

## Final Report

Support to the development  
of harmonised sport statistics  
in the EU

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Support to the development  
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# Executive summary

The legal basis of sport has been acquired with the entry into force of the Treaty of Lisbon in December 2009. Article 6 confers on the EU the competence to support or supplement the actions of the Member States in the field of sport. Article 165 sets out the details of a sports policy, stating that the Union ‘shall contribute to the promotion of European sporting issues while taking account of the specific nature of the sport, its structures based on voluntary activity and its social and educational function. Since 2014, the Commission has EU Work Plans for Sports and the current period 2021-2024, the EU has three priority areas of which the socio-economic and environmental dimensions of sport priority is of importance within the project context.

In terms of the expectations from the project, **the first and foremost** was the harmonisation of sports statistics as well as supporting and enhancing sports and physical activities. The **second element** was the importance to have a common definition of sport, according to the initial white paper of the European Commission, including the societal role and the economic dimension of sport, which ultimately could lead in time to a European Satellite Account for sport. The **third element** referred to a common classification since there was not always a specific sport classification within national sports statistics. Furthermore, providing Members States with good practices, recommendations and tools through briefings and trainings were additional important goals of this project.

This project was implemented through different work packages, covering all the above-mentioned expectations and leading towards tangible results to support evidence-based policymaking at both national and EU level by harmonising existing methodologies and definitions of sports statistics.

Work package III **‘SET-UP OF A TASK FORCE AND COORDINATION OF IT’** aimed to set up a Task Force (TF) with appropriate technical expertise of its members, comprising representatives from NSIs, universities or research institutes or ministries with extensive experience in research and data analysis on sports statistics and sports economy. The Task Force had three main targets:

- The first target was linked to harmonisation, in particular to a harmonised statistical definition describing what should be measured in statistical terms for the sports sector. There is also a need for a general definition of both sports and physical activity.
- The second target was the use of statistics available at the Eurostat database to which sport is related, where also the upcoming NACE and CPA revisions should be considered.
- The third target was linked to briefings, knowledge sharing regarding the data or methodological guidance where expert consultation is needed, i.e. volunteering participation or physical activities.

Work package IV **‘TECHNICAL SUPPORT TO NATIONAL SPORT SATELLITE ACCOUNTS (SSAs)’** aimed to support EU MS technically according to the countries’ needs, depending on the current level of implementation of the SSAs. The primary objective of this work package was to increase the number of countries that have developed SSAs, through direct technical methodological support.

Work Package V '**CONTRIBUTION TO EU AND NATIONAL POLICY-MAKING**' aimed to contribute to the EU and the national policy-making process by providing background information and analysis on specific topics based on sports statistics on both economic and social aspects. Briefings should focus more on social aspects such as sports volunteering, sports tourism, physical activity, health-related aspects, and cost of physical inactivity, healthy lifestyle, social impact and subjective well-being.

Work package VI '**RECOMMENDATIONS**', aimed to translate all the findings gathered along the work carried out from the above work packages into concrete recommendations on follow-up actions and steps at the national and EU level towards a common definition of harmonisation for sport.

This document constitutes the final report of the work carried out during the implementation of the three-years project. The report describes all activities carried out for the achievement of the project objectives and summarises the most important findings and decisions for all specific objectives. Namely, elaboration of the harmonised definitions and methodologies on sport statistics by the Task Force, technical assistance offered for developing the national SSAs, completed with recommendations for each country, and Conclusions and recommendations to the European Commission and national policymakers.

During the three-year term of the project, the desired outcomes of work package III could be realised. A total of three physical meetings of the Task Force were held in Brussels, Madrid and Vienna. In addition, 35 meetings were organised for the individual TF Sport subgroups within Work Package III:

- TF Sport subgroup 1 revised the Vilnius definition and developed a template for a simplified collection of sport-relevant data to create SSAs, which was tested in case studies with Poland and Italy.
- Subgroup 2 of the TF Sport recommended harmonised methods for monitoring and measuring active participation in sport and physical activity across the EU, addressing the need for systematic data collection to inform policy and improve health outcomes. They developed a roadmap proposing the establishment of a steering group in 2025 to implement a new harmonized monitoring system by 2027, supported by the European Commission, Eurostat, member states, and WHO.
- TF Sport subgroup 3 focused on the social value and socio-economic dimensions of sports participation and physical activity. They identified and described the social and socio-economic effects of sports, developed methods for the monetary evaluation of these effects, and selected effects that can currently be evaluated based on data availability. Their work aimed to support evidence-based policymaking by recognizing and measuring the broader benefits of sport and physical activity, such as physical and mental health, social capital, and inclusion.

Significant results were also achieved in work package IV over the 3-year period, as 3 technical assistance missions were carried out in Poland, Lithuania and Sweden, as well as an online support meeting with Italy. MSs were consulted several times over the 3 years on their interest in receiving technical assistance. The results of the last technical assistance enquiry are described in more detail later in this report. In addition, a total of six webinars were held to present the results of the three TF Sport subgroups to a wider audience.

In work package V, the update of the 2018 Study on the economic impact of sport through Sport Satellite Accounts was presented during the closing webinar in December 2024. The update involved creating a large and complex data matrix, which was difficult to process due to software limitations. The study examined the economic categories associated with sport, its impact on GDP and GVA, job creation, and effects on other industries.

Work package VI, the recommendations for follow-up measures and steps at national and EU level regarding a possible future European Sports Satellite Account.

## Résumé exécutif

L'entrée en vigueur du Traité de Lisbonne en décembre 2009 pose les jalons sur le plan juridique en matière de sport. L'article 6 confère à l'UE la compétence de soutenir ou de compléter les actions des États membres dans le domaine du sport. L'article 165 expose les détails d'une politique sur le sport, indiquant que l'Union « contribue à la promotion des enjeux sportifs européennes tout en tenant compte de la nature spécifique du sport, de ses structures basées sur l'activité volontaire et de sa fonction sociale et éducative ». Depuis 2014, la Commission a des plans de travail de l'UE pour le sport et pour la période actuelle 2021-2024, l'UE a trois domaines prioritaires dont la dimension socio-économique et environnementale du sport est importante dans le contexte du projet.

