maintaining facilities has to play a vital role in planning processes. "It doesn't make sense to put millions in new projects if you don't have means for running the game. Like a car without fuel, it gets racked" as the architect puts it.

It's not only a matter of recovering and renovation. If maintenance should avoid being too costly, it's important constantly to develop things, so "you don't have to patch ball fields and cycle paths up again and again. A better approach would be to figure out why things are not working as they were meant to be".

It was stated that responsibility and ownership of facilities also played a major role. "You treat your own stuff or that you borrow quite differently from what nobody owns" So when it comes to infrastructure for LTPA it should be signalled who the infrastructure belongs to and if it was in a public domain, the user should be highlighted as "the owner".

So important issues regarding maintenance of facilities is solid budgets for running the infrastructure, visible ownership and a analytical approach to avoid degeneration.

4.4.4 *Issues regarding accessibility of facilities*

Many facilities within short distance would in general improve the access, but in the best of all worlds you would always have limited access. As the sports councillor, Municipality of Roskilde puts it: "We can't all have access to a tennis court 24-7", so a solution would be a system for a better coefficient of utilization. There were several examples of booking systems used in municipalities where clubs could book open hours in gyms and sport halls. However, a limiting factor is that these booking systems are reserved the clubs, so the citizen with no place to go, couldn't just enter the free setting without consulting one of the clubs.

Outdoor facilities for recreational activities and sport don't have - of natural reasons - the same kind of access difficulties. Parks play grounds and soccer fields can in certain times be overcrowded, but mostly it's possible to find your own room for activity. In special areas on specific installations, however, some groups, gangs or the like can occupy the surroundings in a way, so other people and groups feel uncomfortable or lack of interest in using the same facilities.

Facilities for active transportation, especially cycle tracks in major cities like Odense and Copenhagen are in prime time subject to congestion. The Campaign Manager in the Danish Cyclists Federation emphasized: "Narrow bikeways make it hard to pass which can result in hazardous traffic", so better bicycle infrastructure could in some cases solve the problem. It was also mentioned that city cycling systems like the one in Paris could make better access to the relatively good facilities for cycling in Denmark.

In general the group agreed that in the matter of making better access to infrastructure for LTPA the city should all in all be considered "as a track-and-field for physical activity". It's a matter of "seeing the city in two dimension - horizontal and vertical" It would broaden the view and make better access, especially if physical activity is considered to be "a behaviour which do not demand change of clothes or a special setting"

4.4.5 *Issues regarding quality of communication between local officials and end-users*

Centralization of administration and government is in general considered very bad in relation to enhance the facilities for LTPA. There has been a tendency to centralize the administration of facilities the last ten to twenty years, - both when it comes to establishing new facilities and running the existing ones. This development has negative influences on the communication between local policy officials and end-users. However, as the sport administrator mentioned, "Those two sides in a case normally find some common ground", and this was due to a democratic culture consisting of many meetings and hearing statements in the effort to make consensus. The backside of this process is the time consuming and the many human resources it involves.

The process results in "slow planning". "It can be frustrating, but gives the best result if the long-term vision is clear and in sight during the process." as the program manager employed of the Danish Cancer Society puts it.

In this progress personal relation between officials and end-users is very important. Relations with common objectives give the best quality of communication between two different players.

4.4.6 *Advice and recommendations*

All participants gave key advices in relation to improve the infrastructure of leisure time physical activity:

Campaign Manager, the Danish Cyclists Federation:

Create a joint venture with public authorities, private companies and end-users based on shared values about healthy planning and liveable cities

Sports Counsellor, Frederiksberg Sports Union:

Use existing infrastructure and add new health objectives in relation to different target groups

Head of Department of Culture and Leisure Administration, Municipality of Copenhagen: Take potential and existing users as point of departure in future planning.

Program Manager, the Danish Cancer Society:

Slow planning involved many interests and different user aspects but improve the likelihood of success.

Sports counsellor, Municipality of Roskilde:

Variation in background and different levels of experiences create synergy and dynamic in planning processes.

Administration Manager, Corporate Sport Union:

Keep it simple; - don't complicate building and maintenance of infrastructure for LTPA

Landscape architect, Architect Company Kraugh & Berglund:

Dare to make mistakes, don't count on routines working on innovating infrastructure

4.4.7 *Conclusion*

Infrastructure for LTPA in Denmark is characterized by conservative planning giving less room for innovative initiatives. However, private foundations with venture capital can play an important role in the future progress of planning. Maintenance is crucial in the effort to minimize the overall cost, so planning processes must include solid budgets for running and managing infrastructure. Many facilities within short distance would in general improve the access, but in short term an internet-based system could improve the coefficient of utilization.

There has been a tendency to centralize the administration of facilities the last ten to twenty years. This development is negative giving poor communication between local policy officials and end-users. However, a planning process based on legislations with mandatory hearings of local stakeholders maintains a democratic culture. Backside of the democratic progress and public involvement is slow planning putting demand on human resources, but the participants in the focus group agreed that this process improved the likelihood of success.

4.5 Finland

Results of the focus group interview in Finland were submitted to the work package leader only after the deadline had passed. Therefore, the national report for Finland was not edited by the work package leader and not included in the overall conclusion of chapter 4 and chapter 5. Finland's results of the group interview were included in the separate appendix to this report.

4.6 France

Results of the focus group interview in France were submitted to the work package leader only after the deadline had passed. Therefore, the national report for Finland was not edited by the work package leader and not included in the overall conclusion of chapter 4 and chapter 5. France's results of the group interview were included in the separate to this report.

4.7 Germany

4.7.1 *Selection of experts*

We approached 19 different organizations. The experts were selected by following sampling strategy:

- Two local municipalities.
- Two NGOs involved in coordinating land use for recreation or sports
- Two larger commercial contractors/property developers with regional coverage
- Two larger local sports facilities/complexes housing more than one type of sport (e.g. swimming pool, fitness facility, athletics, soccer field).
- Two larger sport clubs (e.g. local field hockey/soccer club)

Partly they are well-known to the researchers because they had been involved in previous projects to improve infrastructure for sports in the local arena (e.g. the local municipalities and the two larger sport clubs). The experts representing the other three categories were identified by personal networks and/or cold calling of representatives.

Eight participants attended our focus group. Others had a busy schedule, showed no interest for the topic or were absent because of illness. Commercially working experts repeatedly expressed that they do not see any benefit in participating in such a research project:

1. Head of the municipal sports department

He is responsible for promoting sports and improving sport structures as well as needs assessment in the field of sports facilities. His department also manages public gyms. He is mainly responsible for the organised sports sectors but he also deals with non-organised sports, e.g. skating nights.

2. Consultant of the local parks and gardens department

He is the head of the municipal facility management. Before that, he was responsible for public facilities designed for LTPA and parks within municipal administration.

3. Representative of the „Alpenverein e. V.“ (German association of mountaineering, rock climbing)

The representative from the Erlangen section of the German association of mountaineering and rock climbing is responsible for artificial rock climbing facilities and has been involved in the development of such a facility in the city of Erlangen.

4. Local assessor of the “ADFC” (German association of cycling)

The German association of cycling represents the interests of cyclist and he is interested in improving the situation and conditions of cycling in Erlangen.

- 5 and 6. Head of municipal facility management for swimming pools (5) & operations manager of the municipal swimming pools (6)

The representatives from municipal facility management deal with renovating, managing and building of public swimming pools in Erlangen.

7. Manager of TV 1848 Erlangen e.V. (large local sport club)

The manager of the city's largest sports club is responsible for leisure-time sports and health enhancing sports within the sports club. The sports club owns own facilities and uses public facilities.

8. Engineer for sport facilities

The engineer works as authorized expert for sport facilities and soil analysis across Europe. He is also involved in developing norms for building LTPA infrastructure.

4.7.2 *Experiences with policies regarding development of LTPA*

The representatives from organised sports (sports club, sports associations) named the regulation by city council that prevents sport clubs from the use of school gyms during holidays as a limiting factor. This regulation is in force virtually in all states in Germany and is linked to the protection of employees' rights (holidays for facility managers and cleaning personnel during school breaks) and insurance coverage (need of facility managers for surveillance).

They also mention legal restraints (noise protection, surveillance, emergency exits, fire protection) for large sport events that prevent organizers from initiating such events. Additionally, too many sectors (finances, building, sports) are involved and too many standards have to be observed in the construction phase of sport facilities. There are several German Industry Norms, noise prevention regulations and almost non-accomplishable restraints concerning distances of sport facilities from residential areas hinder construction of playgrounds or facilities. This is grounded in German legislation processes.

The representatives from public administration acknowledge that comprehensive negotiations between the different sectors (sports, building, parks and recreation, finances, transport) prevent goal-oriented development. They also underline that in the local area, nobody follows a national strategy for the development of sport facilities because no national strategy has been known to them up to that point.

The engineer underlines that DIN-standards (German Institute for Standardization norms) - that have to be considered in building - are outdated and do not represent up-to-date technical standards.

The representatives from the local sport authorities name a lack of municipal funding whereas the representative from the cycling club argues that a lack of political will by local politicians hinders the development of Infrastructure of LTPA.

Another limiting factor - according to the representative from municipal management - are the user groups themselves, who prevent each other from using sport facilities (e.g. competitive sports vs leisure-time PA in swimming pools).

4.7.3 *Issues regarding maintenance of facilities*

The representatives from public administration talked about their positive experiences with roundtables involving all relevant perspectives, which might be of use for discussions about maintenance issues.

The participants of the focus group also mentioned some problem areas regarding the maintenance of facilities. The engineer argues that the budget of sport facility development is widely checked whereas the check of the quality of the planned facility is insufficient.

With regard to finances, the representative from sports department argued that consequential costs of maintenance of facilities are not foreseeable and not considered in municipal budgeting.

One representative from local facility management names vandalism as a problem in the maintenance of sport facilities due to a lack of supervision.

4.7.4 *Issues regarding accessibility of facilities*

The representative from the cycling club argued that many regulations concerning biking in public are originally made for others (e.g. motorcycle traffic) and that complicates the access to infrastructure that potentially could be used for LTPA on bikes.

