

# **NATIONAL SPORTS PROGRAM**

2019 – 2026

Pursuant to Article 2 paragraph 2 of the Sports Act (Official Gazette, No. 71/06, 124/10, 124/11, 86/12, 94/13, 85/15 and 19/16 - Correction) at its session of 12 July 2019 the Croatian Parliament adopted

## **NATIONAL SPORTS PROGRAM 2019 – 2026**



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# NATIONAL SPORTS PROGRAM 2019 – 2026

TOWARDS A HEALTHY  
AND ACTIVE NATION  
PROUD OF ITS SPORTING  
ACHIEVEMENTS



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## FOREWORD

# Gordan Jandroković

Speaker of the Croatian Parliament



**A**s Speaker of the Croatian Parliament, I am extremely pleased that the first National Sports Program was adopted by the Croatian Parliament in July this year almost unanimously, which confirmed the importance of adopting this strategic document for Croatian society.

It is a document which, on the basis of the constitutional obligation for the state to encourage and assist physical culture and sports, for the first time in a comprehensive, interdisciplinary, systematic and long-term way, takes Croatian sport into account and creates strategic conditions at all levels for its further successful development in Croatia.

Why is sport important? As a widespread social activity, sport is an integral part of the culture of the individual and of contemporary society as a whole. Playing sports serves a great health and educational role, especially for young people. It encourages numerous physical and mental strengths - from disease prevention, promotion and maintenance of health to the development of various traits in an individual, such as discipline, creativity, communication, confidence, leadership, responsibility, work and life habits to basic human values such as honesty, solidarity, tolerance and mutual respect. Its social role is also important as it promotes the democratic and inclusive character of an equal opportunity society, given that sport is accessible to all persons regardless of their age, gender, social position, beliefs, disabilities, etc.

As someone who was intensely involved in handball throughout my youth, I can testify that all the knowledge, skills and virtues that I have acquired through sport have shaped me as a person and have positively influenced my relationship with individuals and society as a whole.

Sport has always played a significant role in the development of Croatian society. This role was particularly prominent at the time of the creation of the independent Croatian state and the promotion of its national identity and recognition in the world. Croatian athletes have been proven to be among the best promoters of Croatia - from their first successful appearance at the 1992 Barcelona Summer Olympics, followed by the worldwide success of Janica and Ivica Kostelić, Goran Ivanišević, Blanka Vlašić, Marin Čilić, Sandra Perković, our handball, water polo, football and tennis national teams to the medals won by our great swimmers, rowers, gymnasts and more.

Therefore, I believe that the implementation of the National Sports Program will create even better conditions for the development of sport as an activity of particular interest to Croatia and its further progress, primarily on the basis of a healthy and active nation continually proud of the superior results of its athletes.

It is up to us all to work together to further promote sports, above all in the Olympic spirit, where the imperative is not victory but good and fair competition, and success is only a means of achieving a higher noble goal.



## FOREWORD

# Andrej Plenković

Prime Minister of the Republic of Croatia

**S**port is an important social phenomenon that contributes to the development, promotion and branding of Croatia, and has a significant educational, social, cultural and recreational role, as it promotes values such as teamwork and fair play and contributes to the personal development and health of the individual. Croatian athletes are an incalculable value of our society and fill us with pride. Their sporting achievements encourage a triumphant spirit and sense of community in the Croatian people, while increasing the country's reputation and global recognition. At the beginning of this Government's term, recognizing the importance of sport and the need to provide it special care and status, the Central State Office for Sport was established, headed by State Secretary Janica Kostelić, one of the greatest athletes of all time.

In almost three decades of Croatian independence, our athletes have won 44 Olympic and hundreds of medals in other major international competitions. Considering its population, Croatia today ranks among the top countries in terms of medals won by its athletes: from the Olympic medal of the Croatian Basketball Team in Barcelona led by Dražen Petrović and the match with the Dream Team, followed by the success of Janica Kostelić at the Winter Olympics in Salt Lake City to the record ten medals at the last Summer Games in Rio de Janeiro. Winning the football bronze in 1998, as well as silver 20 years later at last year's World Cup is an immeasurable success of our team led by its captain and the world's best and World Cup best player Luka Modrić. We are also proud of the many medals won by our water polo players, handball players, rowers, athletes, sailors, tennis




players, weightlifters, boxers, archers, swimmers, taekwondo athletes, gymnasts, and all other athletes. We are particularly proud of the tremendous successes of our disabled athletes who will continue receiving our support.

Taking into account the potential of sport, since the beginning of our term of office, we have increased sports appropriations by more than HRK 100 million, enabled investments in sports from European funds, increased the prize pool for top athletes and appropriations for the development of local sports.

The National Sports Program 2019-2026 completes the achievements of the past three years and is the basis for many new projects, obliging us to care for athletes and professional staff. It creates the preconditions for more efficient co-financing of programs and projects of national sports federations, development of top-level sports, local sports, investments in sports infrastructure, support for major sporting events, care of professional work and dual career athletes through scholarships and subsidies.

The National Sports Program 2019-2026 is the first strategic document in the field of sports, and with its adoption, we have shown a strategic approach and determination in addressing all the challenges that the sports system in Croatia faces, from top-level and recreational sports to sports in the education system. I am sure that in 2026 Croatian citizens will be healthier and more active and even more proud of their sporting achievements.





## FOREWORD

# Janica Kostelić

State Secretary




**W**ere we to choose one word only with which to express a range of emotions, describe something that enriches our life quality and has a positive impact on our health, I do not think there would be a more appropriate one than – sport. Whether we played sports in our youth or in older age, whether we were only spectators on the field or in front of our screens, whether sport served us as a temporary pastime or it was our life calling –in some form sport touched the lives of all of us.

It is precisely for this reason that we at the Central State Office for Sport were well aware of the importance of adopting the first strategic document in the field of sports in the Republic of Croatia. National Sports Program 2019-2026 included all three manifestations of sport in order to touch upon all segments of life in which we encounter sport, from kindergartens to schools, from recreation to top-levels sports, from managing of the sporting system to its funding, from professional staff to infrastructure. This document set down the guidelines for the development of Croatian sport through six general objectives the accomplishment of which in the following eight-year period would, on the one hand make sport equally accessible to everyone, and on the other, provide optimal training conditions for top-level achievements.

Were you to ask me what I would be most proud of eight years into this strategy, it would be if sport would become a habit for as many of my fellow citizens as possible. Of course, it is difficult to describe the pride we all feel when our athletes conquer Olympus and the world, but the statistics on physical activity in people over 15 years of age, which we obtained when drafting this document, is worrying and devastating, and I believe that fact to be the biggest challenge we are facing. We must change the awareness of the importance of engaging in any type of physical activity and instill this into the habits of those youngest so they can have better life quality and live healthier and happier lives. That would be the result all of us would be proud of.

Passing of the National Sports Program is but a first step to all the challenges ahead of us. The implementation of its measures will provide new tasks which we will surely accomplish and in doing so reach the goals we strive towards, which is also contained in the subtitle of this document, "Towards a healthy and active nation proud of its sporting achievements."