En termes d'attentes liées au projet, l'élément le plus important était l'harmonisation des statistiques sportives ainsi que le soutien et l'amélioration des activités sportives et physiques. Le deuxième élément était l'importance d'avoir une définition commune du sport, selon le livre blanc initial du Conseil de l'Europe, incluant le rôle sociétal et la dimension économique du sport, ce qui pourrait finalement conduire à terme à un compte satellite européen pour le sport. Le troisième élément faisait référence à une classification commune puisqu'il n'y avait pas nécessairement une classification sportive spécifique dans les statistiques sportives nationales. De plus, fournir aux États membres des bonnes pratiques, des recommandations et des outils par le biais de briefings et de formations représentaient des objectifs importants supplémentaires à atteindre.

Ce projet a été mis en œuvre à travers différents lots de travail, couvrant toutes les attentes mentionnées ci-dessus et conduisant à des résultats tangibles pour soutenir l'élaboration de politiques basées sur des preuves aux niveaux national et européen en harmonisant les méthodologies et définitions existantes des statistiques sportives.

Le lot de travail III '**MISE EN PLACE D'UNE FORCE DE TRAVAIL ET COORDINATION DE CELLE-CI**' visait à mettre en place un Groupe de Travail (GT) avec l'expertise technique appropriée de ses membres, comprenant des représentants des INS, des universités ou des instituts de recherche ou des ministères ayant une vaste expérience en recherche et analyse de données sur les statistiques sportives et l'économie du sport. Le Groupe de Travail avait trois objectifs principaux :

- L'harmonisation, en particulier à l'élaboration d'une définition statistique harmonisée décrivant ce qui devrait être mesuré en termes statistiques pour le secteur sportif. Figure également le besoin d'une définition générale du sport et de l'activité physique.
- L'utilisation des statistiques disponibles dans la base de données d'Eurostat sur le sport, où les révisions à venir de la NACE et de la CPA devraient également être prises en compte.
- Les briefings, le partage des connaissances concernant les données ou les orientations méthodologiques où une consultation d'experts est nécessaire, c'est-à-dire sur la participation volontaire ou les activités physiques.

Le lot de travail IV '**SOUTIEN TECHNIQUE AUX COMPTES SATELLITES SPORTIFS NATIONAUX (CSS)**' visait à soutenir techniquement les États membres de l'UE selon les besoins des pays, en fonction du niveau actuel de mise en œuvre des CSS. L'objectif principal de ce lot de travail était d'augmenter le nombre de pays ayant développé des CSS, par le biais d'un soutien méthodologique technique direct.

**Le lot de travail V 'CONTRIBUTION À L'ÉLABORATION DE POLITIQUES**

**EUROPÉENNES ET NATIONALES'** visait à contribuer au processus d'élaboration des politiques de l'UE et nationales en fournissant des informations générales et des analyses sur des sujets spécifiques basés sur les statistiques sportives sur les aspects économiques et sociaux. Les briefings devraient se concentrer davantage sur les aspects sociaux tels que le bénévolat sportif, le tourisme sportif, l'activité physique, les aspects liés à la santé, le coût de l'inactivité physique, le mode de vie sain, l'impact social et le bien-être subjectif.

Le lot de travail VI '**RECOMMANDATIONS**' avait pour objectif de transformer toutes les conclusions obtenues à partir des lots de travail précédents en recommandations concrètes. Ces recommandations portent sur les actions et les étapes à suivre aux niveaux national et européen pour parvenir à une définition commune de l'harmonisation dans le domaine du sport.

Ce document est le rapport final d'un projet de trois années. Il détaille les activités menées pour atteindre les objectifs de ce dernier et résume les conclusions et décisions les plus importantes prises pour chaque objectif spécifique. Cela inclut l'élaboration de définitions et de méthodologies harmonisées sur les statistiques sportives par le Groupe de Travail, l'assistance technique pour le développement des comptes satellites nationaux du sport (CSS), accompagnée de recommandations pour chaque pays, ainsi que les conclusions et recommandations destinées à la Commission européenne et aux décideurs nationaux.

Pendant les trois années du projet, les objectifs du lot de travail III ont été atteints. Trois réunions physiques du groupe de travail ont eu lieu à Bruxelles, Madrid et Vienne. En outre, 35 réunions supplémentaires ont été organisées pour les sous-groupes dans le cadre du lot de travail III :

- Le sous-groupe 1 du GT sur le Sport a révisé la définition de Vilnius et développé un modèle simplifié pour la collecte de données pertinentes sur le sport, destiné à créer des comptes satellites du sport (CSS). Ce modèle a été testé dans des études de cas en Pologne et en Italie.
- Le sous-groupe 2 a recommandé des méthodes harmonisées pour surveiller et mesurer la participation active au sport et à l'activité physique à travers l'UE. Ces recommandations répondent au besoin de collecte systématique de données pour informer les politiques et améliorer les résultats en matière de santé. Les membres du sous-groupe ont élaboré une feuille de route qui propose la création d'un groupe de pilotage en 2025, afin de mettre en œuvre un nouveau système de surveillance harmonisé d'ici 2027, avec le soutien de la Commission européenne, d'Eurostat, des États membres et de l'OMS.
- Le sous-groupe 3 s'est concentré sur la valeur sociale et les dimensions socio-économiques de la participation au sport et à l'activité physique. Ils ont identifié et décrit les effets sociaux et socio-économiques du sport, développé des méthodes pour l'évaluation monétaire de ces effets, et sélectionné les effets qui peuvent actuellement être évalués en fonction de la disponibilité des données. Leur travail visait à soutenir l'élaboration de politiques basées sur des preuves en reconnaissant et en mesurant les avantages plus larges du sport et de l'activité physique, tels que la santé physique et mentale, le capital social et l'inclusion.