All representatives agreed that the not-organised sport sector is not enough considered. They argue that due to highly competitive situation of access to infrastructure designed for LTPA, only well organised groups succeed. This might result in a lack of adequate offers for certain underorganised or underprivileged target groups.

The representative from pool management gives the example of the implementation of women-only pool hours. They often come along with difficulties: in fact they are well accepted but other users show no understanding for "losing" pool hours.

The sports club manager argued that certain target groups (e.g. German-Russian immigrants) are excluded from using sport facilities due to the owners' being afraid of vandalism. However, these target groups also provide a chance of a potential new member group and therefore the sports clubs should open towards new user groups.

4.7.5 *Issues regarding quality of communication between local officials and end-users*

To this issue the German side did not have noted comments due to running out of time.

4.7.6 *Advice and recommendations*

The engineer and the representative from the mountaineering club had the key advice that more coaching (by experts and local authorities) instead of controlling would be a

plus, especially in the construction phase. Also, the sports associations could contribute to secure quality standards of sport facilities

The sports club manager argued that deconstruction and mergence of sports facilities could save money, when multiple target groups can use it. The engineer underlines in this respect that sport clubs should have more voice in decision making on building of sport facilities.

The sports club manager and a representative from facility management also gave the advice that partial commercialisation could resolve financial problems. Such a partial commercial orientation might result in a building by municipalities that later on lease the facilities to commercial firms.

The facility management representative also underlined that intersectoral cooperation (e. g. sport, school, parks and gardens) could produce win-win-situations.

Concerning vandalism, the representative from facility management gave the key advice that the provision of adequate offers and organisation of voluntary control for youth could help to work against vandalism. The sports club manager argued that build up trust to special target groups could be achieved by working together with adequate and relevant partners. It might also help to allow target groups to create their own facilities of sport and physical activity.

The cycling club representative aims at promoting a „culture of movement“ within society.

4.7.7 *Conclusion*

A problem in Germany is the marginal awareness of existing policies for the development of infrastructure of LTPA. So it is difficult to discuss about problem areas and limiting factors in the experiences with policies regarding the development of LTPA. With this background our main findings are mostly very practical.

Currently, potentially existing national policies for the development of infrastructure for LTPA apparently have no impact in the local arena – except for technical DIN standards concerning building. National policies could be helpful if they contributed to downsizing of regulations and to promoting cooperation of relevant sectors (e.g. sports, building, school, transport) and actors (governmental, non-governmental like sports clubs and interests groups of specific target groups).

The participants of the focus group underlined the importance of intersectoral cooperation as prerequisite and defining moment of “good” development of infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity. Such cooperation could contribute to up-to-date, target group adequate and inspiring infrastructure and thus foster a “culture of movement” in Germany.

4.8 **Italy**

Results of the focus group interview in Italy were submitted to the work package leader only after the deadline had passed. As a result, the national report for Italy was not edited by the work package leader. It is only included in the separate annex to this report. Furthermore, data from the focus group interview in Italy could not be included in the report overall discussion and conclusion.

4.9 Lithuania

Results of the focus group interview in Lithuania were submitted to the work package leader only after the deadline had passed. As a result, the national report for Lithuania was not edited by the work package leader. It is only included in the separate annex to this report. Furthermore, data from the focus group interview in Lithuania could not be included in the report overall discussion and conclusion.

4.10 Norway

4.10.1 *Selection of experts*

In total 11 organisations were invited to the focus group interview, while only five organisations attended. Experts were selected from organisations that were considered relevant according to the matrix categories, and because they held positions in the organisations with responsibilities that corresponded with the topic. Four of the experts were contacted directly, while one of the experts was recommended by another member of the organisation the expert represented.

One expert represented the local administration of an average sized municipality. The expert's job responsibility is local planning of outdoor recreation areas such as ski tracks, trek paths and the local coastline. Two experts hold leading positions in sports clubs. One expert was invited in the capacity of representing the National Board for Sports Facilities, but this expert also leads a local sports club. One expert is a researcher in an independent research centre and with an interest in social science and planning.

Two private contractors with expertise in construction and with a portfolio including sports facility construction and private-public partnerships declined as they considered their area of expertise to be outside the scope of the investigation. The National Association for Residents' Organisations, an expert from the sports department in a municipality administration, and, a member of a regional sports confederation with job responsibilities involving advice on multi-sport facilities were unable to attend. A private company within the field of urban gardening infrastructure never replied to the invitation.

4.10.2 *Experiences with policies regarding development of LTPA*

One sports manager identified as a major challenge for sports clubs in urban areas that land shortage results in few or no alternative sites for sports facilities in the local environments. The local population is often negative to construction of large facilities for noisy activities and the resulting increase in car traffic. Sports facility developers are also in land competition against property developers for housing, business and nurseries. Sports clubs in neighbouring cities or city segments are also not eager to collaborate and share facilities. Also, neighbouring municipalities rarely collaborate on construction and enter shared ownership of sports facilities.

The researcher argued there is also an unhealthy proportion between the large number of facilities used by relatively few (e.g. ball bins used by boys aged 10-16), and the small number of facilities used by larger segments of the population (e.g. swimming pools for all age groups). This view is shared by more than one expert.

The community planner identified as a problem that many different interest groups demand very specific infrastructure protected from other types of activities. For example separate walking paths, separate horse paths, and separate bike paths. The local process of prioritising different projects was also subject to discussion.

One sports manager felt that political interests beyond sports policy at times made it possible for certain down-prioritised projects to queue-jump. Another sports manager remarked that a given project's potential to climb on the priority list was a result of securing sufficient funding.

Informants from both the sports clubs and the community planning (involved in plans for recreation areas) expressed concern that the sports sector and the outdoor recreation sector have unwillingly become antagonists, and that a power-unbalance has developed between the two parts. There is an unbalance on the national level at which FRIFO (The Joint Cooperation for Outdoor Recreation Organisations in Norway) is weaker than the national Confederation of Sports. The same power-unbalance is seen on the local level at which the local sports advisor exercise formidable influence on the local politicians compared to the local organisations for outdoor recreation.

The researcher suggested that there are certain mechanisms within the sports movement which result in generation a high level of public spending on progressively more spectacular and expensive facilities, and these are progressively more defined as facilities for competitive sports. These facilities are to a large extent defined beyond the reach of the non-organised segment of the population.

A sports manager illustrated the challenges relatively minor sports clubs face as a consequence of criteria and conditions defined by various sports federations concerning the standard of sports facilities. E.g. The Football Association of Norway demands a certain number of stadium seats, which is often not affordable nor relevant for certain sports clubs/municipalities. Such criteria drain both club- and municipality resources reserved for infrastructure for physical activity. The informant representing the National Board for Sports facilities responded that a dialogue has been initiated between the football association and the National Board for Sports Facilities with regard to this issue.

The researcher argues that the organisation-society has the unfortunate effect that one may only influence policies through organisations. Thus, the non-organised segments of the population become invisible. Furthermore, there is a lack of knowledge among lay people concerning how to enter the political process concerning development of infrastructure.

The researcher argues that city planning is not on the political agenda. Approximately 90% of regulation plans in Oslo are proposed by private contractors. A deregulation of the property market has resulted in reduced political control and influence on housing and local environment quality. This has resulted in progressively increasing density in housing complexes in the inner cities, and a corresponding reduction in space for activity and recreation, and reduction in the quality of this space. Defined criteria for outdoor areas concerning size and sunlight were not integrated in the new Planning- and Building Act. Also, the Housing Bank (Husbanken) has removed criteria regarding property and outdoor environment. The researcher also states that the lack of local space makes "green corridors" between housing areas and recreational areas/sports

facilities even more important, but these corridors are also under threat due to an increase in building density. There is a corresponding lack of infrastructure for lifestyle activities, such as bike lanes to allow cycling to work. The researcher argues infrastructure for pedestrians and cyclist must be given a higher priority in the National Transport Plan. Furthermore, the informant expresses concern that landscape architects have insufficient competence in city planning. Another problem is the lack of political control of contracted constructors, who have been entitled to apply procedures for documented internal audit. I.e. the municipality does no longer routinely perform audits to control contractors. The contractors perform the audit, or they hire a third party audit company.

The progressive densification of the cities impact on children, and “older” children in particular, who need more than a sandbox. Certain urban areas are built and designed in a children-hostile fashion, because they are not intended for children. One informant refers to an interview with the City Development Commissioner of Oslo, Agerbak Jensen, published in the magazine “Norsk Form”, in which the Commissioner states that the Bjørvika area of Oslo is not suited for children to live in. General perceptions of certain areas as non-suitable for families with children are, according to the researcher (informant), exploited by construction contractors as a reason for not planning for sufficient local outdoor areas. The researcher raises the question if such planning may be categorized as some form of discrimination. The National Policy Guidelines for Children and Planning (RPRs - Rikspolitiske retningslinjer for barn og planlegging) have been weakened. Regulations concerning schoolyards do also not sufficiently secure pupils healthy environments: The school yards are covered with tarmac, and the size of the school yards shrink. This is a growing problem as children spend more time in school (SFO), and the number of children increase. The infrastructure which is designed and constructed for children’s activities are often designed for typical “boy’s activities”. A large number of ball bins have been constructed in various recreation areas.

In the past local municipalities were obliged to employ a Representative for Children. According to the new Planning and Building Act, it is sufficient for the municipalities to ensure a “mechanism” in order to represent children’s’ perspectives/interests. The researcher argues the term “mechanism” is a vague legal phrase, and stress the need to protect children irrespective of where they live, as it is impossible to define areas as “children no entry”-areas, because children will live everywhere adults live.

One informant argues the health sector has traditionally been absent in the planning process, and health personnel have limited planning competence. There is, however a tendency within the health sector to address structural barriers to good health.

A sports manager informs that national stadiums for international events are built at the expense of resources that could be distributed to local infrastructure (e.g. Holmenkollen Ski Stadium and a planned 50,000 seater national football stadium). These infrastructure and facilities are also partly funded by money intended for local infrastructure. The experts find it hard to grasp why expensive national sports facilities so easily receives large amounts of money, when it is at the same time difficult to get sufficient money for construction and maintenance of small-scale and simple infrastructure for physical activity which larger proportions of the population may utilise.