# CONTENT

<b>1. INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>12</b>
1.1. STARTING POINTS	15
1.2. METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH	16
<b>2. SITUATION ANALYSIS</b>	<b>22</b>
2.1. CROATIAN SPORTS IN FIGURES	24
2.2. SPORTS SYSTEM AND SPORTS ORGANIZATIONS	28
2.3. SPORTS FINANCING	31
2.4. SPORT AND ATHLETES IN THE EDUCATION SYSTEM	49
2.5. SPORTS FACILITIES	55
2.6. PROFESSIONAL STAFF IN SPORT	57
2.7. HEALTH-ENHANCED PHYSICAL EXERCISE – SPORTING RECREATION	62
2.8. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK	68
<b>3. SWOT ANALYSIS - STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES AND OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS IN THE SPORTS SYSTEM IN THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA</b>	<b>70</b>
<b>4. VISION AND MISSION</b>	<b>80</b>
4.1. VISION	82
4.2. MISSION	83
<b>5. GENERAL AND SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES WITH THE ASSOCIATED ACTION PLAN</b>	<b>84</b>
5.1. GENERAL OBJECTIVE 1: Provide prerequisites for the development of sports	87
5.2. GENERAL OBJECTIVE 2: Improve health-enhanced physical exercise and increase the promotional value of the sport	98
5.3. GENERAL OBJECTIVE 3: Improve the care of athletes	110
5.4. GENERAL OBJECTIVE 4: Establish a systematic and rational approach to managing a sustainable sports infrastructure	122
5.5. GENERAL OBJECTIVE 5: Improve the care of professional staff in sport	128
5.6. GENERAL OBJECTIVE 6: Improve the management system in sport	137
<b>6. IMPLEMENTATION</b>	<b>152</b>
6.1. MONITORING AND REPORTING SYSTEM	154
6.2. NATIONAL SPORTS PROGRAM IMPACT ASSESSMENT SYSTEM	156
<b>7. CONCLUSION</b>	<b>160</b>





# 01

## INTRODUCTION

For decades now, sport has been an important segment of Croatian social life, but still a segment that is very rarely considered in a strategic and coherent way. Sport inspires individuals, fosters a spirit of togetherness and affects the whole nation (we feel collective pride in achievements of our individual athletes and teams) and has remained the best means of promotion which ensures a continuous level of recognition of our entire country.

Although sport is an activity of special interest to the Republic of Croatia, the big question remains in what capacity have the preconditions for the achievement of high-level sports results been set. Does the current level of funding allow for the development of sports? Do we take sufficient care about sports facilities? Have we ensured normal working and living conditions for our athletes even after their career has ended? Do we provide support to sports in the educational system and in what capacity? How oriented are we as a nation towards healthy and active life? These are some of the main questions addressed by this development planning act which defines the baseline guidelines and is to become the foothold of sports policies in the Republic of Croatia.

"National Sports Program 2019 – 2026, towards a healthy and active nation proud of its sporting achievements" is the first development planning act of its kind and an important starting point in the consideration and realization of the future of Croatian sports. In the future, we envision Croatia as a country of great sporting results and a country whose citizens live a healthy and active life. In order for this vision to come to fruition actions of all stakeholders in the sports system need to be clearly defined, synchronized and directed towards the achievement of set objectives. Undeniably, our umbrella sports organizations, as well as national sports federations, sports clubs and local sports communities, have obtained outstanding results in line with the criteria of their individual sports, but when it comes to sports there is definitely still room for us to do more and do better. During the workshops and interviews in the process of drafting this document, many sports professionals emphasized the numerous strengths and weaknesses of sport in Croatia, and their suggestions, thoughts and ideas, along with the research conducted, served to form a vision and mission, to set general and specific objectives, as well as measures and activities.

We are aware that strategic approach to the organization and development of sport and recreation – health-enhanced physical exercise, on all levels, as well as joint actions of all stakeholders are key in achieving continued success of Croatia as a sports nation.

In consultation with a large number of sports stakeholders, the "National Sports Program 2019 - 2026" will provide mechanisms to meet national sports objectives and clearly define the roles, tasks and responsibilities of all partners in the chain of creating a sports result, from the athlete and the club, through the municipality or city, county and national level, the national sports federation and umbrella organizations all the way to the Central State Office for Sport.

Sport is a complex and multidisciplinary social phenomenon, and its future success depends on the participation of other sectors, notably finance, education, tourism, health and construction as well as their coordination. Also, with the growth of investment in sports, we should aim to spend funds as efficiently and transparently as possible, but also to provide clearer evidence of the direct and indirect effects of sport on the local community and society as a whole.

In order to be able to fully perform all its functions, the entire sports sector must be empowered, and we, as stakeholders, must add value to the work of our partners in order to justify any investment in sports and to serve the welfare of the sport and the interests and welfare of the nation.

## 1.1. STARTING POINTS

Pursuant to Article 1, paragraph 2 of the Sports Act (Official Gazette No. 71/06, 124/10, 124/11, 86/12, 94/13, 85/15 and 19/16 - correction) sports activities are activities of special interest to the Republic of Croatia, and in accordance with Article 2 of the said Act, the adoption of the National Sports Program, which is the basic planning and development act governing the development and improvement of the sports system in the Republic of Croatia, is urgently required.

The National Sports Program is adopted by the Croatian Parliament at the proposal of the Government of the Republic of Croatia for a period of eight years, setting out the development objectives for sports, the measures and activities necessary for the implementation of these objectives, the responsible authorities and executors of the development and the control measures for its implementation as defined by Article 2, paragraph 1 of the Sports Act.

### ACCORDING TO THE ACT, NATIONAL SPORTS PROGRAM MUST ENCOMPASS THE FOLLOWING:

- » programs creating conditions for sporting activities in the educational system
- » programs creating conditions for achieving high-level results of Croatian athletes in international competitions
- » programs creating conditions for recreational sports of all citizens of the Republic of Croatia, in view of protecting and improving their health.

The Sports Act stipulates that the National Sports Program establishes the obligations of state bodies and bodies of local and regional self-government units and the City of Zagreb, the Croatian Olympic Committee (hereinafter: COC), the Croatian Paralympic Committee (hereinafter: CPC). The Croatian Deaf Sports Federation (hereinafter: CDSF), national sports federations and sports communities in carrying out the tasks assigned. Thus, the National Sports Program provides, among other things, guidelines for the long-term program plans of umbrella sports organizations.

The Central State Office for Sport finances the work and operation of five umbrella sports organizations directly from the state budget of the Republic of Croatia, namely: the Croatian School Sports Federation (hereinafter: CSSF) and the Croatian Academic Sports Federation (hereinafter: CASF), as competent authorities of most programs for creating conditions for playing sports in the educational system, as well as COC, CPC and CDSF as the responsible authorities of most programs for creating conditions for achieving high-level results of Croatian athletes at international competitions. The Central State Office for Sport finances programs of umbrella sports organizations through public needs in sports. Programs of public needs in sports at the state level are passed by Croatian Parliament at the proposal of the Government of the Republic of Croatia together with the state budget of the Republic of Croatia.

In addition to umbrella sports organizations, programs for creating conditions for playing sports in the educational system and programs for creating conditions for achieving the high-level results of Croatian athletes in international competitions are also encouraged by the independent programs and projects of the Central State Office for Sport, bodies of local and county (regional) self-government units (hereinafter: ULC(R)S) and the City of Zagreb, as well as their respective sports communities.