Des résultats significatifs ont également été obtenus dans le lot de travail IV au cours des 3

années car 3 missions d'assistance technique ont été menées en Pologne, Lituanie et Suède, ainsi qu'une réunion de soutien en ligne avec l'Italie. Les États membres ont été consultés plusieurs fois au cours des 3 années sur leur intérêt à recevoir une assistance technique. Les résultats de la dernière enquête d'assistance technique sont décrits plus en détail dans ce rapport. De plus, un total de six webinaires ont été organisés pour présenter à un public plus large les résultats des trois sous-groupes du GT sur le Sport.

Dans le lot de travail V, la mise à jour de l'étude de 2018 sur l'impact économique du sport à travers les Comptes Satellites du Sport a été présentée lors du webinaire de clôture en décembre 2024. La mise à jour impliquait la création d'une grande matrice de données complexe, difficile à traiter en raison des limitations logicielles. L'étude a examiné les catégories économiques associées au sport, son impact sur le PIB et la VAB, la création d'emplois et les effets sur d'autres industries.

Le lot de travail VI, les recommandations pour les mesures de suivi et les étapes au niveau national et européen concernant un éventuel futur compte satellite sportif européen.

# Zusammenfassung

Die Rechtsgrundlage für den Sport wurde mit dem Inkrafttreten des Vertrags von Lissabon im Dezember 2009 geschaffen. Artikel 6 überträgt der EU die Zuständigkeit, die Maßnahmen der Mitgliedstaaten im Bereich des Sports zu unterstützen oder zu ergänzen. Artikel 165 legt die Einzelheiten einer Sportpolitik fest: „Die Union trägt unter Berücksichtigung der Besonderheiten des Sports, seiner auf Freiwilligkeit beruhenden Strukturen und seiner sozialen und erzieherischen Funktion zur Förderung der europäischen Sportpolitik bei. Seit 2014 verfügt die Kommission über EU-Arbeitspläne für den Sport und für den aktuellen Zeitraum 2021-2024 hat die EU drei Schwerpunktbereiche, von denen die sozioökonomische und ökologische Dimension des Sports im Projektkontext von Bedeutung ist.

In Bezug auf die Erwartungen an das Projekt war die erste und wichtigste die Harmonisierung der Sportstatistiken sowie die Unterstützung und Förderung von Sport und körperlichen Aktivitäten. Das zweite Element war die Bedeutung einer gemeinsamen Definition des Sports gemäß dem ursprünglichen Weißbuch des Europarats, einschließlich der gesellschaftlichen Rolle und der wirtschaftlichen Dimension des Sports, die letztlich zu einem europäischen Satellitenkonto für den Sport führen könnte. Das dritte Element bezog sich auf eine gemeinsame Klassifikation, da es nicht immer eine spezifische Sportklassifikation innerhalb der nationalen Sportstatistiken gab. Darüber hinaus war es ein wichtiges Ziel des Projekts, den Mitgliedstaaten durch Briefings und Schulungen bewährte Praktiken, Empfehlungen und praktische Werkzeuge zur Verfügung zu stellen.

Dieses Projekt wurde durch verschiedene Arbeitspakete umgesetzt, die alle oben genannten Erwartungen abdeckten und zu greifbaren Ergebnissen führten, um eine evidenzbasierte Politikgestaltung sowohl auf nationaler als auch auf EU-Ebene durch die Harmonisierung bestehender Methoden und Definitionen von Sportstatistiken zu unterstützen.

Arbeitspaket III ‚**EINRICHTUNG EINER TASK FORCE UND KOORDINATION DIESER**‘ zielte darauf ab, eine Task Force (TF) mit geeigneter technischer Expertise ihrer Mitglieder einzurichten, die Vertreter von national statistischen Ämtern, Universitäten oder Forschungsinstituten oder Ministerien mit umfangreicher Erfahrung in der Forschung und Datenanalyse zu Sportstatistiken und Sportökonomie umfassen. Die Task Force hatte drei Hauptziele:

Das erste Ziel war die Harmonisierung, insbesondere eine harmonisierte statistische Definition, die beschreibt, was im Sportsektor statistisch gemessen werden sollte. Es besteht auch Bedarf an einer allgemeinen Definition sowohl von Sport als auch von körperlicher Aktivität.

Das zweite Ziel war die Nutzung der in der Eurostat-Datenbank verfügbaren Statistiken, die sich auf Sport beziehen, wobei auch die bevorstehenden NACE- und CPA-Revisionen berücksichtigt werden sollten.

Das dritte Ziel war die Erstellung von Briefings und der Wissensaustausch bezüglich der Daten oder methodischen Leitlinien, wo eine Expertenberatung erforderlich ist, z.B. freiwillige Teilnahme oder körperliche Aktivitäten.

Arbeitspaket IV ‚**TECHNISCHE UNTERSTÜTZUNG FÜR NATIONALE SPORT-SATELLITENKONTEN (SSAs)**‘ zielte darauf ab, die EU-Mitgliedstaaten je nach Bedarf und aktuellem Stand der Umsetzung der SSAs technisch zu unterstützen. Das Hauptziel dieses Arbeitspakets war es, die Anzahl der Länder zu erhöhen, die SSAs entwickelt haben, durch

direkte technische methodische Unterstützung.

Arbeitspaket V ‚**BEITRAG ZUR EU- UND NATIONALEN POLITIKGESTALTUNG**‘ zielte darauf ab, zur EU- und nationalen Politikgestaltung beizutragen, indem Hintergrundinformationen und Analysen zu spezifischen Themen auf der Grundlage von Sportstatistiken sowohl zu wirtschaftlichen als auch sozialen Aspekten bereitgestellt werden. Briefings sollten sich mehr auf soziale Aspekte wie Sportehrenamt, Sporttourismus, körperliche Aktivität, gesundheitsbezogene Aspekte und Kosten der körperlichen Inaktivität, gesunden Lebensstil, soziale Auswirkungen und subjektives Wohlbefinden konzentrieren.

Arbeitspaket VI ‚**EMPFEHLUNGEN**‘ zielte darauf ab, alle im Rahmen der oben genannten Arbeitspakete gesammelten Erkenntnisse in konkrete Empfehlungen für Folgeaktionen und Schritte auf nationaler und EU-Ebene zur Harmonisierung des Sports zu übersetzen.