The local planner believes local souls are discouraged from applying for funds for simple inventions for physical activity due to a far too complicated application procedure. Only big actors with large budgets have capacity to get proposals through the process.

4.10.3 *Issues regarding maintenance of facilities*

The sports managers agree that lack of financial resources hit the maintenance work harder than the planning/construction. As a rule, the municipality is the owner of facilities, and due to very limited local resources, maintenance is down prioritized. Some of the experts agree on that politicians are applauded louder for opening new facilities than securing proper maintenance of existing infrastructure. Furthermore, more advanced infrastructure/design is more expensive to maintain. Closed facilities (indoor halls) are more expensive to maintain than outdoor/open facilities. There is a trend in Norway for football clubs to move into indoor arenas. A fundamental problem is the fact that maintenance is hardly discussed at the planning stage. Due to limited resources, the municipalities encourage sports clubs to take responsibility for the daily maintenance of the facilities, but the financial contribution the clubs receives from the municipality represents only 25% of the actual costs. This offer is not considered to be feasible by the experts.

4.10.4 *Issues regarding accessibility of facilities*

The researcher argues that financial reasons are a barrier for access to sports facilities due to the membership fees. Therefore, local recreational infrastructure for non-organised individuals is very important, as the use of these infrastructure does not rely on payment of membership fees. Consequently, it is important to reserve local recreational areas for activities for non-organised. The researcher argues it is necessary to hinder sports clubs in occupying developed recreational areas (or areas appropriate for such development) by setting up facilities for organised sport hindering non-organised from accessing these areas. In contradiction, one of the sports managers argued that sports facilities and organised sports contributes to integration. At the same time, the sports manager acknowledges the need to prevent membership fees from escalating and thus exclude individuals with low socioeconomic status. Thus, special mechanisms must be in place to prevent exclusion due to financial reasons. The sports manager refers to examples from a municipality in which local businesses have built a fund to support individuals who cannot afford the membership fees.

All facilities sponsored by the National Lottery fund must be accessible for all. There are examples of local sports clubs sharing facilities with schools and social welfare programs (Aktiv på Dagtid), which contributes to use the facilities for more prolonged periods of the day.

The researcher remarks that local infrastructure such as bike lanes will contribute massively to increase physical activity. Bike lanes and pedestrian paths must become a number 1 priority in the National Transport Plan, as well as in the Local Plan for Outdoor Areas and Sports Facilities. Heavy traffic is an obvious barrier to these infrastructure inside cities. Thus, it is imperative to safeguard the green and children friendly corridors to ensure access to recreational areas.

All informants agree on the need to develop strategies for stimulating physical activity among members from ethnic minorities, and one of the biggest challenges is to integrate girls from certain ethnic minorities. It is considered important to initiate a dialogue with these groups on the local level. Furthermore, it is crucial to regulate areas for sports

disciplines - within the local environment or larger region - which different ethnic groups identify with. For example cricket?

4.10.5 *Issues regarding quality of communication between local officials and end-users*

The discussion reflects different views on the issue of communication. Some of the sports managers argue that local politicians lack insight into the need of the population and into how to run sports facilities, and what really sports is all about. There is a need both for sports clubs and health service to inform politicians.

Local sports managers are rapidly replaced, and it takes time for new managers to develop insight into how most efficiently to communicate with politicians and administration. One sports manager argues representatives from sports clubs must regularly meet with the local advisor on sport, the regional sports branch association, and the local politicians.

The researcher consider the sports movement on the different levels (local, regional, national) to represents a system which has proved successful in influencing policies. This is, however, not the case for organisations representing outdoor recreation, nor the interest of the non-organised segments of the population. Organizations for recreation are not organised in the same fashion (or not organised at all) on the national and local level. Consequently, the lack of communication of outdoor recreation related interests lose out to sports interest. The local planner argues that meetings with the local politicians should involve both representatives of sports and the outdoor recreation organisations.

4.10.6 *Advice and recommendations*

Summarize the key advices stated by the participants.

Sports manager: Local sports clubs need to collaborate in terms of planning and use of infrastructure.

Sports facilities must be opened for non organised groups (social welfare groups, PE-classes).

Informant representing the National Board of Sports facilities: Municipalities must collaborate on large scale infrastructure.

Sports manager: Educate local population – including the youth - in procedures for planning and applying for Lottery funding.

Local planner: Procedure for applying for lottery money should become more simplified for the small-scale local environment infrastructure in order stimulate more applications, and distribute more resources to less advanced infrastructure.

Researcher: Establish national criteria and regulations (e.g. regarding size and sunshine) to protect bike infrastructure, and for the quality and accessibility of outdoor/recreational areas and play courts/school yards in the local environment.

Develop further the new initiative “Health in Planning” (Helse i Plan).

The policies presented in the paper “Recipy for a healthier Norway” (Resept for et sunnere Norge) must be developed into a concrete plan of action with defined tools.

Health personnel must build competence in planning and get more involved in local planning.

Sports manager: It is crucial to protect the National Lottery (Norsk Tipping), and prevent betting companies from draining money into pure commercial interest.

Sports manager: National stadiums should not be financed through resources for local infrastructure, and before considering to host international events, there must be a succinct plan involving analysis of impact on local sports in order not to drain local resources for infrastructure.

Sports manager: Municipalities must increase the resources allocated to sports clubs for maintenance work.

Sports manager: Local sports clubs should be allowed to generate money in order to pay for maintenance.

Political decisions on the proportion of resources available for maintenance must be agreed on annually.

Develop meeting places in which representatives from local sports and outdoor recreation associations exchange experiences and collaborate

Sports and outdoor recreation associations must be part also of the building process (not only the planning process), as these organisations possess the know-how concerning the real need.

Local planner: Positions must be established in the local administration for local advisors on outdoor recreation - as a parallel to the local advisors on sport.

4.10.7 *Conclusion*

The experts agree on a need for better collaboration between the sports organisations and outdoor and recreation organisations. Due to lack of communication, the sectors unintentionally become rivals. There is need for more collaboration between sports clubs across municipality borders. More influence by Outdoor & Recreation organisations relies on better representation at the local level. Protection of recreational areas in the local environment is vital to stimulate activity among non-organised individuals. Commercialisation of sport results in too expensive demands in terms of facility standards which drain local resources for construction and maintenance. Maintenance must be discussed during the initial planning, and health workers must be trained and involved in planning of local environments to secure easy access to health enhancing neighbourhoods.

4.11 Portugal

4.11.1 *Selection of experts*

The total number of approached organisations was 7 because in Portugal there are not many entities dealing with LTPA infrastructure planning process. Five organisations replied positively. Experts were selected by their post on the institution contacted: we tried to contact the person with the higher post. This decision was made based on the fact that the higher the post the more holistic knowledge of LTPA infrastructure planning process the person would have. Some of these contacts are part of our personal network as well.

Portugal focus group members were:

1. The PortoLazer Lda: a municipality company that was created with the aim of promoting and supporting leisure and recreation physical activity and sports as well as cultural animation in general. This company collaborates in the creation and provision of the necessary technical, material and logistics conditions for the development of active habits in the population. PortoLazer works at local level (municipality) although it also cooperates with regional initiatives.
2. Sports Department of Maia City Hall: this department's main goals are the development of coherent, integrated and endogenous growth. For Maia's Sports Department, sport is an important factor in human and social recovery as well as a healthy way of occupying the leisure and recreational time. The City Hall recognizes sports as one of the population main demands both in high competition sport and recreational activities. It considers that sports may act like an important social, cultural, political and economic factor for the whole municipality.
3. The Sports Department of Oeiras City Hall has a very similar approach to sports and physical activity as Maia's Sports Department. This Department considers sport and physical activity a very important health determinant and seek to provide sports opportunities for all the municipality residents.
4. Sports Department of Tomar City Hall which has a quality certificate for all the work and projects it develops in this area. The department main concerns are the facilities management and the programs or interventions to improve Tomar's population physical activity level. The majority of the work is done on the local level.
5. Geography Professor (Planning Process) in Coimbra's University and I&D Company Director ("PensarTerritório Lda." - Think Territory). The company employees are master students whose research fields concerns urban planning and GIS experts that are constantly working on projects to several City Halls. Some of those projects deal with LTPA infrastructure though in a territory planning perspective. This company tries to balance people's needs for these infrastructure with the geographic characteristics of the implantation local.

Portugal Sport Institute and the North Regional Commission of Coordination and Development were also contacted but could not be present at the focus group interview due to their filled agenda.

4.11.2 *Experiences with policies regarding development of LTPA*

The strategy adopted to discuss this bullet was to split the questions according to the planning process. By doing this we were able to deepen the knowledge about all parts of LTPA infrastructure planning.

Issues concerning planning:

Plans are made by municipalities' urban planning experts and civil engineers who, in most of the cases, have no knowledge about sports or physical activity. The person who requests these infrastructure and who leads the entire process is the Major. For instance if the Major wants to build a swimming pool in a certain area, he requests a plan from the experts and they have to follow some criteria usually spread in the legislation regarding the size, materials to be used in its construction or even the budget. During this process there is no concern about the target people or the maintenance which, like many experts said, is a very big mistake as we can see by the large number of good swimming pools built all over Portugal that have no usage or had to be shut because the municipality has no funding to face the high maintenance costs.

When the plan is done, usually after some months of meetings and approval of municipality assembly, it has to be approved by the Portugal Sport Institute. This entity takes several months to review the plans and in some experts opinion Portugal Sport Institute should assess not only the plan alone but its surroundings. This way they could avoid the chaotic LTPA infrastructure network seen in many Portugal regions. According to some experts there regions where one can find three or more swimming pools within less than 10Km area and other regions where there is no such infrastructure.

Issues concerning funding:

LTPA infrastructure constructions are mostly funded by the European Union. The more funding municipalities get the bigger and more expensive facilities they built. Some experts revealed that politics distort the main goal of LTPA infrastructure and instead of building appropriate facilities for the general population they rather built facilities to attract high competitive sports athletes. Their aim is to draw the attention to themselves and somehow to highlight their importance.