Important areas of the National Sports Program are: defining sports management, creating conditions to stimulate investments into sports as well as transparent and purposeful spending of funds, maintenance of sports facilities through a creation of a network of sports facilities and construction and maintenance of sports facilities, as well as encouraging and regulating of education of professional personnel in sports, care of athletes as the main stakeholders in sports and providing conditions for recreational sports activities in order to protect and better the health of the citizens of the Republic of Croatia.

## 1.2. METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

National Sports Program is a comprehensive strategic document on the development of sports in the Republic of Croatia and is the basis for the creation of strategic documents of all national, regional and local sports organizations. Proceeding from the analysis of the situation and the problems identified, the methodological approach of the National Sports Program of the Republic of Croatia regards sport as a multidisciplinary phenomenon and is based on the following principles:

- » transparent planning process
- » multidisciplinary approach
- » cooperation, involvement of stakeholders and the public
- » top down/bottom up planning
- » based on available data.

State Secretary of the Central State Office for Sport appointed an expert working body to design the Draft proposal of the national sports program, alongside responsible authority for the document.

Experts from various disciplines – kinesiologists, economists and professionals from other related fields such as medicine, construction and tourism – also participated in the development of the National Sports Program. The multidisciplinary approach, the structure, scope and complexity of the issues covered by the National Sports Program, as well as its importance and role in the Croatian society, demanded the active cooperation of all experts from relevant scientific research institutions in the country. Cooperation involved contacting all relevant stakeholders in the sports system in the Republic of Croatia, from local sports clubs to national sport organizations and umbrella sports organizations. For this reason, seven workshops were held throughout the Republic of Croatia (Zagreb, Varaždin, Rijeka, Split, Zadar, Osijek and Bjelovar), involving 395 sports professionals from all counties, and 182 were personally attending workshops and were actively involved in the process of drafting the National Sports Program with their written contributions.

In addition to workshops with sports professionals from all counties, workshops were held with all national sports of Olympic and non-Olympic sports, as well as associated and temporary members of the Croatian Olympic Committee, so a total of 85 national federations were included in the drafting of the National Sports Program proposal. Thus, the principle of co-operation and involvement of stakeholders was achieved, which implies intense communication, discussion and/or exchange of opinions in order to achieve consensus and the principle of top down/bottom up planning which involves planning of sports development from the local through the county level, to the development of sports at the state level and vice versa, i.e., confronting the "top down" and "bottom up" approaches in order to find optimal development solutions.

The drafting of the National Sports Program was also based on the analysis of available secondary data published in reports of umbrella sports organizations, domestic and foreign statistics and/or professional publications, as well as by conducting primary research. In-depth interviews included 20 experts of different profiles, while for the purposes of analyzing the recreational activities of citizens, a survey was conducted on a representative sample of households in the Republic of Croatia, with the aim of collecting data on the level and type of involvement of all household members in various recreational activities.

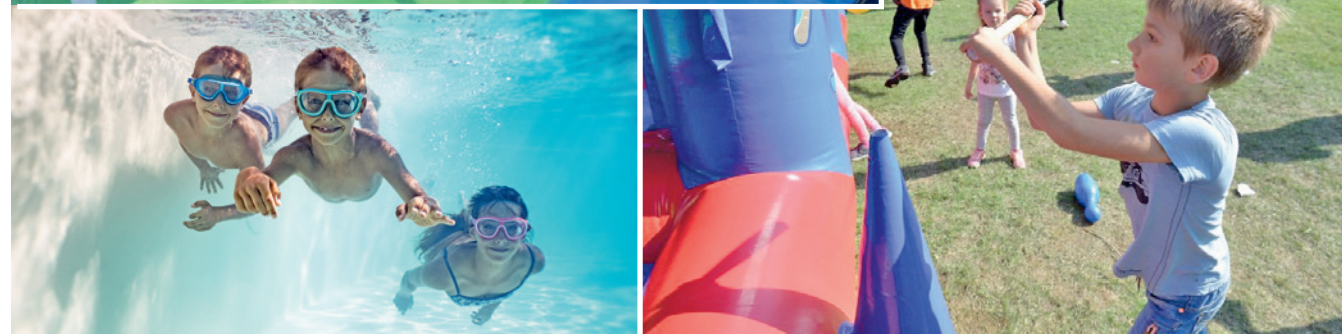
In addition, the data of the Ministry of Finance have been collected and analyzed with regard to budget allocations for sports at the level of municipalities, towns and counties, and by online questionnaires addressed to units of local and county (regional) self-government, data on the number, type and current level of equipment, i.e., the condition of facilities. Furthermore, available data were collected on total budget allocations for the period from 2011 to 2017 from the competencies of the ministries and other central state administration bodies. Also, an analysis of the structures and staff qualified for professional positions in sports, in all institutions in the Republic of Croatia, registered for the implementation of training programs for professional staff in sports has been carried out. With the help of the Croatian Olympic Committee, national sports federations and sports education institutions, data on the total qualification structure of coaches that are currently active in the Croatian sports system were collected, while all umbrella sports organizations provided information about their members and their sports results.

In addition to this, the basis for drawing up and defining the current situation for the purposes of drafting the National Sports Program 2019–2026 is contained in the documents "Financing of sports in the Republic of Croatia with a comparative overview of financing in the European Union" (Institute of Public Finance, 2012) "Coaches and Professional Staff in Croatian Sports" (Faculty of Kinesiology, University of Zagreb, 2011), which were commissioned and funded by the then ministry of sports.

## SCOPE

Sport is understood and defined in the widest sense, primarily from the point of view of illness prevention and the promotion and preservation of health in line with the definition of sport recommended by the Council of Europe: "Sport implies all forms of physical activity which, through casual or organized participation, aim at expressing or improving physical fitness and mental well-being, forming social relationships or obtaining results in competition at all levels." Since 2007, when the "White Paper on Sport" was published, the first strategic document of the European Union in the area of sports and physical activity beneficial to health, numerous strategic documents have been issued that recognize the social, healthcare, educational and economic role of sport.

The importance of sport is recognized in Croatia as well, since its most important documents such as the Sports Act and the National Health Development Strategy for the period 2012–2020 (Official Gazette 116/12) emphasize that physical activity is one of the fundamental ways of improving physical and mental health of people. This is stipulated also in the National program "Healthy living" (Croatian Institute of Public Health), which includes a series of activities aimed at regular physical activity in general population, in line with WHO guidelines. Therefore, the National Sports Program deals with all manifest and organizational forms of sports. Hereafter sport implies sports and physical activity that is beneficial to health.





**“Croatia won from 2013 to 2017  
11 medals at the Olympic, six medals  
at the Paralympics and eight medals  
at the Deaf Olympic Games”**



# 02

## SITUATION ANALYSIS

## 2.1. CROATIAN SPORTS IN FIGURES

When referring to the current numerical indicators for Croatian sport, the tabular presentation of which follows in the next section of this document, it can be pointed out that the Republic of Croatia is fully qualified for the title of "sports nation". This is especially valid when we take into consideration the number of medals won at the Olympic Games, European and World Championships, which, given the objective limitations that arise from the size of the country and the population, place Croatia at the top not only of European but also of world sport. Continuous top-sports achievements would certainly not be possible without the support of the umbrella sports organizations and their members, who care not only about the development of top and amateur sports, but also about the development of sports of people with disabilities and school and academic sports. The synergy of their activities allows for the development of numerous sports, which directly results in the expansion of the base for the development of top athletes through the increase in the number of clubs and athletes, and it indirectly stimulates physical activity beneficial to health.