Dieses Dokument stellt den Abschlussbericht der während der dreijährigen Projektlaufzeit durchgeführten Arbeiten dar. Der Bericht beschreibt alle durchgeführten Aktivitäten zur Erreichung der Projektziele und fasst die wichtigsten Erkenntnisse und Entscheidungen für alle spezifischen Ziele zusammen. Nämlich die Ausarbeitung harmonisierter Definitionen und Methoden für Sportstatistiken durch die Task Force, die technische Unterstützung zur Entwicklung der nationalen SSAs, ergänzt durch Empfehlungen für jedes Land sowie Schlussfolgerungen und Empfehlungen an die Europäische Kommission und nationale Entscheidungsträger.

Während der dreijährigen Projektlaufzeit konnten die gewünschten Ergebnisse des Arbeitspakets III realisiert werden. Insgesamt fanden drei physische Treffen der Task Force in Brüssel, Madrid und Wien statt. Darüber hinaus wurden 35 Treffen für die einzelnen TF-Sport-Untergruppen innerhalb des Arbeitspakets III organisiert:

- TF-Sport-Untergruppe 1 überarbeitete die Vilnius-Definition und entwickelte eine Vorlage für eine vereinfachte Erfassung sportrelevanter Daten zur Erstellung von SSAs, die in Fallstudien mit Polen und Italien getestet wurde.
- TF-Sport Untergruppe 2 konzentrierte sich auf harmonisierte Methoden zur Überwachung und Messung der aktiven Teilnahme am Sport und an körperlicher Aktivität in der gesamten EU und ging auf den Bedarf an systematischer Datenerfassung ein, um die Politik zu informieren und die Gesundheitsergebnisse zu verbessern. Sie entwickelten eine Roadmap, die die Einrichtung einer Steuerungsgruppe im Jahr 2025 vorschlägt, um bis 2027 ein neues harmonisiertes Überwachungssystem zu implementieren, unterstützt durch die Europäische Kommission, Eurostat, Mitgliedstaaten und die WHO.
- TF-Sport-Untergruppe 3 konzentrierte sich auf den sozialen Wert und die sozioökonomischen Dimensionen der Sportteilnahme und körperlichen Aktivität. Sie identifizierten und beschrieben die sozialen und sozioökonomischen Auswirkungen des Sports, entwickelten Methoden zur monetären Bewertung dieser Auswirkungen und wählten Auswirkungen aus, die derzeit auf Basis der Datenverfügbarkeit bewertet werden können. Ihre Arbeit zielte darauf ab, eine evidenzbasierte Politikgestaltung zu unterstützen, indem die umfassenderen Vorteile von Sport und körperlicher Aktivität, wie körperliche und geistige Gesundheit, Soziales Kapital und Inklusion, anerkannt und gemessen werden.

Im Arbeitspaket IV wurden über den Zeitraum von drei Jahren bedeutende Ergebnisse erzielt, da drei technische Unterstützungsmissionen in Polen, Litauen und Schweden durchgeführt wurden sowie ein Online-Unterstützungstreffen mit Italien. Die Mitgliedstaaten

wurden mehrfach über die drei Jahre hinweg zu ihrem Interesse an technischer Unterstützung konsultiert. Die Ergebnisse der letzten Anfrage zur technischen Unterstützung werden später in diesem Bericht ausführlicher beschrieben. Darüber hinaus wurden insgesamt sechs Webinare abgehalten, um die Ergebnisse der drei TF-Sport-Untergruppen einem breiteren Publikum zu präsentieren.

Im Arbeitspaket V wurde die Aktualisierung der Studie von 2018 über die wirtschaftlichen Auswirkungen des Sports durch Sport-Satellitenkonten während des Abschluss-Webinars im Dezember 2024 vorgestellt. Die Aktualisierung umfasste die Erstellung einer großen und komplexen Datenmatrix, die aufgrund von Software-Einschränkungen schwer zu verarbeiten war. Die Studie untersuchte die wirtschaftlichen Kategorien, die mit Sport verbunden sind, seine Auswirkungen auf das BIP und die Bruttowertschöpfung, die Schaffung von Arbeitsplätzen und die Auswirkungen auf andere Branchen.

Arbeitspaket VI, die Empfehlungen für Folgemaßnahmen und Schritte auf nationaler und EU-Ebene im Hinblick auf ein mögliches zukünftiges europäisches Sport-Satellitenkonto.

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## Abbreviations

<b>Eurostat</b>	The Statistical office of the European Union
<b>EU</b>	European Union
<b>CPA</b>	Classification of Products by Activity
<b>SSA</b>	Sport satellite accounts
<b>ESS</b>	European Statistical System
<b>EACEA</b>	European Education and Culture Executive Agency
<b>DG EAC</b>	Directorate General of Education, Youth, Sport and Culture
<b>NACE</b>	statistical classification of economic activities in the European Community
<b>NSIs</b>	National Statistical Institutes
<b>MSs</b>	Member States
<b>TF</b>	Task Force
<b>WP</b>	Work Package

# 1 Abstract

The final report of the three-year EU project on sports statistics and policy harmonisation presents significant advancements in creating a unified framework for sports data collection and analysis, supporting the development of National Sport Satellite Accounts (SSAs), and enhancing evidence-based policymaking at both national and EU levels. Guided by the EU Work Plan for Sport (2021-24), the project addressed three key priorities: harmonising sports statistics, establishing a common definition of sport, and providing technical assistance to Member States. The project was structured into six work packages, encompassing the creation of a Task Force to develop harmonised definitions, methodologies, and recommendations for statistical data collection; technical support for implementing SSAs; and contributions to policymaking on socio-economic and environmental aspects of sport. Key achievements include the revision of the Vilnius definition, a roadmap for harmonised participation monitoring, methods for evaluating the socio-economic impact of sport, and technical assistance missions to several Member States. As part of the project, the 2018 study on the economic impact of sport was also updated, providing insights into the contribution of sport to Gross domestic product (GDP), employment and other sectors with concrete recommendations for future action to establish a European Sports Satellite Account and to further harmonise sports statistics in the EU. A series of webinars and consultations promoted further knowledge exchange between stakeholders.