However there are some municipalities (like Maia, Oeiras, Porto and many others) that besides concerning about the facility itself they also implement physical activity enhancing programs for the general population (children, adults or older adults). The programs costs are almost totally supported by the municipality. All experts agreed about the importance of such programs and they think that there should be more funding for these initiatives. Besides, these programs keep the community very united and might have positive influence on people's health.

Issues concerning construction:

Portugal lacks specialized constructors of LTPA infrastructure. So, the construction of this type of infrastructure might be done by any construction company. As some experts highlighted, nowadays everyone has to have a specialization: there is so much knowledge about everything that one can only know about a specific subject. Considering the fact that LTPA infrastructure are so specific, the constructors company should be chosen by its knowledge and experience in this field. This could prevent some situations such as, time delays or little decision power on specific circumstances.

Issues concerning management:

In Portugal each type of LTPA infrastructure has different type of management. Public open spaces such as parks and other green spaces are managed by the City Hall or a partnership between the City Hall and the Environment Ministry, while some sports halls are managed by public/private partnerships (usually between the City Hall and Local Sports Clubs). There are also some sports halls attached to schools that are managed by a partnership between the City Hall and the Education Ministry.

However in most cases the City Hall has the biggest share of responsibility in managing these facilities: paying people to clean and look after the facilities and its content. The only problem is the fact that these infrastructure do not produce any profit so it is difficult to reduce its degradation level.

4.11.3 *Issues regarding maintenance of facilities*

The maintenance of parks and gardens are done exclusively by City Halls gardeners. Sports Halls (either the ones managed by sports clubs or the ones attached to schools) have a rather easy and low cost maintenance. These facilities expenses are supported by the City Hall but users also contribute with the payment of a symbolic entrance fee.

According to the experts opinion, swimming pools have the highest maintenance cost: water disinfection, electricity, surveillance by competent people etc...The symbolic entrance fee to public swimming pools is not enough to face all the maintenance costs. Several municipalities had to shut their swimming pools because of this issue. This situation might be product of the lack of planning: during this procedure there is no preoccupation about management or maintenance issues which could prevent the expenditure of huge amounts of money in the construction of such facilities.

One of the experts said that LTPA infrastructure should not be planned at municipality level: he proposed a regional approach to these facilities because he claimed that Portugal is a too small country to have so many LTPA infrastructure, specially the oversized ones, which produce so many maintenance problems.

4.11.4 *Issues regarding accessibility of facilities*

We divided access issues in two subcategories: transport accessibility and human accessibility.

Transport accessibility:

Some of the finest LTPA infrastructure, like parks and big gardens, are quite far from residential areas and have no access by public transport so people have to either go by foot or use their own car to use them. This might be a barrier for some people. In the Portuguese experts' opinion, a good public transport network is needed as well as the requalification of some residential areas. More green areas should be created in residential and other urban areas.

Human accessibility:

Not all sports halls and swimming pools are prepared to receive handicapped people. Architectural barriers like steps, small sized doors and the lack of specialized WC's are some of the examples that keep handicapped people away from these facilities.

There is also the need to hire physical education monitors and teachers, specialized in dealing with handicapped (either mental or physical) people.

All facilities (except beaches and coast areas) require a symbolic fee to be used. The problem is that not everyone is able to pay that fee: there should be a distinct fee for different users (with different economic background).

4.11.5 *Issues regarding quality of communication between local officials and end-users*

Experts were unanimous about the fact that there is little cooperation/communication between local policy officials and end-users. One of the experts gave the only example on how some population representative might be part of the policy making process: not very often the National Municipality Association is contacted by the Republic Assembly or any other governmental organ in order to give their opinion about a possible change in the legislation or even a new legislation project. When this happens

all of Portugal's City Halls Majors contact their experts that do their best by advising how to improve the existing legislation or creating new one.

The Portugal Sports Institute has the power to approve or not the construction as well as the usage of sports halls and swimming pools. Baring this in mind, experts think that this entity should be more open to the communication with municipalities once they are the closest governmental organ to the population who are the main end-users.

One of the ways to improve the process of cooperation and communication between these two entities is to give more power of decision to the regional Portugal Sports Institute delegations. Nowadays Portugal Sports Institute main office is in Lisbon and although there are some sub delegations spread in the territory all the decisions have to be made in Lisbon which, in some situations is not very practical.

One of the experts suggested the creation of regional teams, with a rigid meeting schedule in which LTPA infrastructure planning process should discussed and perhaps with some decision power. He continued saying that these teams should be constituted by: city halls representative, urban planners, civil engineers, architects, Portugal Sports Institute representative and regional power representative. These teams would be able to achieve solutions for many issues that have been pointed out earlier in a faster and maybe more coherent way.

4.11.6 *Advice and recommendations*

1. PortoLazer Lda: Portugal Sports Institute sub delegations should have more decision making power and rules/criteria concerning LTPA infrastructure (specially in the coast) should be more flexible. Some criteria impede the use of Portugal's coast and its natural features to create LTPA infrastructure, such as natural swimming pools for example.
2. Sports Department of Maia City Hall: the creation of multidisciplinary teams with government representatives with regular meetings to discuss only LTPA infrastructure issues.
3. The Sports Department of Oeiras City Hall: while planning LTPA infrastructure, the City Hall should also have in account the private availability of sports halls. This concern might avoid the spending of a large amount of funding in the construction of facilities that already exists in the same municipality.
4. Sports Department of Tomar City Hall: the creation of an inventory of all LTPA infrastructure and its features either at local or national level.
5. Geography Professor (Planning Process) in Coimbra's University and I&D Company Director ("PensarTerritório Lda." - Think Territory): integrate more variables on the planning process and not just concern about size, materials and budgets. Social and Bio-physic territory variables such as: population density, age, school level, proximity to residential areas, accessibility, attractiveness, target population etc... must be part of the LTPA infrastructure planning process.

4.11.7 *Conclusion*

All the process of planning LTPA infrastructure in Portugal needs to be updated. The initiative of planning and building these LTPA facilities should not occur out of nothing, i. e., before applying a LTPA infrastructure project, one must make sure that this type of facilities is necessary; if the population will give it the use it requires to keep it open and most important of all if the managing and maintenance is affordable in long term. Basically, LTPA infrastructure must be planned in a sustainable way.

Another point that all the experts referred was the existence of too many LTPA infrastructure with little or no use at all. So, before building new facilities it is more

important to requalify the old ones and adapt them to more modern types of sports or other activities related to physical activity.

In order to achieve these goals all entities involved in the LTPA infrastructure planning process should meet, discuss all the issues that were pointed before, and create more efforts on developing a more efficient system of the planning process.

Our small focus group meeting of experts agreed in most of the issues discussed. This makes us believe that the problems related to LTPA infrastructure planning process are well known by all entities that has to deal with it. However the initiative of improving the planning process has to start at the higher level: only at this level there is enough power to convoke mandatory meetings.

Fortunately a lot City Halls Majors and expert teams already have some knowledge about these issues and try to avoid the mistakes made in the past and largely discussed in this report.

4.12 Spain

Results of the focus group interview in Spain were submitted to the work package leader only after the deadline had passed. Therefore, the national report for Finland was not edited by the work package leader and not included in the overall conclusion of chapter 4 and chapter 5. Spain's results of the group interview were included in the separate appendix to this report.

4.13 The Netherlands

4.13.1 Selection of experts

In the Netherlands, representatives of seven organisations participated in the IMPALA focus group meeting. These organisations were diverse in composition and background. The participants were selected through existing and non-existing contacts. The total number of approached organisations was 22 of which only seven attended the interview. The main reasons for non-participation were unavailable (due to holiday or other appointments), unfortunate timing (re-organisation or strategic repositioning), no-priority (in policy) or unwillingness (no interest or no answer).

The selection was done to cover most of the criteria: the organisation is focused on some kind of LTPA facility and is involved into at least one of the policy processes planning/design, finance, building and management.

Background participating organisations:

Gelderse Sportfederatie – (2 representatives)

The Gelderse Sportfederatie is the central organisation in the province of Gelderland to support and promote sport and healthy movement. It cooperates with government, sport clubs, schools, businesses and other organizations. The experts in the interview are working on the subjects of spatial structure for play and outdoor activity.

NOC-NSF – (1 representative)

The Nederlands Olympisch Comité - Nederlandse Sport Federatie is the head organisation for the organised sport clubs in the Netherlands. The body has 90 national sport members which together represent over 27000 sport organizations and over 4,7 million athletes. With the national Sport Agenda 1012 the organization wants to lead the Netherlands towards a more sportive and healthy country.

NUSO – (1 representative)

The NUSO is the national network organisation of playgrounds and outdoor facilities for children. The network consists of over 700 playgrounds in the Netherlands. The main task of the NUSO is to support and guide the member playgrounds and the renovation and building of playgrounds and facilities.

Gemeente Zoetermeer – (1 representative)

The city of Zoetermeer is represented by the project manager of leisure time provisions and accommodations. The main task is to manage and realise all the sport facilities within the community of Zoetermeer. Zoetermeer is a middle large city in the Netherlands with approximately 121.500 inhabitants.

Corporatie Com.Wonen Rotterdam – (1 representative)

Com.Wonen is the second largest housing corporation in the region of Rotterdam and Rijnmond. Its goal is to create and maintain the quality of life in the neighbourhood. The representative is working at the strategic property department.

Richard Krajicek Foundation – (1 representative)

The mission of the Richard Krajicek Foundation is to promote sportive activities in a social safe environment, for those who have fewer opportunities in their neighbourhood. Therefore it develops and creates its own playground, called the Krajicek Playgrounds. In the Netherlands there are around 50 playgrounds already and the number is growing.

Sportcentrum Galgenwaard Utrecht – (1 representative)

The Sportcentrum Galgenwaard is managed by the city of Utrecht. The local government has a department of development for societal services and sport, which is responsible for the development of several indoor sport accommodations within the area. The sports centre is a result of one of the development projects done by this department.

4.13.2 Experiences with policies regarding development of LTPA

Several main problems were mentioned: process of getting financial resources, little notion of return on investment, the division of urban spatial structure, the exploitation of the facilities, lack of national policy or guidelines and the scope of local governments. All the factors are discussed briefly below.