TABLE 1: UMBRELLA SPORTS ASSOCIATIONS AND THEIR MEMBERS

UMBRELLA ORGANIZATIONS	MEMBERS
<b>Croatian Olympic Committee</b>	44 national Olympic sports federations
	41 national federations of non-Olympic sports
	20 county sports communities and the Zagreb Sports Organization
	10 other associations and institutions
<b>Croatian Paralympic Committee</b>	14 national sports organization
	11 county sports organization
	10 city sports organizations of persons with disabilities
<b>Croatian Deaf Sports Association</b>	14 full-fledged sports federations (3 national sports federations and 11 city and county sports organization)
	6 affiliated sports organizations
<b>Croatian Academic Sports Federation</b>	19 higher education sports organizations
<b>Croatian School Sports Federation</b>	20 county school sports organizations School Sports Organization of the City of Zagreb

Source: Croatian Olympic Committee, Croatian Paralympic Committee, Croatian Deaf Sports Association, Croatian Academic Sports Federation, Croatian School Sports Federation



**TABLE 2: NUMBER OF CLUBS AND ATHLETES IN THE YEAR 2017**

		Number of sports clubs	Number of athletes	Number of categorized athletes
COC	Olympic	4.131	246.694	2.601
	Non-Olympic	2.840	36.038	443
CPC	Total	152	1.305	98
CDSF	Total	62	296	43

Source: Croatian Olympic Committee, Croatian Paralympic Committee, Croatian Deaf Sports Association

**TABLE 3: NUMBER OF MEDALS WON IN THE PERIOD FROM 2013 TO 2017**

		Medals won in the Olympics/ Paralympics/ Deaflympics	Medals won in World championships	Medals won in European championships
COC	Olympic	11	101	200
	Non-Olympic	-	210	158
CPC	Total	6	56	101
CDSF	Total	8	15	13

Source: Croatian Olympic Committee, Croatian Paralympic Committee, Croatian Deaf Sports Association

**TABLE 4: NUMBER OF SCHOOL SPORTS ASSOCIATIONS, UNIVERSITY SPORTS ASSOCIATIONS AND THE NUMBER OF PUPILS AND STUDENTS INVOLVED, IN THE YEAR 2017**

	Number of ŠSD/SSU	Number of pupils/ students
Croatian School Sports Federation	1.299	120.000
Croatian Academic Sports Federation	242	4.665

Source: Croatian Academic Sports Federation, Croatian School Sports Federation

\*ŠSD/SSU - school sports organizations/academic sports organizations

**TABLE 5: TOP FIVE SPORTS BY NUMBER OF REGISTERED ATHLETES AND CLUBS IN THE COC IN 2017**

Olympic sports	Clubs		Athletes		Categorized athletes	
	Sport	Number	Sport	Number	Sport	Number
Teams	football	1.559	soccer	128.274	football	300
	handball	342	basketball	32.050	handball	221
	basketball	218	handball	14.687	volleyball	191
	volleyball	186	water polo	3.200	water polo	153
	water polo	70	volleyball	11.239	basketball	119
Individual sports	karate	167	shooting	14.971	athletics	277
	shooting	141	karate	8.500	taekwondo	154
	taekwondo	125	swimming	7.182	swimming	121
	tennis	116	judo	5.200	rowing	95
	sailing	115	athletics	3.995	karate	91
Non-Olympic sports	sports fishing	496	bowling	4.892	scuba diving	83
	bowling	377	kickboxing	4.751	pin bowling	61
	mountaineering	345	chess	4.089	bowling	56
	sea fishing	292	pin bowling	3.507	kickboxing	34
	chess	207	darts	2.612	chess	26

Source: Croatian Olympic Committee

## 2.2. SPORTS SYSTEM AND SPORTS ORGANIZATIONS

Sports activities include activities in sporting competitions, sporting preparations, sporting recreation, sports teaching, sports training, organization and management of sporting competitions, and the management and maintenance of sports facilities.

### SPORTS ACTIVITIES ARE PERFORMED BY:

- » **natural persons (athletes, coaches, persons qualified to work in sports, persons involved in organizing and managing sporting competitions and sports agents)**
- » **legal persons (associations, companies and institutions) that can perform all sporting activities defined by the Sports Act, with the exception that the sports club, if founded as a company, can only have a legal form of a joint stock company (sports joint-stock companies - SJSCs)**
- » **school sport organizations not founded as legal persons, for the purpose of carrying out extracurricular sporting activities of students. Funds for their work and activities are provided by the state budget of the Republic of Croatia and from the budget of ULC(R)S and the City of Zagreb to the school account.**

The basic organizational unit of Croatian sports consists of sports clubs associated in local and/or national sport federations, as well as local sports communities, which thus make the foundation of sports system pyramid scheme based on freedom of association. In order to perform sporting competitions, a sports club must register as a sports organization (citizens organization) or sporting joint-stock companies affiliates (for example, d.d.). Regardless of whether they are registered as an organization or a d.d., they can have either a professional or an amateur status. Those sports clubs that have concluded professional player contracts with more than 50% of registered athletes in seniors' competition or if they are eligible to acquire professional status in accordance with the rules of the respective national sports federation can obtain professional status.

The top of the pyramid of the sports system consists of: COC, acting as a national Olympic committee, an alliance of national sports federations and an alliance of county sports communities, and CPC, CDSF, CASF and CSSF, each having separate pyramids and building their sporting system independently of COC. Various expert and/or professional athletic associations and organizations are also stakeholders in the sports system, e.g., the Croatian Olympians Club, the Croatian Kinesiology Federation, the Croatian Sports Journalists Association and various professional associations such as those of coaches, referees, clubs, athletes, etc.

The pyramid of public (state) support for the sports system consists of state administration offices in counties and the city office in the City of Zagreb and their administrative departments responsible for sport, then the competent offices/departments/sport management boards in ULC(R)Ss (municipalities, cities and counties) and the Central State Office for Sport of the Republic of Croatia. All these bodies together form the sports system in the Republic of Croatia and are jointly responsible for ensuring the conditions for its further sustainable development.

### UMBRELLA SPORTS ORGANIZATIONS AND NATIONAL SPORTS FEDERATIONS

The term "umbrella sports organizations" is not identified in the Sports Act, but from the structure of sports system as well as allocation of funds from the state budget of the Republic of Croatia to five associations, namely the COC, CPC, CDSF, CASF and CSSF, it is evident that these five organizations should be considered as umbrella sports organizations. The definition, scope and responsibilities of umbrella sports organizations are regulated by Articles 49 to 57 of the Sports Act and are mostly funded from the State Budget of the Republic of Croatia and run athletic programs in five distinct, and yet mutually interconnected areas.