# 2 Introduction

This final report is prepared in the frame of the Contract N° SI2.862371 on 'Support to the development of harmonised sports statistics in the EU'. It aims to inform on the activities carried out under this specific contract over the three-year duration of the project, from 2022 to 2024.

Furthermore, the final report will include a summary of the most important findings and decisions for all specific objectives. Namely, elaboration of the harmonised definitions and methodologies on sport statistics by the Task Force, technical assistance offered for developing the national SSAs, completed with recommendations for each country, and Conclusions and recommendations to the European Commission and national policymakers.

The report is structured as follows:

- Section 3 presents the activities carried out within the different work packages
- Section 4 presents the conclusions and recommendations from the project
- Section 5 includes the annexes

## 3 Activities carried out

### 3.1 Work package III: task force coordination

The main objective of this WP was to set up a Task Force with appropriate technical expertise of its members and to organise and implement regular Task Force online meetings as well as few physical meetings. During the three years of the project, the following tasks have been implemented:

- Regular update of the list of TF participants,
- Organisation of and participation in the TF online meetings, and
- Organisation of and participation in the three physical TF meetings.

#### 3.1.1 Organisation and participation in the TF online meetings

Over the course of the project, several online meetings took place with subgroups of the Task Force.

Overall, 17 online meetings were organised with Subgroup 1. The work of Subgroup 1a 'Vilnius definition of Sports and related data' was concluded in October 2023 and succeeded by the work related to Subgroup 1b 'Methodology and Technical aspects of SSAs'. The meetings covered the following topics:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting on 16 September 2022 'Discussion and update of Vilnius definition and CPA classification revision with more focus on the Vilnius definition updates
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting on 27 September 2022 'Discussion and update of Vilnius definition and CPA classification revision with more focus on the CPA classification revision
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting on 04 November 2022 'Discussion on how to complement the Vilnius definition from the demand-side perspective and how to reconcile the durable good with the sport/PA aspect for e-bikes
- 4<sup>th</sup> Meeting on 18 January 2023: 'Characteristic/connected product framework and definition concept'
- 5<sup>th</sup> Meeting on 25 January 2023: 'Characteristic/connected product framework and definition concept
- 6<sup>th</sup> Meeting on 30 January 2023: 'Active/passive sports'
- 7<sup>th</sup> Meeting on 03 February 2023: cancelled
- 8<sup>th</sup> Meeting on 09 February 2023: 'The new definition of characteristic and connected goods'
- 9<sup>th</sup> Meeting on 20 March 2023: 'The new definition of characteristic and connected goods'

- 10<sup>th</sup> Meeting on 27 April 2023: 'Characteristic goods, connected goods, and rules for SSAs'
- 11<sup>th</sup> Meeting on 12 May 2023: 'Relevant categories for characteristic goods'
- 12<sup>th</sup> Meeting on 31 May 2023: 'Compilation process and comparability of SSAs'
- 13<sup>th</sup> Meeting on 20 June 2023: 'Compilation of estimated shares for sport-related categories'
- 14<sup>th</sup> Meeting on 05 July 2023: 'Vilnius definition, e-bikes and e-sports'
- 15<sup>th</sup> Meeting on 18 September 2023: 'Vilnius definition and e-sports'
- 16<sup>th</sup> Meeting on 25 October 2023: 'Template for sports-relevant data collection and rules of the Vilnius definition'
- 17<sup>th</sup> Meeting on 03 May 2024: 'Latest refined version of the template for simplified collection of sports-relevant data and feedback received from Poland and Sweden'
- 18<sup>th</sup> Meeting on 23 October 2024: 'Latest refined version of the template for simplified collection of sports-relevant data in accordance with the new Vilnius Definition'

Fourteen online meetings were organised for Subgroup 2 'Health/Well-being and PA/sport participation' covering the following topics:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting on 13 September 2022: 'Discussion on the revised version of the mandate circulated after the kick-off meeting of the TF SPORT and to define the subgroups goals, deliverables and milestones'
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting on 27 March 2023: 'Agreement on physical activities, determinants and data availability'
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting on 9 June 2023: 'Working approach of the group and break-out session for working on the document'
- 4<sup>th</sup> Meeting on 27 June 2023: 'Break-out sessions for working on the document'
- 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2023: Meeting between Ms. Vlachou and the group leaders to discuss the progress made and the way forward.
- 5<sup>th</sup> Meeting on 17 November 2023: 'Timeline for the report, general overview of the topics per monthly meeting and discussion of paragraph 2.1-2.6 in order to decide on the characteristics needed for the summary table per paragraph'
- 6<sup>th</sup> Meeting on 15 December 2023: 'One-pager with description of the harmonization approach (roadmap) developed in the DEDIPAC and implemented in PEN'
- 7<sup>th</sup> Meeting on 16 February 2024: 'Existing measurement instruments like the health interview surveys and the Eurobarometer'
- 8<sup>th</sup> Meeting on 15 March 2024: 'Discussion of recent changes to the group report and division of upcoming work'
- 9<sup>th</sup> Meeting on 19 April 2024: 'Discussion of the remaining points of the group report'
- 10<sup>th</sup> Meeting on 21 June 2024: 'Policy recommendations and preparation of a pre-final version of the group report'

- 11<sup>th</sup> Meeting on 12 July 2024: 'Pre-final version of the report, case study and e-sports'
- 12<sup>th</sup> Meeting on 9 August 2024: 'Consistency with other groups in terms of concepts and definitions and refinements in pre-final version of the group report'
- 13<sup>th</sup> Meeting on 18 October 2024: 'Discussion of remaining details for the roadmap'
- 14<sup>th</sup> Meeting on 15 November 2024: 'Finalisation of the subgroup 2 report'

Three online meetings were organised for Subgroup 3 'Social value and the socio-economic dimension of sport' participation and physical activity' and covered the following topics:

- 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting on 19 October 2022 'Review and assess the main methods for the monetary evaluation of non-market social aspects of sport and physical activities and define a comprehensive framework of the available methodologies to assess the social value of sport, identifying the main models and making recommendations to the commission of the efficient ones
- 24<sup>th</sup> February 2023: Meeting with the group leaders in order to progress in group 3 towards the objectives laid down in the TF Mandate
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting on 4 May 2023: 'Revisiting the previous discussion session in Brussels, identifying and defining potential domains and outcomes included within social value area, and exploring the development of a monitoring system to be implemented'
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Meeting on 15 December 2023 'Status of the work and definition of next steps to be carried out until end of May 2024'
- Bilateral meeting on 18 December 2023 between Mr. Hoekman and Mr. Jimenez to discuss the further development of the group document. Revision of the document by Mr. Silva
- Meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> December 2024 between Mr. Jimenez, Mr. Kokolakis and Ms. Koch for the finalisation of the group 3 report and the organisation of the closing webinar
- Webinar on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2024 was organised where the results of TF subgroup 3 were presented to a broader audience by Mr. Kokolakis. The presentation focused on the Social value and socio-economic dimension of sports participation and physical activity. It was concluded by a discussion on the group's policy recommendations.

### 3.1.2 Organisation and participation in the physical TF Sport meetings

Over the course of the project, three physical meetings of the TF Sport took place in Brussels, Madrid and Vienna. The contents of the meetings and the number of participants are summarised in the table below.

Table 1: Overview on the physical TF sport meetings

No.	Venue	Number of participants	Contents
1	Brussels	35	Adoption of the TF mandate, Overview of the work performed, Results of the Questionnaire on the technical support on SSAs, Reports and results of the 3 TF sport subgroups, Roadmap and next steps of the TF Sport
2	Madrid	31	Overview of the work performed by group 1, practical template to produce SSAs, definition of e-sports, technical assistance missions, reports and results of subgroup 2 and subgroup 3 of the TF Sports, Roadmap and next steps of the TF Sport
3	Vienna	35	Overview of the work performed by the three subgroups, update on the technical assistance missions, Update of the Pan-European Sports Study, Policy recommendations for further improvements among MSs, Concluding steps of the TF Sport

The table below summarises the tasks, subtasks and deliverables under WP III

Table 2: Activities, project tasks and deliverables for WP III

Activity/Task	Deliverables
Task 3 – Organisation and implementation of meetings	
Subtask 2.1. Organisation and implementation of the TF kick-off online meeting	Minutes of the kick-off meeting
Subtask 2.2. Organisation and implementation of the TF physical meetings	Minutes of the physical meeting
Subtask 2.3. Organisation and implementation of the TF online meetings for TF subgroups	Minutes of the meetings

## 3.2 Work package IV: technical support to national sport satellite accounts (ssa)

This WP aimed to support EU MSs technically according to the countries' needs, depending on the current level of implementation of the SSAs. The technical support should include also a dimension linked to the harmonisation of the methodologies and definitions used by the Task Force established in Work Package III (in particular the Vilnius Definitions) as well as the contribution to the EU and national policy-making process in Work Package V.

The primary goal of the technical support was to increase the number of Member States (MSs) producing SSAs. During the reporting period, the following tasks were carried out:

- Providing on-site technical support to MSs
- Providing training courses (online webinars)
- Operating a helpdesk to Member States

### 3.2.1 Providing on-site technical support to MSs

Three on-site technical support visits took place during the three years of the project.

The first on-site visit took place in Lithuania on 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2023. A second on-site visit followed in Poland on 26<sup>th</sup> May 2023. A third on-site technical support visit took place in Sweden on 15 April 2024.

One further online technical support session was conducted with Italy on 22 November 2024.

During the course of the project, the GOPA team constantly updated the status of the MSs by actively contacting responsible persons or after receiving information from them.

In November 2023, the GOPA team contacted relevant stakeholders in Croatia, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Hungary, Ireland, Latvia, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia and Sweden and in order to re-initiate further on-site technical assistance missions and investigate the willingness of countries to participate. A detailed summary on the replies received was included in the Second Progress Report with the annexed D10 update.

In March 2024, the GOPA team contacted representatives from the National Statistical Institutes, ministries or other relevant stakeholders in Belgium, Bulgaria, Finland, France, Hungary, Malta, the Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Slovenia and Slovakia in order to ask for any updates regarding the need for technical assistance.

Representatives from Ireland informed the GOPA team that the government agency is still in the process of networking with the Central Statistical Office and has not received a response recently. They will follow up on the matter and keep the GOPA team informed of any progress.

The representatives of Croatia, Portugal, Romania, Denmark and Czechia informed the GOPA team that currently, they do not have the resources for establishing SSAs in their countries and that this is not a priority currently.

The representatives from Latvia informed the GOPA team of a change in the person

responsible and initially asked for further information on the project before they could tell us anything about the need for technical assistance.

Representatives of Slovenia informed the GOPA team about a new contact on the part of the ministry, with whom the GOPA team is trying to establish contact.

The GOPA team did not receive responses to its latest request from the representatives of Belgium, Bulgaria, Finland, France, Hungary, Malta, the Netherlands and Slovakia.

The Italian representatives were not contacted regarding a technical assistance mission in March 2024, as the Istituto Nazionale di Statistica (ISTAT) had informed the European Commission shortly beforehand that they were now obliged to compile an SSA. The Italian representatives previously agreed to participate in a case study on the use of the newly developed template for a simplified collection of sports-relevant data. During the reporting period, a first technical assistance mission was conducted on November 29, during which questions from ISTAT on the template were answered in detail by the experts of subgroup 1.

Polish representatives were asked previously whether they would like a second technical assistance mission despite their participation in the case study, but they do not see any need for this at present. However, they agreed to also take part in the case study on the use of the newly developed template for a simplified collection of sports-relevant data.