Process of getting financial resources

Getting sufficient financial resources was named an important issue by several participants. The issue also included the many political and procedural factors involved. Trust was mentioned by some experts as a main factor to win the lobby. There are many parties involved, said the NOC-NSF representative, each with their own agenda and with or without financial resources. As a developer of LTPA facilities you have to deal with the variety of possible stakeholders. Amongst all participants, the expert of the Krajicek Foundation said money is “the least of (its) problems”. Rather, its solution was to present such a high quality plan and proposal, which cannot be rejected by local politicians. For the Gelderse Sportfederatie experts the problem was to find the right stakeholders within the local and regional government.

Return on investment

The return on investment was mentioned by several participants. On one hand as an investor you want to have a clear overview of the return on investment or the effect of

the investment, on the other hand it is difficult to come up with these data. All participants agreed that it is necessary to measure the 'societal benefit' in order to justify the investment and development of LTPA facilities. Unfortunately, the adequate methods and instruments to measure this benefit are not always available.

Urban spatial structure

Several parties mentioned issues regarding the urban spatial structure. The NUSO representative said that when developing a living area first is thought of planning parking spaces, schools, roads and pathways. Playgrounds for the children or room for physical exercise come at last. The NOC-NSF representative continued that on abstract level the 'free' hours people have are occupied with sport and LTPA, but also with other activities. Developers and spatial structure specialists should take this into their account when designing (and most of all) dividing a spatial area. Therefore, a norm is needed, said also the representative of Sportcentrum Galgenwaard, which claimed to already use a guideline for the percentage of space for LTPA.

Exploitation of the facilities

Within the development of LTPA facilities good long term vision including a financial chapter on exploitation, management and maintenance is lacking, said the representative of Gemeente Zoetermeer. Also, Sportcentrum Galgenwaard's participant mentioned, new projects are often exploited as a prestige object. "When the bubbles of the champagne are gone, the stakeholders start to realize the facility also should work and be in-use." He concluded that the exploitation is being underestimated in the ideas in local governments' plans to develop LTPA facilities.

A related issue mentioned was the dependence of return of investment of a LTPA facility with the way of exploitation. The experts of Gemeente Zoetermeer and NOC-NSF did see a positive development: by combining several functions (apart from LTPA supported facilities) in one structure the long-term value of the asset (the facility) is more secured. As single LTPA facility the return on investment is probably low, therefore seeking for combinations with other functions, minimizing the spatial use, and optimizing management cost, would increase the profit.

National policy

The experts agreed there is no national policy on the programming of activities. Also, when it comes to the agenda, sport was not considered as the highest priority of local governments. The expert of NOC-NSF even doubted the necessity to have a national policy. Customization and decentralisation are the keywords, according to the expert. "Local governments have their own plans, but sometimes it is better to cooperate at regional level", commented the participant of Gelderse Sportfederatie. Eg. Not every city needs a public swimming pool. A risk is the growing tendency of copy-cat behaviour ("I wanna have what you have."). On the contrary more unique and diverse facilities are needed.

Scope of policymakers

It is necessary for local governments to use longer policy scope over their 4 years term of office, said the representatives of NOC-NSF and Sportcentrum Galgenwaard. Gemeente Zoetermeer's representative concurred that the policy on sport and movement is in alignment with the national Olympic Agenda to 2028. The expert of the municipality of Zoetermeer said, that the Olympic Agenda has sufficient concrete guidelines (regarding development of sport and LTPA structure) for local policy given

the attention to infrastructure. He said: “The municipality can use this agenda for setting its own agenda on development of LTPA infrastructure.”

4.13.3 *Issues regarding maintenance of facilities*

Three important issues were mentioned by the participants: the responsibility for the maintenance, the quality of the facilities and the quality of the people (eg. training and competences).

One problem mentioned was the responsibility for taking care of the LTPA facilities. The Gelderse Sportfederatie representatives questioned whose main responsibility is the maintenance of the facilities? For example, a school playground is often desired by the school. Yet, often neither the school nor the municipality are willing to take the responsibility for the maintenance. Also, in the plans for developing facilities for LTPA a chapter for maintenance is lacking, concluded one of the experts of Gelderse Sportfederatie.

The representative of the Richard Krajicek Foundation complained that the quality of the outdoor facilities (like playgrounds) is rather low. It seemed that the places are of nobody's interest or responsibility, which led to dirty, unattractive and possibly unsafe environments.

The quality of the “peopleware”, meaning employees, the training of employees and their competences, was also an issue according to the representative of the Richard Krajicek Foundation. He said that if you want better people who are responsible for the maintenance, guidance and security, you need to invest into it. Therefore, he concluded, that the task for a developer is to make sure to invest into these aspects or at least make it important.

4.13.4 *Issues regarding accessibility of facilities*

The interviewees mentioned a number of issues regarding access: the synchronization of the facilities with different target and user groups, the utilization of facilities during the day, and the general accessibility of LTPA facilities.

With changing requirements, the synchronization of the facilities with target and user groups is altering, according to some experts. For instance, less people have a membership at a sport organisation or club, said the NOC-NSF expert. Also, more and more people have different requirements and needs based on their background, sex, age and physical condition, continued the experts of the Gelderse Sportfederatie. Several examples were given by the participants on LTPA facilities adapted or created for multifunctional or specific use and target groups. Eg. Special swimming pools for revalidation of disabled people, or Muslim women; or the restructuring of a sports hall in order to facilitate Hindustan wedding parties.

A problem of access and exploitation is the full utilization of sport facilities, such as soccer fields, said the representative of NOC-NSF. Apart from soccer activities these fields are empty and non-used during the day time, he said. The expert advised a big step is needed to optimize the exploitation of a sport accommodation. This was also considered as an information issue: sport clubs need to know from each other when their accommodations are and are not in use.

Accessibility starts at the home situation, mentioned the Sportcentrum Galgenwaard representative. He said that LTPA infrastructure goes further than the physical facility alone. He raised the question: “How does the user get from A to B?” And gave the answer: “The signs and references to the facility have to be available, visible and recognisable. More important, the facility is preferably part of a total package, which sells a positive experience.”

4.13.5 *Issues regarding quality of communication between local officials and end-users*

One issue was mentioned regarding direct communication between local policy officials and end-users. Also three other communication issues were mentioned by the participants regarding communication within the domain of the policy makers.

Stakeholder/Neighbourhood involvement. To narrow the contact between end-users and policy makers, policy officials should visit a neighbourhood meeting and has to get direct contact with the resident, said a Gelderse Sportfederatie expert. The representative of NUSO mentioned that all parties who are involved into the project should sit at the table, including neighbourhood representatives, voluntary organisations and the housing corporation. When many stakeholders are committed to this meeting, residents feel more understood and trusted, he continued.

Also, as a professional, the civil servant has to be professional enough to think along with the customer and other stakeholders, said the participant of Sportcentrum Galgenwaard. With the right mindset a clerk will be more of a creative advisor, than a top-down developer, he said.

At national level, the minister and his administration seem to look for the “easy way”, said the representative of the Krajicek Foundation. Therefore, the minister is gathering easy-going partners, quick entries and no complexities, he continued. The expert of NUSO commented that developing new and innovative solutions asks for a complex and more difficult path. The representative of NOC-NSF explained that because of the quick-win and high-score attitude of policy makers, this is an inevitable problem. “They rather put the idea in the freezer, than implement it after all,” Gemeente Zoetermeer expressed.

To prevent copy-cat behaviour, more communication and alignment between cities and local governments is needed, said the expert of Gemeente Zoetermeer. Also, he said, more information exchange would help to come up with innovative and useful solutions and facilities.

More internal cooperation at local governments will have a positive effect on the efficiency and effect of the whole process, mentioned a representative of Gelderse Sportfederatie. She continued that it would make it more clear what people's responsibility are, and where you can find the right people you need for the job done. In a lot of local governments organisation is structured in a functional way, based on expertise, she concluded. In the Municipality of Zoetermeer, the municipal representative said, policy officials work differently: the project is leading, the organization is structured based on themes rather than on expertise, and for each project the right expertise is gathered.

4.13.6 *Advice and recommendations*

The representative of Gemeente Zoetermeer advised on the level of functional integration and management of LTPA infrastructure. He advised that LTPA facility

should maintain its functional purpose for future use. Also, he said, that in order to keep it clean, unharmed and safe, proper investments into maintenance and management are needed.

The two representatives of the Gelderse Sportfederatie recommended on the maintenance and management of LTPA infrastructure. They said good management and maintenance is a combination of both physical maintenance as well as maintenance of peopleware (eg. competent employees, guidance of employees, and local social involvement). The representatives also advised to diversify the involvement of parties. They said to involve parties, such as the neighbourhood from the start of the development, to secure the use and value for the long term.

The representative of the Krajicek Foundation advised that development of LTPA infrastructure as well as the management and future exploitation needs a long term investment plan. For instance, he said that Krajicek Foundation agreed with Com.Wonen on a long term management and exploitation contract for eight years. "This commitment is necessary to secure a good exploitation and continuous development after implementation. Also, the facility needs to create a social secure environment."

The expert of NUSO recommended a national regulatory norm for the amount of LTPA facilities within a certain area (for instance three percent). He argued that maybe national level is not enough, and that it should be regulated on European level. Another advice he gave was that for the concrete realization and implementation it is important to involve the local end-users (eg. the people in the neighbourhoods) during the development of LTPA facilities.

The participant of Com.Wonen advised to always keep an eye on the quality of the peopleware. He said that guidance and coaching are often guaranteed only for a period of time. He recommended that parties should be aware of the continuous awareness of reinvestment into people and management, when the quality around the LTPA facility and its peopleware is deteriorating.

The expert of NOC-NSF said there is a high need for information exchange. He said that there many positive initiatives, developments and practices, yet, the availability and provision of information is minimal. He advised to improve the exchange of information to solve 'child deceases' and problems of synchronization between different stakeholders.

Another suggestion he made was to improve the functional flexibility of the LTPA infrastructure for future use. By flexible design and construct the infrastructure, facilities are not fixed on a single purpose and limit the risk of redundancy, he said.