From all of the above, as shown in Tables 1, 2, 3 and 4, it is clear that these organizations represent the basic structure responsible for the implementation of the National Sports Program and are the proposers and executors of measures and activities to be covered by the National Sports Program and his Action Plan. National sports federations, especially in those aspects of programs that are under the authority of the COC, are organizations that will, immediately following umbrella sports organizations, also be tasked with implementing the measures and activities of the National Sports Program.

## LEGAL PERSONS IN THE SPORTS SYSTEM

According to the Sports Act, legal persons in the sports system are associations, trading companies and institutions. The establishment, organization, legal status, registration and termination of activities of sports associations and all their forms of association shall be governed by the provisions of the Law on Associations (Official Gazette No. 74/14 and 70/17), unless some of these questions are not regulated by the Sports Act.

The Sports Association is independent in the pursuit of its goals as established by its statute. To illustrate this, on 22 November 2018, a total of 52,314 organizations were registered in the Register of Associations in all groups of activities, out of which 10,974 are engaged in sporting activities which are registered in the Registry of Associations in accordance with the Nomenclature of Sports and Sports Categories of the COC and are classified in eight sub-groups: martial arts, equestrian sports, other athletic activities, professional athletic activities, sporting activities on the ground, water sports, air sports and athletic activities of persons with disabilities. It is unclear why or when exactly such a classification is chosen, however, it shows a lot of illogicality. For example, no sports organization is filed in the subgroup of equestrian sport, although there are 245 organizations (equestrian clubs and federations) registered in the Register of Associations in the Field of Sporting Activities, of which 40 are registered in the City of Zagreb.

The Central State Office for Sport keeps the Register of professional sports clubs. On 22 November 2018, a total of 19 professional sports clubs were registered: 16 professional football sports clubs, out of which seven sporting stock companies, two basketball professional sports clubs, of which one sporting stock company and one professional handball sports club with the status of a sports joint-stock company.

Furthermore, the Sports Act stipulates that institutions may be established for permanent execution of activities of sports recreation, sports education, management and maintenance of sports facilities. It is evident from the data of the Central Bureau of Statistics from September 2016 that there are 30 establishments registered for sporting activities.

To conclude, the entire sports system, from which the competence of sports organizations and societies stems, is concerned primarily with the implementation of the competitive sports segment. The system does not establish or provide a secured network that would concern itself with welfare of sports and physical activity in the function of health, which would, inter alia, collect and analyze system users' data, maintain methodical care for the improvement of the sports infrastructure, staff education, implementation and availability of programs for different groups of users. Measures should be taken to improve the quality of sports and health-related physical activities, and therefore the National Sports Program designs models and prescribes the guidelines, frameworks and criteria for a planned, balanced and cross-linked stable financing of all segments within the sports and health-related physical activities framework.

## 2.3. SPORTS FINANCING

The Sports Act stipulates that sports activities are of particular interest to the Republic of Croatia, which makes sports financing of national importance as well. Financing sports creates prerequisites for the development of sports from the youngest age, through recreational to high-level and professional sports. The sports financing system in the Republic of Croatia is governed by Article 74 of the Sports Act.

Taking into consideration the data on the allocation of state budget funds to finance public sporting needs defined by Article 75 of the Sports Act for the period 2012-2017, (Table 6) it can be concluded that the amount of funds allocated to sports in relation to Olympic 2012 was lower in the following years, with a significant growth in 2016, and total sports allocations in 2017 amounted to HRK 261,110,765.00.

**TABLE 6: EXPENDITURE FOR SPORTS FROM THE STATE BUDGET OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA (MINISTRY OF SCIENCE, EDUCATION AND SPORTS/ CENTRAL STATE OFFICE FOR SPORT)**

Year	State Budget of the Republic of Croatia	Total funding for sport from the state budget of the Republic of Croatia (Ministry of Science, Education and Sports/Central State Office for Sport)	% allocations for sports relative to state budget
2012	132.413.411.201,99	190.416.549,66	0,14
2013	144.667.691.943,00	163.442.322,17	0,11
2014	154.679.107.815,32	214.059.254,11	0,14
2015	145.909.137.374,99	206.690.752,58	0,14
2016	138.836.599.540,26	222.214.618,47	0,16
2017	163.925.950.625,30	261.110.765,00	0,16

Source: State Budget execution, Ministry of Finance

Furthermore, the data collected in the research project “Financing of Sports in the Republic of Croatia with a Comparative Overview of EU Financing”, referring to state allocations for public needs in sports at the level of GDP, state that in the Republic of Croatia these shares amount to from 0.28% to 0.11% (2008–2011), which is considerably lower than the share in comparable countries in Europe. For example, Hungary and Slovenia are at the level of 0.60%, Denmark 0.56%, while the highest share in the observed period was the one of 3.47% in Switzerland.

In the period from 2012 to 2017, along with the Central State Office for Sport, i.e., the then relevant ministry, which participates in the financing of public sports needs and sporting projects with over 90% of funding under various funding programs for NGO programs and projects, another six ministries were inconsistently and periodically drawing funding from their budget to finance sports programs. For example, there are some joint programs in the field of science and education that are focused on sports. In addition, construction of sports halls within schools and faculties is funded in the system of elementary, secondary and tertiary/higher education, and expenditure on construction of sports facilities for large sports competitions is a special item of budget. Significant funds are also allocated by the Ministry of Regional Development and European Union Funds and the Ministry of Tourism. The sports programs (Olympic Games, Paralympics Games, Universities Games) were co-financed by the Government of the Republic of Croatia from the funds of the budget reserve.

Public sporting needs programs, pursuant to Article 75 of the Sports Act, at state level include: funding of umbrella sports organizations, state awards for top athletic achievements, State Award for Sports “Franjo Bučar”, awarded for outstanding achievements and contributions of particular importance for the development of sports in the Republic of Croatia, permanent monthly compensations, sporting facilities, prevention programs, restructuring of sports clubs – competition organizations, information system in sports, non-institutional sports programs, promotion of international sport cooperation and the activities of the National Sports Council.



**TABLE 7: FUNDING FOR PUBLIC NEEDS IN SPORTS  
AT THE STATE LEVEL FROM 2013 TO 2017**

EXECUTED FROM THE STATE BUDGET					
PROGRAM ACTIVITIES	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
City sports halls in Zagreb, Split and Varaždin	31.365.641,00	58.327.075,00	45.900.000,00	43.604.999,06	53.122.367,93
Programs of public needs in sports at the state level	124.348.151,70	124.585.163,30	128.555.622,34	142.086.179,51	156.532.011,50
State awards for top athletic achievements	3.287.800,00	5.765.000,00	3.715.620,00	7.369.500,00	5.154.400,00
Encouragement of international athletic cooperation	193.729,35	145.591,10	560.972,92	799.303,61	352.884,42
European Week of Sport	0,00	0,00	0,00	500.431,06	803.343,99
State Recognition - Permanent Cash Benefits	77.101,30	14.180.340,40	15.823.792,31	17.267.623,68	17.122.635,26
Encouraging sports and recreational activities	969.000,00	792.000,00	1.400.000,00	1.399.736,27	2.216.598,00
State sports award "Franjo Bučar"	421.597,97	437.628,39	446.216,69	378.362,50	494.294,41

EXECUTED FROM THE STATE BUDGET					
PROGRAM ACTIVITIES	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Sports as means of school violence prevention	129.724,00	79.060,21	194.644,17	93.142,71	114.285,90
National Sports Council	178.783,90	256.103,97	285.065,24	218.545,71	0,00
Reconstruction of sports clubs/associations	113.806,95	117.887,44	147.356,93	146.391,53	116.949,01
European Handball Championship 2018	0,00	0,00	0,00	800.000,00	16.000.000,00
Information system in sports	0,00	73.404,30	0,00	0,00	977.750,00
Organization of EuroBasket 2015	0,00	9.300.000,00	4.468.723,15	0,00	0,00
Encouraging professional qualifications of top athletes	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00	156.330,00
Administration and management of CSOS	0,00	0,00	0,00	350.402,83	5.946.914,54

Source: State budget execution, Ministry of Finance

Public funds are allocated to finance programs of public needs in sports and/or through tenders to co-finance specific sports programs and projects.