The Spanish representatives informed the GOPA team earlier that they are currently developing SSAs in Spain and that an official statistical operation has already been included in the preliminary draft of the next National Statistics Plan and was elaborated by the Ministry of Culture and Sport in collaboration with the National Statistical Institute of Spain. However, the organisational structure in the country changed recently. Sports now falls under the competency of the Ministry of Education, Vocational Training and Sports (MEFPD). The Spanish delegates provided the contact details of GOPA to the relevant competent body and agreed to provide the GOPA team with all methodological and numerical documents related to official sport statistics as well as a first methodological draft.

The Greek representatives expressed their interest in conducting an SSA as they meanwhile found a researcher who could carry out this task. A representative from Greece visited GOPA expert Themis Kokolakakis in Sheffield in March in order to organise a technical support mission to Greece. Regarding the involvement of the Greek Statistical Office, Mr. Kokolakakis is still waiting for a reply.

For Cyprus, the GOPA team received information that work on the SSA has been discussed to begin within 2024. An initial meeting on implementation and technical support was scheduled for April 2024. Mr. Kokolakakis has ongoing conversations with Cyprus, now also involving the Statistical Office.

In the case of Lithuania, technical support and advice has been given to compile a letter to the Prime Minister for approving the estimation of an SSA. This is done to satisfy the demands of the Statistical Office. For this purpose, the GOPA team has been in contact with Professor Vilma Cingiene who is responsible for the final result.

During the fourth webinar on the work of subgroup 1, a representative from INJEP in France asked about information about the use of SSAs in other countries. GOPA expert Mr. Kokolakakis sent relevant information to the French representatives and offered further assistance but is still waiting for a reply.

The latest information received by the GOPA team on the status of SSAs in the countries is summarised in the table below.

Table 3: Responses of MSs regarding technical assistance missions

Country	Current status
AT	Already producing a national SSA. No need for technical support.
BE	Produced an SSA earlier but no permanent experts or budget available.
BG	Currently no interest in developing an SSA due to a lack of experts and resources.
CY	Currently developing an SSA via an external consulting agency. CYSTAT will be supporting the authorities by providing the data. At the moment, no technical assistance is needed. There are ongoing conversations with the Statistical Office.
CZ	Currently no interest in developing an SSA due to a lack of experts and resources.
DK	Interest in developing an SSA, but currently no capacity to support the establishment of an SSA.
DE	Already producing a national SSA. No need for technical support.
EE	Produced an SSA earlier but currently no permanent experts or budget available.
EL	An expert for developing an SSA was found, and technical assistance is foreseen to take place soon.
ES	Currently developing an SSA and no need for technical assistance. At a later stage, Spain will share its methodology with the TF Members. Organisational changes and shifted responsibilities for the compilation of SSA. GOPA will follow up with Spain.
FI	Interest in developing an SSA, but currently no capacity to support the establishment of an SSA.
FR	Interest in developing an SSA, but currently no capacity to support the establishment of an SSA. The GOPA team sent documents on the use of SSAs to a representative from INJEP and offered further assistance.
HR	Produced an SSA earlier but currently no permanent experts or budget available.
HU	Interest in developing an SSA, but currently no capacity to support the establishment of an SSA.
IE	Interest in developing an SS and currently trying to liaise with the central statistics office in Ireland.
IT	Italy received the template for a simplified collection of sports relevant data and has just started with the work on the SSA. A first technical support mission was conducted on 29 November 2024.
LT	Stagnation in the development of an SSA was observed after the first technical mission.
LV	Interest in developing an SSA, but currently no capacity to support the establishment of an SSA. The GOPA team was informed of a change in the person responsible and initially asked for further information on the project.
LU	Already producing a national SSA. No need for technical support.
MT	Currently no interest in developing an SSA due to a lack of experts and resources.

Country	Current status
NL	Produced an SSA earlier but currently no permanent experts or budget available.
PL	No second physical technical assistance mission necessary, preference for online interventions and consultation was expressed.
PT	Produced an SSA earlier but currently no permanent experts or budget available.
RO	Currently no interest in developing an SSA due to a lack of experts and resources.
SE	A technical assistance mission was conducted on 15-16 April 2024.
SI	Interest in developing an SSA, but currently no capacity to support the establishment of an SSA. Further discussion with the respective Ministry is needed. The GOPA team has been informed about a new contact on the part of the ministry and is trying to establish contact.
SK	Currently no capacities to support the establishment of an SSA

### 3.2.2 Providing training courses (online webinars)

Over the three-year duration of the project, a total of 6 webinars were conducted.

The first webinar, titled 'Introduction to EU Sport Satellite Accounts (SSAs),' was held on November 23, 2022, from 10:00 to 11:15 CET. The webinar was attended by overall 28 participants and covered the following topics:

- Construction and purpose of Sport Satellite Accounts (SSAs)
- Building a Sport Satellite Account at EU level
- The SSA from a national accounts' perspective

The second webinar with the title 'An update of the Vilnius definition of sport' took place on 21 April 2023 from 10:00-13:00 CET. The webinar was attended by overall 40 participants and covered the following topics:

- An update of the Vilnius definition of sport: why was it needed and what has been done?
- Challenges and implications of the update of the Vilnius definition of sport in computing an SSA
- Info point – Helpdesk and technical support available to EU Member States

The third webinar was titled 'Revised Vilnius definition of sport and practical template for the compilation of SSAs' and was held on 29 November 2023 from 10:00-13:00 CET. The webinar was attended by overall 38 participants and covered the following topics:

- Update Vilnius definition of sport: current state of play, characteristic and connected goods
- Practical template for the compilation of SSAs

- Practical template for the compilation of SSAs: methodological and practical advice

The fourth webinar with the title 'Revised Vilnius Definition, template for the compilation of SSAs and policy recommendations' took place on 13 November 2024 from 09:00 to 11:00 CET. The webinar was attended by overall 61 participants and covered the following topics:

- Short overview of the revised Vilnius Definition
- Practical template and data sources for the compilation of SSAs
- Policy recommendations by subgroup 1 of the TF Sport

A fifth webinar, titled 'Towards harmonisation of Sport and Physical Activity Measurement in the European Union', took place on 29 November 2024 from 10:00-12:30 CET. The webinar was attended by overall 54 participants and was dedicated to the following topics:

- Overview of the work performed by subgroup 2 of the TF Sport
- Roadmap for implementing a harmonised monitoring system
- Policy recommendations developed by subgroup 2 of the TF Sport

A sixth webinar and closing seminar with the title 'Social value and socio-economic dimension of sports participation and physical activity in the EU' took place on 13 December 2024 from 10:00 to 12:30 CET. The webinar was attended by overall 48 participants and was dedicated to the following topics:

- Social value and socio-economic dimension of sports participation and physical activity (TF sport group 3)
- Health / wellbeing and physical activity (TF sport group 2)
- Economic impact of sport and revised Vilnius Definition (TF sport group 1)
- Updated 'study on the economic impact of sport through sport satellite accounts'

The table below summarises the tasks, subtasks and deliverables under WP IV.