The representative of Sportcentrum Galgenwaard additionally suggested that the media should cover and publish more positively on these subjects. He said that positive developments and success stories do exist, but have to be told to the public.

4.13.7 *Conclusion*

In short, the lack of a national policy or agenda on LTPA infrastructure did not impede the participants to develop, manage and maintain existing and future infrastructure. On the other hand, the participants did mention several issues regarding to the

development, maintenance, accessibility, and communication between policy officials and end-users.

All the parties in this interview agreed LTPA infrastructure requires customization and should be best decentralised (in relation with governance). Main issues regarding the development of LTPA facilities are the many parties involved in the process and the unclearness on the return on investment. Documentation on the finance, management of exploitation and maintenance is missing or insufficient. This could pose a risk for the eventual responsibility or ownership of the facilities. Communication and cooperation, both within and between governmental organisations, have to improve to overcome lack of confidence at residents' side, lack of information on existing good practices and lack of knowledge on collegial expertise.

With the Olympic agenda as a guideline and an unofficial 3 percent norm on spatial structure for LTPA, governments and other parties are able to work. Yet, more long term vision on the development and exploitation of LTPA infrastructure has to be implemented for securing future use and value of existing and new LTPA infrastructure.

4.14 Overall Conclusion

4.14.1 Selection of experts

The participating countries adopted similar approaches to contacting possible interviewees. Countries made good use of their own networks, for example through the snowball effect, and approached new contacts. The number of organisations contacted varied between 7 (Portugal) to 22 (the Netherlands), although the number was not an indicator of the response rate. Most countries failed to reach the preferred number of 8-10 participants; only Germany (8) and the Czech Republic (10) were successful in this respect. Reasons for not attending the meeting were quite similar in all countries: the persons did not show up (sometimes because of illness), the organisations did not consider themselves to be within the scope of the target group or did not see what the interest for them was, full agendas were an obstacle to participation, and several contacts did not answer at all.

The organisations that attended represented a variety of backgrounds. Most countries tried to establish a sample that was representative for the preferred organisational categories. Representatives of local government were present at the table in all countries. Most countries did invite representatives from NGOs which were involved in either encouraging or facilitating LTPA. This category in particular attracted a wide range of organisations: from the Cancer Society of Denmark to an association for mountain climbing in Austria and Germany. Several countries invited a representative from the umbrella sports association responsible for the promotion of sports and LTPA nationwide. Other representatives were architects and engineers, or representatives from swimming pools, fitness centres or sports clubs.

Experiences with policies for LTPA development

Questions were asked about three experience categories: the development of LTPA infrastructure (planning, construction and promotion, for example), finance and management. Within these categories there were similarities and differences between the participants and participating countries.

Planning

In several countries, experts said that politicians are either selective about which kind of facilities are planned (the Netherlands and Norway, for example) or obstruct plans for political reasons (as in Denmark and Germany). Some experts said that politicians prefer to invest in new and ambitious projects rather than in the development of small and politically less appealing infrastructure (for reasons relating to media exposure, for instance). Other experts said that sports and LTPA are not always high priorities for local politicians.

The experts said that countries where land or space to build LTPA infrastructure are scarce or limited (Norway, Denmark and Portugal, for example) have a spatial planning problem. They put forward several reasons for this. The density of infrastructure is too high with respect to the size of the area; it is hard to find an adequate location to erect a new facility; the infrastructure is spread unequally (geographically speaking).

In the Czech Republic, a societal shift generated more demand for new infrastructure. After the fall of communism, for example, people's daily lives changed. People needed more leisure time and were looking for new lifestyle openings. Nevertheless, the experts said the amount of infrastructure failed to match demand because of a shortage of knowledge on the planning side about health and healthy lifestyles. A knowledge gap is also apparent in Portugal, where knowledge about the target group is insufficient and where the consequences for maintenance (such as the necessary financial resources) are not taken into account adequately. This is why, according to the experts, there is too much unused infrastructure in Portugal.

As for the other countries, there are no national plans for improving or promoting sports or PA. Instead, plans are sometimes made at the regional or local levels. For instance, the municipality of Eisenstadt in Austria has a development plan for the next 10 to 15 years for sports and PA infrastructure. However, in the Netherlands, experts said a new national Olympic Agenda for 2028 could give a boost to the development and promotion of sports and PA activities and infrastructure. At the regional and local levels, both politicians and sports associations found that the Olympic Agenda contained enough guidelines for the expected development of sports and LTPA facilities for use in later planning activities.

In some cases, the problem is the way the planning is organised. For example, the Portuguese Sports Institute has to approve plans, but the experts believe that this organisation takes too much time to review the plans, and does not assess secondary issues relating to the plan (such as the geographical spread of infrastructure, demand for facilities etc.). In the Netherlands, the process of planning is blurred because of institutional obstacles (lack of transparency on the government side) and the multitude of actors involved in the process.

Finance

Financial issues relate either to the lack of finance (Norway, Netherlands and Czech Republic, for example), clarity relating to subsidies (as in Austria), or the distribution of funding (in Portugal, for instance). In countries where finding finance or funding was considered to be the major issue, experts said that political will and involvement are often important prerequisites. In the Netherlands, the experts raised another issue: namely, clarity about the return on investment in the LTPA infrastructure. When it is not possible to make the situation relating to exploitation and ROI clear enough, investors will not consider putting money into the new infrastructure.

In general, finance was not always the major issue affecting the construction of LTPA infrastructure. On the contrary, there are good examples of funding: in some

municipalities in Portugal, all costs for LTPA programmes are funded by local government.

Management

In Germany, regulations prevent some facilities (such as school gyms) being used for other purposes or for the organisation of specific kinds of activities (for reasons relating to noise, surveillance etc.). In several countries (such as Austria, the Czech Republic and Denmark) the variety and number of groups using the facilities are not in proportion to the available capacity. This places limitations on other user groups. In some countries, the qualifications of people involved with either building or managing the LTPA infrastructure are an important issue (as in the Netherlands, Portugal and Austria). The quality of management and exploitation of the facility therefore depends on the right qualified people being involved or responsible.

4.14.2 Facility maintenance

A major issue addressed by many experts (for example in Austria, Denmark, the Czech Republic, Norway and Portugal) is the lack of attention paid to maintenance by government. As politicians and administrators are more concerned with other plans and agendas (such as investing in new facilities), the maintenance of existing infrastructure has a low priority. In some countries, entrance fees for LTPA infrastructure are used as an alternative source of financing for maintenance costs (the Czech Republic and Portugal being examples here).

Another major issue addressed by the experts is the ownership of facilities (in Denmark and the Netherlands, for example). This corresponds to the need for investment. If no-one seems to 'own' the facility, in other words if no-one is responsible for management and maintenance, nobody will be concerned about the financial responsibility for maintenance either. A good example comes from the city of Vienna in Austria, where maintenance "works well", experts said. One reason is that, in Vienna, maintenance is taken into consideration during the planning process.

Vandalism and safety, usually in the vicinity of outdoor LTPA facilities, are two intertwined issues about which all experts were concerned. Firstly, vandalism pushes up maintenance costs. It also results in an unattractive and unsafe environment for possible target groups, especially children and families. Several experts (in Germany and the Netherlands, for example) mentioned the issue of supervision and qualified personnel at the facility location. Indeed, it is not easy to find enough competent staff.

4.14.3 Accessibility of facilities

Several limitations were mentioned by the experts. There is a distinction between transport accessibility (travelling to a facility) and personal accessibility (personal needs).

In some countries, the geographical location of the facilities hinders easy access for users (the Czech Republic, Denmark and Portugal, for example). The experts said that shorter distances to infrastructure would be preferable and that adequate links with public transportation could help. In the Netherlands, the issue was raised of accommodating the user from door to door. In other words, experts thought that the user experience begins as soon as a user leaves home and travels to the facility, and therefore that this route should be made as easy as possible.

Experts from all countries said that the accessibility of facilities is adversely affected by entrance or membership fees. These fees are often used for maintenance and so they are unavoidable when additional funding is absent.

Another issue addressed by many experts was whether the facilities are in balance with the needs of the target user groups. Either facilities are overcrowded (as in Denmark), dominated by certain user groups (Germany and Austria, for example), or are used inefficiently for only specific sports or activities (as in Norway and the Netherlands). On the other hand, special programmes have been developed for improving accessibility for disabled and minority users (as in the Czech Republic, Norway, Austria and the Netherlands).

4.14.4 *Quality of communication between local officials and end-users*

Communications-related issues were thought to be twofold: either there are no clear lines of communication linking end users and the local or regional policymakers, or there is not enough knowledge exchange between the parties involved. The fuzzy organisation on the policymaking side makes it hard to find the right persons to communicate with, according to many experts of sport associations and other end users (from Denmark, Austria and the Netherlands, for instance). On the other hand, a lack of knowledge and information can result in misunderstandings, inefficient planning and a lack of trust (this was a feature of, for example, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Norway, and the Netherlands). Experts said many policymakers are unaware or uninformed about the needs of sport and LTPA.

Cooperation and communications do work when there are mutual interests (as in the Czech Republic, where there is co-ownership of sports clubs) or when neighbourhoods and NGOs get more involved in the planning process (as in the Netherlands and Austria).

4.14.5 *Advice and recommendations*

Development of LTPA infrastructure

Much advice and many recommendations were given about development issues (such as planning, construction, and promotion). Several recommendations related to the position of policymakers. Czech experts pleaded for more competent policymakers for sports. German experts advised changes in the role of the experts and local authorities involved in the development process. They need to play a more coaching role rather than a controlling one. In Portugal, an expert advised the transfer of decision-making to the national sports institute.

Other countries' experts recommended creating synergy and furthering dynamism in the planning process by involving numerous disciplines and a wide range of experience (Denmark, for example), and emphasised the importance of a long-term vision and budget planning for the development, management and exploitation of infrastructure (as in the Netherlands.) A Norwegian expert said that current initiatives in the areas of sports and health should be developed further into concrete actions and instruments. For instance, the creation of a local or national database with all infrastructure and features could help policymakers, according to a Portuguese expert.