Public funds for sports financing, as was mentioned above, include revenues from games of chance. These are the revenues of the state budget of the Republic of Croatia. Each year, the Government of the Republic of Croatia issues a Decree on criteria for determining the beneficiaries and the manner of allocating parts of the revenue from games of chance. Distribution criteria are established in accordance with national strategies and programs for meeting public needs in appropriate activities and in accordance with programs for promoting civil society development and are expressed as a percentage of individual program activities in the total of the revenue from games of chance, one part always being allocated for the promotion of the development of sports. By the decision of the head of the central state administration body responsible for sporting affairs, the aforementioned funds for promotion and development of sports are allocated to the public needs in sports, to five umbrella sports organizations implementing a program of public needs in sports at the national level.

It should be stressed that the share of allocations for organizations promoting the development of sports in the observed period recorded a negative trend, i.e., that it ranged from 35.00% in 2012 to 32.95% in 2016. Please note that in the period from 2013 to 2015, the percentage of allocations was 30.96%. The establishment of the Central State Office for Sport and its active role in the adoption of the Decree on criteria for determining the beneficiaries and manner in which a portion of revenues from games of chance for 2017 and 2018 is allocated, the share of allocations for organizations promoting sport development increased by 2.05%, i.e., it went back to 35.00%, as it was in 2012. Thanks to the increase in revenue from games of chance, the absolute amount from this source is constantly on the rise.

Considering financing structure of the abovementioned public needs in state-level sports, it can be concluded that most of funding is related to the financing of public needs in sport carried out by umbrella sports organizations.

### FINANCING OF UMBRELLA SPORTS ORGANIZATIONS AND NATIONAL SPORTS FEDERATIONS

Programs meeting national public needs in sport related to the activities of the COC and national sports federations, the organization and implementation of national championships and international sports competitions of representative level and care of top athletes are proposed by the COC, which is responsible for executing the program and spending of funds and which submits to the Croatian Parliament and the Central State Office for Sport a report on the implementation of the program of public needs and the spending of funds.

All other umbrella organizations suggest programs related to their operation. Within its scope of work each organization is responsible for executing programs for which funds are secured, and submits its reports to the Central State Office for Sport.

The Central State Office for Sport proposes to the Government of the Republic of Croatia: programs to meet the public needs related to the financing of sports for children and young people, in particular the sports activities of CSSF; the promotion of planning and construction of sports facilities; the awarding of the "Franjo Bučar" and state awards for top athletic achievements, international sports cooperation and international obligations of the Republic of Croatia in sports, science and development programs in sports and the functioning of the Information system in sport.

Since COC, as the umbrella organization of Croatian sports, is financed by more than 85% of funds allocated to public needs in sports, it has the obligation of high-quality and successful organization of the majority of sports activities in the Republic of Croatia, a task for which a stable and integral source of funding is necessary. By reviewing and analyzing the COC revenues and expenditures for the period from 2012 to 2017, a more complete insight into their structure and trends was gained. COC financial statements were used as source of data.

**TABLE 8: PUBLIC NEEDS IN SPORTS FOR UMBRELLA SPORTS ORGANIZATIONS FROM 2012 TO 2017**

	EXECUTION					
	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
<b>COC</b>	114.973.938,23	100.364.354,00	98.183.230,00	107.565.046,00	121.312.770,00	122.218.919,00
<b>CPC</b>	9.236.492,00	9.510.656,00	9.860.474,00	10.383.817,00	13.950.019,00	14.483.392,00
<b>CDSF</b>	2.162.438,07	2.136.204,00	1.998.207,00	2.103.207,00	2.014.988,00	4.330.350,00
<b>CSSF</b>	8.659.699,88	9.404.787,74	9.986.499,26	9.387.904,00	9.697.250,00	12.365.000,00
<b>CASF</b>	1.037.839,19	2.885.899,00	4.059.291,00	5.028.631,00	6.138.544,11	2.798.350,00

Source: State budget execution, Ministry of Finance

COC is funded from several major sources: the state budget of the Republic of Croatia as a public source of funding, own revenues and revenues from Olympic solidarity and other revenues. With the share of 87% to 90% of the total realized income in the observed period, the main source of COC's revenues is the state budget of the Republic of Croatia.

Revenues of Croatian Olympic Committee from the state budget of the Republic of Croatia consist of revenues from general revenue and receipts (source 11) and income from games of chance (source 41). In line with the aforementioned, the share of income from games of chance, as a revenue for special purposes, makes up the majority of total funds that the COC receives from the state budget of the Republic of Croatia, whereas regular funds (revenues of the State Budget of the Republic of Croatia from the general revenue and receipts) make up only a small part.

Most resources are allocated to the regular program of national sports federations and members of the COC (listed under the heading National Sports Federations). In the observed period, this amount averaged around HRK 59 million a year, with a total of about HRK 74 million allocated for the aforementioned program in 2017, with their average share of 49% of the COC's total expenditure. For specific projects involving Olympic programs, multi-sports events, athletes' and coaches' development programs and Olympic sports promotion programs through local sports, between HRK 19 million (2014) and HRK 40 million (2012) were earmarked, and their share in total expenditures averaged 22.8%. In the structure of total expenditures third place with an average of 16% is taken by common program tasks, which include salaries, marketing costs and informing of the COC. Expenditures for this program group ranged from HRK 16.9 million (2015) to HRK 22 million (2012).

It is apparent that the revenues of the Croatian Olympic Committee from the state budget of the Republic of Croatia in the observed period ranged from HRK 115 million in the Olympic year 2012 to HRK 121 million in the Olympic year 2016 and even larger amount of HRK 122 million in the year 2017. A drop in revenues of 12.7% in 2013 and 14.6% in 2014 compared to 2012 can be partly explained by the fact that 2012 was the Olympic year, which increased the regular resources of the State Budget of the Republic of Croatia for the London Olympics.

It is important to note that other umbrella sports organizations are almost entirely dependent on revenues from public sources, while the share of other sources of funding is largely negligible. The opportunity to increase funds could certainly stem from the European Union funds, which have so far been very poorly or in no way/not at all made use of.