Table 4: Activities, project tasks and deliverables for WP IV

Activity/Task	Deliverable
Task 1 - Identification of countries that need technical support for production of SSAs and the type of support	
Subtask 1.1: Desk research regarding the countries' status of implementation of the SSAs	D10: Feedback notes per country about the state of play on the national Sport Satellite Accounts (March 2022 and June 2022)
Subtask 1.2: Preparing a questionnaire to identify the current state of play of SSAs among MSs	D10: Feedback notes per country about the state of play on the national Sport Satellite Accounts (September 2022)
Task 2 - Providing direct technical support to the EU-27 identified countries depending on the necessity and type of support	
Subtask 2.1: On-site technical assistance	Presentations (ppt) and meeting agendas
Subtask 2.2.: Providing training courses (online webinars)	Presentation (ppt)

## 4 Conclusions and recommendations

The final report of the project 'Support to the development of harmonised sports statistics in the EU' under Contract N° SI2.862371, covering the period from 2022 to 2024, provides a comprehensive overview of the activities, findings, and recommendations aimed at establishing a unified framework for sports data collection and analysis across the European Union. The project, executed over three years, involved multiple work packages, each contributing to the overarching goal of harmonising sports statistics and supporting the development of National Sport Satellite Accounts (SSAs).

One of the primary conclusions of the project is the successful harmonisation of sports statistics definitions and methodologies. The Task Force, established under Work Package III, played a crucial role in this achievement. The Task Force, comprising experts from National Statistical Institutes (NSIs), universities, research institutes, and ministries, focused on revising the 'Vilnius definition' of sports and related data. This effort culminated in the development of a template for the simplified collection of sports-relevant data, which was tested in Poland and Italy. The harmonised definitions and methodologies are expected to facilitate consistent and comparable data collection across Member States, thereby enhancing the reliability and utility of sports statistics for policy-making.

The project also underscored the importance of providing technical assistance to Member States to develop and implement SSAs. Work Package IV focused on delivering tailored technical support based on the specific needs and current implementation levels of SSAs in different countries. Technical assistance missions were conducted in Poland, Lithuania, and Sweden, along with an online support meeting with Italy. These missions were instrumental in addressing the challenges faced by Member States in developing SSAs and ensuring that they adhere to the harmonised methodologies established by the Task Force. Additionally, six webinars were organised to disseminate the findings and methodologies developed by the Task Force to a broader audience, further promoting knowledge exchange and capacity building.

Another significant conclusion from the project is the recognition of the socio-economic impact of sports participation and physical activity. The Task Force's Subgroup 3 focused on identifying and describing the social and socio-economic effects of sports, developing methods for their monetary evaluation, and selecting effects that can be currently evaluated based on available data. This work aimed to support evidence-based policymaking by highlighting the broader benefits of sports and physical activity, such as physical and mental health, social capital, and inclusion.

The updated study on the economic impact of sport, presented during the closing webinar in December 2024, provided valuable insights into the contribution of sport to GDP, employment, and other sectors, reinforcing the importance of sports in the socio-economic landscape.

The project also made significant contributions to EU and national policy-making processes. Work Package V focused on providing background information and analysis on specific topics based on sports statistics, covering both economic and social aspects. The briefings produced under this work package addressed issues such as sports volunteering, sports tourism, physical activity, health-related aspects, and the cost of physical inactivity.

In terms of recommendations, the project emphasises the need for the establishment of a European Sports Satellite Account (SSA) to further harmonise sports statistics across the

EU. This recommendation is based on the successful outcomes of the technical assistance missions and the harmonised methodologies developed by the Task Force. The establishment of a European SSA would provide a unified framework for sports data collection and analysis, facilitating more accurate and comparable data across Member States. To achieve this, the project recommends the formation of a steering group in 2025 to oversee the implementation of a new harmonised monitoring system by 2027, supported by the European Commission, Eurostat, Member States, and the World Health Organisation (WHO).

The project also recommends continued technical assistance to Member States to ensure the successful implementation and maintenance of SSAs. This includes regular training courses and webinars to promote ongoing knowledge exchange and capacity building. The harmonised methods for monitoring and measuring active participation in sport and physical activity developed by the Task Force should be systematically implemented to provide comprehensive and comparable data across Member States. Additionally, the methods for the monetary evaluation of the socio-economic effects of sports participation should be refined and used to support policy decisions that recognise and promote the broader benefits of sports and physical activity.

Finally, the project highlights the importance of integrating the findings and recommendations into national and EU-level sports policies. The harmonised sports statistics and the insights gained from the socio-economic evaluations should be used to inform and enhance policy-making processes, ensuring that the benefits of sports and physical activity are fully recognised and supported.

In conclusion, the project 'Support to the development of harmonised sports statistics in the EU' has made significant strides in harmonising sports statistics, providing technical assistance to Member States, and highlighting the socio-economic impact of sports. The recommendations for the establishment of a European SSA, continued technical assistance, enhanced data collection and monitoring, and policy integration are expected to further advance the harmonisation of sports statistics and support evidence-based policymaking in the EU. Addressing the lack of resources in Member States remains a critical challenge that must be addressed to ensure the successful execution of these recommendations.



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