Experts from several countries (such as Germany, the Netherlands and Austria) advised reconsidering the development of infrastructure with respect to exploitation. The new facilities should be designed to be flexible and multifunctional in order to anticipate future and changing needs. Developers should therefore always take potential and existing users as their point of departure, added a Danish expert. A Portuguese expert said that it is wise to optimise the utilisation of existing infrastructure before building new infrastructure.

Some experts (from Germany, the Netherlands, Austria and Norway, for example) explicitly advised improvements to the involvement of end users and other parties in the development process. The end users are the inhabitants of neighbourhoods and cities,

whereas other parties could consist of interest groups, sports and outdoor recreation associations, engineers etc.

Hardly any recommendations were made about funding and finance. Austrian experts all agreed that public funding and subsidies must be linked to a development plan. This could prevent pointless or ill-considered investments. In Norway, the experts advised allocating lottery funding to less advanced and small-scale infrastructure, and using local resources for local infrastructure instead of spending money for commercial purposes, or spending local money on national projects. Some German experts agreed about renting facilities to commercial parties to generate income and to resolve financial problems.

Maintenance

Only a few recommendations were made about maintenance, mostly by experts with links to sports associations. To prevent vandalism and to ensure safe environments, developers need to invest in people and management, for example voluntary supervision and cooperation with relevant partners (in the Netherlands and Germany for example). In Norway, an expert said that more money should be allocated to maintenance in the form of either subsidies from the municipal authority or sports clubs' own earnings.

Accessibility

Advice about the accessibility of LTPA infrastructure was twofold. Firstly, experts said that, social and geographical factors should be taken into account in the development and planning process (as in Portugal and the Czech Republic). Some experts even recommended concrete regulatory criteria about the percentage of infrastructure within an area (the Netherlands, for example) or about size and architecture (as in Norway). Other experts wanted to incorporate other factors, such as health objectives (Denmark) and gender differences (in the Czech Republic, a sports manager argued that planning for LTPA infrastructure should place more emphasis on the views of women). Secondly, recommendations were made about the utilisation of facilities (Austria and Norway). Sports and outdoor recreation facilities should be made more open and easy to use for non-organised user groups, especially when the facilities are managed by specific organisations and therefore closed to the general public.

Communications and collaboration

Experts from all countries recommended improving collaboration and the exchange of information between the involved parties. Most experts wanted to create platforms for a broad audience, including public and private organisations and end users (as in Denmark, Austria, Germany and the Netherlands). In other cases, the exchange of knowledge and experiences could be limited to certain groups such as municipal authorities or sports associations (Norway, the Czech Republic and Portugal). Czech experts also recommended raising awareness in people and organisations about the importance of a healthy and active lifestyle by supplying health education and information. Another recommendation made by some experts was the promotion of positive news about LTPA facilities (as in the Netherlands and Czech Republic) and active and healthy lifestyles (as in Germany and Czech Republic).

4.14.6 Conclusion

The main conclusion is that issues relating to the development and use of LTPA infrastructure are more or less similar across Europe (with the exception of differences in perspective). The focus group interviews have shown that LTPA infrastructure issues

transcend national, cultural and expertise boundaries. Although only a select group of European countries participated, it is fair to say that professionals and experts in Europe encounter the same problems in relation to planning, building, managing and maintaining LTPA facilities.

The absence of a national plan or agenda for sports, leisure-time physical activity, or healthy lifestyles was not considered to be a limitation for the development of LTPA infrastructure. On the other hand, the experts interviewed advised policymakers and developers to make thorough appraisals of the need for, the goals and the exploitation of, existing and new infrastructure. Doing so could save unnecessary expense, prevent time-consuming projects, and reduce frustration among the public, the professionals and the politicians involved.

In addition to the planning process, the availability and exchange of relevant knowledge and proper information were considered to be very important. Firstly, the experts said that the knowledge shortfall at the decision- and policy-making levels could result in unclear plans and misunderstandings with other stakeholders. Secondly, knowledge exchanges between all the actors involved could improve communications and collaboration at both the planning and management stages. More specifically, good communications between municipalities could prevent the redundant development of infrastructure, and communications between ‘users’ of sports and outdoor recreation facilities, such as sports associations and schools, could optimise the utilisation of these facilities. Thirdly, since the public is sensitive to media information, proper and positive news coverage of issues relating to LTPA infrastructure could promote sports and healthy lifestyles.

At the same time, communications between local officials and end users were felt to be unsatisfactory. The experts did recommend more end-user involvement. For example, if local officials were to attend neighbourhood meetings, this could result in more mutual trust and awareness.

Surprisingly, even against the background of the economic downturn, financing did not emerge as the main issue. The experts believe there are sufficient financial subsidies and funds. The problem is often how to win the political fight and obtaining sufficient support or ensuring that the funds are allocated to the right projects. An interesting recommendation was the linkage between funding and a master or development plan. This could force politicians and policymakers to develop realistic and feasible infrastructure plans.

The issues relating to maintenance were twofold: a lack of financial investment and a lack of human resources. Almost all the experts concluded that maintenance was not seen as the highest priority when planning LTPA infrastructure. At the same time, experts encountered the consequences of problems with maintenance: badly maintained, old facilities ready for closure that created vandalised, unattractive and unsafe environments. The resulting experts’ recommendations were as simple as they were logical: investment in education and training for voluntary workers and supervisors, and more money for maintenance.

Another maintenance issue addressed by several experts was ownership. Although this issue was not included in the recommendations, clarity with respect to ownership could be an important prerequisite for the future maintenance and management of LTPA infrastructure. However, even after initial investments – financial or otherwise – have been made in development and maintenance, if nobody assumes responsibility, it is highly questionable whether anybody will be willing to invest in training for people in the long term and to pay for future maintenance costs.

All the experts agreed that developers and relevant actors should take the accessibility of infrastructure into account. Specific problems were experienced by different countries, and the corresponding recommendations from the experts varied accordingly. Countries with geographical and spatial challenges could learn from each other in terms of coping with these issues. More interestingly, accessibility for different target groups will be the next challenge given the direction in which society is developing. On the one hand, there are differences in people's ability to pay entrance or membership fees. On the other, accessibility can also be an issue for ethnic minorities (for example). A third issue is how to achieve a balance in terms of fulfilling all the needs of all the possible user groups. Some experts said that facilities are already overcrowded or used unevenly. Developing multipurpose or multifunctional LTPA facilities could be a way of anticipating these challenges.

Unfortunately, only seven of the twelve participating countries delivered adequate material from the focus group interviews. The missing data could have yielded valuable additional or supporting information. Nevertheless, the findings of the focus group interviews clearly indicated how European professionals at the regional and local levels deal with the development, management and maintenance of LTPA infrastructure. This raises the question of whether 'Europe' should provide support or intervene in this matter. The experts stated that no additional regulation was necessary. However, promotion and knowledge transfer in the area of sports, LTPA and healthy lifestyles could be organised at the European level (international expert platforms for exchanging experiences, for example). Nevertheless, the first step could be taken by the representatives at the national, regional and local levels by making a start on resolving the issues discussed.

5 Overall conclusion of Work Package 1

The goal of this work package was to gather information on existing regulatory laws and guidelines for the development of infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity (LTPA). Besides collecting policy documents and guidelines, the activities within this work package (i.e. the focus group interview and the individual interviews) were also used to gain insight in issues concerning the development process of infrastructure for LTPA (i.e. planning, financing, building and managing at national and local level. Also, the accessibility of infrastructure for LTPA for target groups and the quality of collaboration between national, local government officials and the end-users were discussed.

Policy documents and legislation

The main finding of this work package is that in all participating countries only few national policy (vision) documents that (indirectly) deal with the development infrastructure for LTPA are available. The few available national vision documents or action plans are generic and do not specify rules or guidelines to plan, finance, built and manage infrastructure for LTPA. The documents deal with related topics such as physical activity/ sports promotion (including the improvement of existing infrastructure) or environmental issues (i.e. promotion of bicycle use through increased connectivity of urban areas). In the participating countries no separate policy documents have been found that specifically aim to facilitate the accessibility of infrastructure for LTPA for specific target groups (e.g., gender, ethnic minority groups). However, sometimes accessibility issues were addressed as a part of abovementioned vision/policy documents.

In most countries there is legislation for urban planning which include mandatory safety and accessibility guidelines, codes for the construction of buildings and other infrastructure (roads etc) and accommodations. There are no national laws that explicitly deal with issues related to the development process of infrastructure for LTPA. The geographical distribution, utilization, number of sports facilities per square kilometer or accessibility of infrastructure for target groups are not regulated by law either.

The lack of policy documents and legislation is partly due the fact that sports and physical activity and related political (health) themes do not rank high on the national agenda in all participating countries. However, as a result of the increasing number of vision documents/action plans that deal with sport and physical activity it a mentality change is emerging in most countries. Nevertheless, the main reason for the lack of policy documents that deal with planning, financing, building and managing of infrastructure for LTPA is the fact that in all countries national governments do not have a say in the details of this development process of these infrastructure at local level. Participants in both the interviews and the focus groups confirm the finding that the local governments are leading and autonomous in the developmental process, and they all see the lack of national interference as an advantage.

Unfortunately, this work package did not provide extensive insight in the availability of formal policy documents/guidelines at the local level on how to develop new infrastructure. Experts did state that in most cases each project is conducted ad hoc, without tuning to related projects, other municipal departments. Moreover, originating from a strong urge of a local government official to 'score' within a political term, a

solid long-term vision with the new facility is often lacking. The experts (end-users) in the focus group interviews (who were mostly from non-governmental organizations), stated that process at local level is not clear-cut, which makes it hard to contact the responsible people within the municipalities to get involved in the early stages of the development of infrastructure for LTPA. On the other hand, the experts of the focus group interviews do not welcome more rigid government guidelines or legislation in the development process for LTPA. They did welcome more internal collaboration between the departments of the municipalities and more transparency.

Main issues in the development process of infrastructure for LTPA

Besides knowledge on available policy documents the activities in this work package also revealed several issues in the development process of infrastructure at a European level that should be addressed in the remainder of the IMPALA project.