## FINANCING OF SPORTS AT THE LEVEL OF LOCAL AND COUNTY (REGIONAL) SELF-GOVERNING UNITS

Public needs programs at the local level are proposed by the sports organizations and adopted by ULC(R)S. Programs related to the activities of children and youth are proposed by the school sports organizations and sports communities to the relevant sports affairs bodies in ULC(R)S and the City of Zagreb. To implement these programs ULC(R)S provides funds from its own budget. Funds for executing public needs programs are transferred to the sports community's account of the appropriate unit by the ULC(R)S.

The analysis of sports financing at the level of local and county (regional) self-governing units was carried out on the basis of the collected data on the execution of the budget of local and county (regional) self-government units according to expenditures in line with functional classification. The data were collected through publicly available financial statements on the Ministry of Finance website.

## FINANCING SPORTS AT COUNTY LEVEL

With the aim of analyzing the financing of sports at the level of local (regional) self-government (county), the data on the execution of the budget were compiled according to the functional classification for 20 counties and the City of Zagreb. The total execution of budget and execution for recreation and sports (function 081 in the accounting plan) was analyzed in the period from 2012 to 2017. Population estimation in the observed period was performed using the PC-Axis database of the Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS, 2019). The parameters of the average allocation for sports, the ratio of total budget execution and allocations for sports and recreation, and the total and average amount of allocations for sport per capita were calculated.

Taking into account the analyzed data (Table 9) in the observed period, an increase in resources in the execution of the total budget and in allocations for recreation and sports can be noticed. Analyzing the percentage of allocations for sports in relation to the total budget of local (regional) self-government, a trend of reductions of the percentage of allocations for sports is present, from 3.51% in 2012 to 3.15% in 2017. On the other hand, an increase in total allocations for sports per capita (from HRK 81.70 in 2012 to 87.13 in 2017) is visible. This increase should be taken with caution because it paints a deceptive picture of the increase of the funds, which is actually due to the decrease in population. The ranges in sports allocations from the budget of local and county (regional) self-governing units show high heterogeneity in the share of public needs in sport in total budgetary funds of individual counties, ranging from the smallest share of 0.17% to the highest share of 3.35%, i.e., 2.46 kuna per year per capita up to the highest amount of 36.38 kuna per capita per year.

By comparing the data obtained from the counties with those of the City of Zagreb, it is apparent that the parameters observed differ significantly in favor of the City of Zagreb. The total execution of the City of Zagreb's budget is reflected in the increase from 2012 (HRK 6,433,030,589.00) to 2017 (HRK 7,325,309,652.00). Also, there is an increase in the number of inhabitants in the City of Zagreb (an increase of 9,799 inhabitants). The total budget allocation for sports of the City of Zagreb in 2017 (HRK 308,645,535.00) remained at the level of the year 2012 (HRK 306,184,728). Almost identical values were found in the allocation of sports funds in relation to the number of inhabitants, which amounted to HRK 385.57 per capita in 2012, or HRK 383.94 per capita in 2017. However, with regard to the budget allocation for sports in relation to total budget execution expressed in percentages, it can be said that there is a trend of reduction of sports and recreational resources (2012 = 4.76%, 2017 = 4.21%). From the above, it can be concluded that, in spite of considerably higher allocations for sports and recreation compared to other units of local (regional) self-government, the City of Zagreb has a trend of decreasing the amount of the funds for sports and recreation in percentage as well as per capita.

**TABLE 9: DYNAMICS AND RELATIONSHIP OF SPORTS AND RECREATION FUNDING FROM COUNTY BUDGETS 2012-2017**

	Year	Amount		Year	Amount
Total county budget (in HRK)	2012	9.924.236.220	Average budget per county (in HRK)	2012	472.582.677
	2013	10.573.219.016		2013	503.486.620
	2014	11.600.297.088		2014	552.395.099
	2015	10.140.415.126		2015	482.876.911
	2016	10.697.491.357		2016	509.404.350
	2017	11.367.367.159		2017	541.303.198
County JPUŠ* total (in HRK)	2012	348.203.064	County JPUŠ* average (in HRK)	2012	16.581.098
	2013	371.441.687		2013	17.687.699
	2014	386.524.657		2014	18.405.936
	2015	336.624.604		2015	16.029.743
	2016	332.494.012		2016	15.833.048
	2017	357.704.598		2017	17.033.552
Total percentage (county/JPUŠ*) %	2012	3,51 %	Average percentage (county/JPUŠ*) %	2012	1,29 %
	2013	3,51 %		2013	1,27 %
	2014	3,33 %		2014	1,22 %
	2015	3,32 %		2015	1,20 %
	2016	3,11 %		2016	1,27 %
	2017	3,15 %		2017	1,22 %
Total population	2012	4.262.140	Budget per capita	2012	2.328,46
	2013	4.246.809		2013	2.489,69
	2014	4.225.316		2014	2.745,43
	2015	4.190.669		2015	2.419,76
	2016	4.154.213		2016	2.575,09
	2017	4.105.493		2017	2.768,82
JPUŠ* total per capita (in HRK)	2012	81,70	JPUŠ* average per capita (in HRK)	2012	29,19
	2013	87,46		2013	30,80
	2014	91,48		2014	31,39
	2015	80,33		2015	28,33
	2016	80,04		2016	28,86
	2017	87,13		2017	30,76

Source: Ministry of Finance (<http://www.mfin.hr/hr/ostvarenje-proracuna-ijlprs-za-period-2014-2017>); <http://www.mfin.hr/hr/ostvarenje-proracuna-ijlprs-za-period-2010-2014>; [https://www.dzs.hr/App/PXWeb/PXWebHrv/Selection.aspx?px\\_path=Stanovni%20a1tvo\\_\\_Projec-ne%20stanovni%20a1tva&px\\_tableid=SP31\\_2.px&px\\_language=hr&px\\_db=Stanovni%20a1tvo&rxid=05a47267-8fe0-4924-a0b5-67b5fddaa056](https://www.dzs.hr/App/PXWeb/PXWebHrv/Selection.aspx?px_path=Stanovni%20a1tvo__Projec-ne%20stanovni%20a1tva&px_tableid=SP31_2.px&px_language=hr&px_db=Stanovni%20a1tvo&rxid=05a47267-8fe0-4924-a0b5-67b5fddaa056)).

JPUŠ = public needs in sports

\*\* Considering that the City of Zagreb, as the capital of the Republic of Croatia, has a special status of both a city and a county (Act of the City of Zagreb), it is included in the analysis of the financing of sport and recreation of counties.



## FINANCING SPORTS AT CITY LEVEL

Financial indicators of allocations for sports at city level were collected through publicly available financial statements of expenditures according to the functional classification for 127 cities on the website of the Ministry of Finance. The first group includes cities of up to 10,000 inhabitants, the second cities with 10,001 to 35,000 inhabitants, the third cities of 35,001 to 75,000 inhabitants, and the fourth group includes cities with more than 75,000 inhabitants. The procedure to exclude from the calculation the average amount of funds for recreation and sport per capita was applied for certain cities of up to 10,000 inhabitants (Korčula, Vis and Pazin) due to extreme values in the mentioned variable for years 2012, 2013 and 2015. In the observed period, these cities had capital investments (construction of sports halls and swimming pools) and therefore their allocation of funds for sports and recreation was considerably higher than in other years.