First, in all countries there is no integrated/ intersectoral approach in the development process of infrastructure for LTPA. Departments (such as sports/health, agriculture, transportation, recreation and infrastructure) on national or on local level related to predominantly work independently from each other. Each department focuses its activities aimed at only one of the three facility types of infrastructure; [1] Sports facilities (i.e. public and commercial facilities); [2] Facilities designed for sports and physical activity (e.g. playgrounds, cycle paths); [3] Facilities not designed for sports and physical activity but usable for LTPA nonetheless (e.g. forests and beaches).

This non-integrated approach in the development process of LTPA might be counteracted by stipulating the interdependency of each facility and activities of each department and by stimulating an increase of the awareness of the importance of sports and physical activity promotion.

Secondly, the majority of existing sports facilities is utilized inefficiently: they are used most in the evening and empty for the remainder of the day. Furthermore most facilities are only usable for one type of sport. In most countries, inefficient utilization is due to the fact that the development of sport facilities is restricted to the financing and building only. Careful consideration of the facilities' management in terms of utilization (e.g. programming of activities) is often neglected and not part of the developmental process. Anticipating on management during the development process might improve efficient use of facilities (in terms of frequency, duration, and variation in use). The lack of human and financial resources to manage facilities to facilitate efficient use of facilities is mentioned as a major short coming in all countries. Multifunctional sports facilities, opening the sport facilities to non-organized sports and more public-private collaborations for building and managing facilities and better communication between proprietors of facilities (i.e. sport clubs) were mentioned as possible solutions. Optimized utilization of sports facilities could also self-regulate the maintenance of infrastructure and contribute to the prevention of vandalism over time. However experts stated that there always should be an overall and clear responsible organization for a facility, which will be the municipality, private organization (corporation of housing) or a sports association in most cases.

Finally, there is the problem of unequal distribution of sport facilities throughout the country, which is the result of poor inter-municipal communication and the urge for competition at the local level. To solve this some experts suggested the development of a centralized information point (i.e. instrument or a database) which provides an (national) overview of geographical spread of facilities and infrastructure for LTPA.

Another solution suggested was the creation of concrete regulatory criteria on the number or size of infrastructure within an area.

The information collected in this work package gave no indication that abovementioned issues are different for three different facility types.

A Sampling strategy and guideline for individual interviews

Sampling strategy

Based on the fruitful discussions we had in Luxemburg on January 29 and 30, we have come up with an overview for the sampling of respondents for WP 1 (and possibly WP 2) in your respective countries. Interviews with representatives of **at least 6** different parties are required. These include:

Topic:

You must have representatives covering all three types of facilities, for example:

- 2 parties representing sports facilities (e.g., fitness facilities/gyms, soccer fields)
- 2 parties representing facilities/infrastructure designed for sports and PA (e.g., playgrounds, cycle/walking paths)
- 2 parties representing facilities/infrastructure not designed for sports and PA, but usable for PA and non-organized sports nonetheless (e.g., parks, forests, beaches, lakes).

It is also possible to identify representatives that are capable of answering questions concerning more than one type of facilities.

Area of expertise/background:

To ensure a complete picture of stakeholders and their respective efforts in the area of policies, please ensure you have a sample involving an appropriate representation of respondents in the areas of: sports, urban planning and tourism/recreation. Preferably you will include representatives covering all three sectors.

Working level:

- 3 parties operating on the local level (e.g., municipalities)
- 3 parties operating on the national level (or in case of countries in which national government plays no role at all: the state/province/regional level)

Please see the figure (**Figure 1A**) for a schematic overview of the parties you are requested to involve. **Please fill out this figure for your country** (see Figure 1B for an example for the Netherlands) by specifying the parties (i.e. affiliations only) you want to interview **and send us the draft of the selection**. This way, we are able to monitor the sampling process in every country. Moreover we can make sure that every participating country selects comparable parties at each level.

Please note that you are free to schedule more interviews than the minimum amount of six. In fact, **we strongly recommend and encourage you to schedule as many interviews as necessary to come up with a complete picture of the situation in your country!**

For the Netherlands, for example, local & regional & national parties are involved. We will therefore try to recruit respondents from 3 working levels.

Final note: We gratefully acknowledge Sonia Kahlmeiers's offer to provide us with a list of names of contacts involved in the WHO effort, related to IMPALA. **We strongly**

advise you to request your country's list before contacting possible respondents.
Please find her contact details below.

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In view of the tight timeline for WP 1, we strongly urge you to take immediate action. If you need help with the sampling strategy in your country, or if you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact Mr Luuk Engbers (luuk.engbers@tno.nl).

Figure 1A: Sampling strategy, to be filled out by each participating country

Sector	Sports			Urban planning			Tourism recreation		
Type of facilities	Sports facilities	Facilities designed for sports and PA*	Facilities not designed for sports and PA but usable nonetheless**	Sports facilities	Facilities designed for sports and PA	Facilities not designed for sports and PA but usable nonetheless	Sports facilities	Facilities designed for sports and PA	Facilities not designed for sports and PA but usable nonetheless
National level***									
Local level									

* e.g. playgrounds, cycle paths

** e.g. forests, beaches

*** If in your country, national government plays no role of relevance for IMPALA at all, please report this to the WP leader and seek representatives from provinces/states/cantons instead. In any case, however, make sure that the experts interviewed will inform you about national policies for the development of local infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity. We recommend a snow ball approach in selecting representatives; if national level/ regional representatives provide you with sufficient information for policy at local level you do not have to recruit representatives at that level.

Guideline for individual interview

The goal of this interview is to assess national policies for developing local infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity (LTPA). The process of developing infrastructure includes the following four elements: 1. planning/designing, 2. financing, 3. building, and 4. managing of local infrastructure. The local infrastructure for leisure-time physical activity contains the following three facility types:

1. Sports facilities (i.e. public and commercial facilities)
2. Facilities designed for sports and physical activity (e.g. playgrounds, cycle paths)
3. Facilities not designed for sports and physical activity but usable for LTPA nonetheless (e.g. forests and beaches).

Questions:

0. Are you responsible for the development of local infrastructure for LTPA? Please describe the part that you are responsible for.

At what level are you responsible?

- o National level
- o Regional/local level

NATIONAL POLICY

1. What are the **national** policy documents that explicitly deal with the development of LTPA infrastructure in the local arena? → please provide (links to) these documents.
2. Do **national** policies exist that specifically deal with or affect access to and/or use of infrastructure for LTPA of population subgroups (e.g. age, gender, social class, ethnicity)?

REGIONAL/LOCAL POLICY

3. How are **national** policies distributed/communicated to local (and if applicable: regional) governments?
4. Are policies for the development of local infrastructure for LTPA primarily developed at the national level or also at the regional or local level?
 - Is this different for the four steps in the planning process (i.e. planning/ designing, financing, building and managing)?
 - Is this different for the three facility types?

STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

5. Who are the relevant actors (governmental/non-governmental) in the development of **national/local**¹ policy for the development of local infrastructure for LTPA?

¹ depending on interviewee's responsibility

- a. Which party/parties (e.g. policy sectors) lead(s) the decision-making on policies in this area and who has the final say?
 - b. Which other party/parties (interest groups/target groups) are involved?
 - c. What is the role of each party and what is the level of collaboration?
 - d. Which parties are currently not involved but should be involved to improve the policy-making for the planning of local infrastructure for LTPA?
6. What are potential benefits of the existing **national/local** policies for the development of infrastructure for LTPA?
 7. What are potential problem areas or limiting factors of the existing **national/local** policies for the development of infrastructure for LTPA?
 8. If problem areas or limiting factors do exist, are there plans to change existing policies to address these shortcomings?

MECHANISMS

9. Are there **formal** planning mechanisms (e.g. procedures and instruments) recommended or mandated by national policies? What are these mechanisms?
10. Are there **informal** planning mechanisms or other initiatives to stimulate cooperative planning between actors not written down in laws, guidelines or other documents?

Additional question:

- A1. Would you be interested in good practice guidelines / a checklist for good practice in developing local infrastructure for LTPA?

B Sampling strategy and guideline for focus group interview

Sampling strategy

For the focus group interview among end-users we suggest to include representatives of the following organizations:

1. Two local municipalities
2. Two NGOs involved in coordinating land use for recreation or sports
3. Two larger commercial contractors/property developers with regional coverage
4. Two larger local sports facilities/complexes housing more than one type of sport (e.g. swimming pool, fitness facility, athletics, soccer field).
5. Two larger sport clubs (e.g. local field hockey/soccer club)

Also please make sure that:

- the invitees for the focus group interviews are different from the ones that you already interviewed.
- your total focus group includes participants that cover the whole development process (i.e. planning, financing, building and managing) and all three facility types:
 - (1) Sports facilities;
 - (2) facilities designed for sports and physical activity (e.g. playgrounds, cycle paths);
 facilities not designed for sports and physical activity but usable nonetheless (e.g. forests and beaches).

Guideline for individual interview

Explain goal of the focus group (by chair)

Short explanation of the IMPALA project and the main goal of the focus group interview: to evaluate the experiences and opinions of the end-users regarding the development process of infrastructure for LTPA and to evaluate the collaboration between different parties in this area.

Interview guideline (and indicative time schedule):

Introduction question (10 minutes)

Please introduce yourself (name and organization) and explain in three sentences your role in the development process of infrastructure for LTPA.

Transition question (10 minutes)

Can you tell us briefly about your experiences (e.g. problem areas and limiting factors) with existing (local) policies for the development process of infrastructure for LTPA.

Key questions (40 minutes)

What are the existing problem areas in the development process of infrastructure for LTPA and how can they be resolved?

What are the main maintenance issues of infrastructure for LTPA and how can they be resolved?

What are the main issues regarding the access to the infrastructure for LTPA and how can they be resolved? (e.g. ethnic groups, costs, opening hours, rules/regulations)

What is the quality of the collaboration/communication between the national/local policies and the end-users, and how can it be optimized?

Ending question (10 minutes)

What would be your key advice for developing local infrastructure for LTPA?

Final question (10 minutes)

Is there anything else that is left unsaid but is important to be mentioned?