**TABLE 10: DYNAMICS AND RELATIONSHIP OF FINANCING PUBLIC NEEDS IN SPORTS FROM THE CITY BUDGETS 2012-2017**

	POPULATION			
	Up to 10.000	10.001 - 35.000	35.001 - 75.000	Over 75.001
Population (average)	5.943,93	16.256,36	47.334,43	119.505,04
Total budget (average in HRK)	25.410.855,15	60.109.534,60	201.518.141,41	553.205.711,29
Public needs in sports (average in HRK)	1.105.651,94	3.209.912,47	14.076.312,29	44.895.756,38
JPUŠ (percentage on average)	4,13 %	4,85 %	6,59 %	7,89 %
JPUŠ (average HRK per capita)	176,42	197,12	292,87	377,51

Source: Ministry of Finance (<http://www.mfin.hr/hr/ostvarenje-proracuna-jlprs-za-period-2014-2017>; <http://www.mfin.hr/hr/ostvarenje-proracuna-jlprs-za-period-2010-2014>)

Table 10 shows the average values from 2012 to 2017 by groups of cities. It is evident from the above that the cities of the first group are significantly disadvantaged in the percentage of the allocation of funds for public needs in sports compared to the total budget, i.e., the public needs in sports per capita, thus they allocate on average 4.13 percent, while in other groups this ranges from 6.59 percent to 7.89 percent. The above points to the need to find solutions for directing the funds from public sources to smaller cities with up to 10,000 inhabitants, given that these cities are least economically developed and are unable to provide the necessary funds from other sources. It should be stressed that this group includes the largest number of cities (roughly 62 to 65 cities) and that a large number of them are located in areas of special state concern.

The data obtained for the purpose of this analysis point to nominally higher amounts for sporty, so it can be concluded that local and county (regional) self-governing units allocate more funds for recreation and sports compared to the period covered by previous research (Škorić, Bartoluci and Čustonja, 2012; Public Finance Institute, 2012). The lack of a standardized form as well as the lack of legal obligation to submit data point to the problem of lack of relevant data that could be used in the process of analyzing and evaluating the situation with the aim of improving the system of sports and physical activity in the Republic of Croatia.

Due to these problems in the financing system, all delivered and presented results should be taken with a grain of salt since in practice different modes and approaches to the recording of financial indicators related to sports are applied. It is important to emphasize that each county, city and municipality as ULC(R)S plans and elaborates on public sports needs in its own way, and has no legal obligation to report more precisely on the spending of resources and the effects of incentives provided. All of the above indicates that with the planned measures of the National Sports Program it should be possible to establish a network of data collection system and to monitor and analyze the effects of financing and allocating incentives in the field of sport. Furthermore, depending on the number of inhabitants of a particular ULC(R)S it is necessary to define the recommended minimum for financing sports as a socially beneficial activity within which each ULC(R)S will autonomously determine a precise amount to finance its public needs in sports.

A person with a prosthetic leg is seen from behind, standing on a paved path. They have their arms raised in a celebratory gesture. The scene is set at sunset, with the sun low on the horizon, casting a warm glow. In the background, there is a fenced-in area, possibly a sports field, and some buildings. The person is wearing a dark long-sleeved shirt and leggings. The prosthetic leg is a modern, curved design. The overall mood is one of triumph and achievement.

**“In the National Sports Program, there is a particular concern about enabling athletes with disabilities equal rights for playing sports and sports recreation with the rest of the population”**

## TAX STATUS OF SPORTS

Taxation of sports can be observed in the following three areas: tax incentives for athletes, value added tax and profit tax.

In the income tax system, there is a number of non-taxable receipts of athletes, with payers having to be from the sports system or, in certain circumstances, state administration bodies or bodies of local and county (regional) self-government. Non-taxable receipts may be:

» receipts not deemed income

» those on which tax is not paid or which are subject to tax exemption

Sports organizations in entrepreneurial activities can perform taxable and VAT-exempt transactions. If they have taxable operations worth more than HRK 300,000.00 (donations and membership fees are not included), they become VAT taxpayers and are subject to the same rules as other entrepreneurs.

The Law on Value Added Tax (Official Gazette No. 73/13, 148/13, 143/14, 115/16 and 106/18) defines, in Chapter X, VAT exemptions for certain activities of public interest, so Article 39 (1) (m) states that VAT exempt services are closely linked to sports or physical education performed by non-profit legal persons engaged in sports or physical education.

Furthermore, paragraph 3 of the same Article states that the supply of goods or services referred to in paragraph 1 points b), g), h), i), l), m) and n) is exempt from VAT when made by other persons to which public authority has not been delegated, provided that they do not strive to make a profit and, should profit nevertheless be made then it should not be distributed, but used to continue or improve the provision of services.

Under the provisions of the Value Added Tax Ordinance (Official Gazette No. 79/13, 85/13 - correction, 160/13, 35/14, 157/14, 130/15, 1 / 17, 41/17, 128/17 and 1/19) related to the tax exemption for deliveries of public interest, Article 63.a states that the recipients of the services referred to in Article 39 (1) (m) of the Law persons involved in sports or physical education professionally or as amateurs.

TABLE 11: TAX RELIEFS FOR ATHLETES

NON-TAXABLE ATHLETES' RECEIPTS	
Prizes regardless of the amount paid	Franjo Bučar State Award for Sports
	Awards by local and county (regional) self-government units – prescribed by the statute of ULC(R)S
	Awards for top sports achievements prescribed by the Decree on State Awards for Top-Level Sporting Achievements. They are awarded for medals won at the Olympic Games, Paralympic Games and Olympic Games of the Deaf and World and European Championships and are planned for these purposes in the state budget of the Republic of Croatia
Other sports awards	Achievement Awards under Special Regulations (those determined by the Ordinance on the categorization of athletes and the Ordinance on criteria for awarding athletes for sports achievements – up to the prescribed amount of HRK 20,000 per year)
Sports scholarships	Olympic scholarships of up to HRK 1,750.00 per month
	Scholarships of categorized athletes of up to HRK 1,750.00 per month
Education scholarships	Scholarships for full-time education of high school and university students up to the prescribed amount
Amateur athlete compensations	Travel, accommodation and board compensations during competition and preparation and special diets compensations of up to HRK 1,750.00 per month
	Certain fees and grants awarded by a sports association to a categorized athlete up to HRK 1,750.00 per month

## PROFIT TAX

Taxpayers are companies and other legal and natural persons, residents of the Republic of Croatia perform their economic activity independently, permanently and in order to achieve profit, income, or revenue or other business relevant benefits. The profit tax rate is 18% or 12% depending on the revenue generated.

State institutions, institutions of units of regional self-government, institutions of units of local self-government, state institutes, religious communities, political parties, trade unions, chambers, associations, artistic associations, voluntary firemen associations, technical culture associations, tourist boards, sport clubs, sport societies and associations, trust funds and foundations are not profit tax payers, but may be tax payers if they carry out some economic activity or have been declared tax payers by the decision of the Ministry of Finance, the Tax Administration.

According to the Profit Tax Act (Official Gazette, No. 177/04, 90/05, 57/06, 146/08, 80/10, 22/12, 148/13, 143 / 14, 50/16, 115/16 and 106/18) gifting in kind or in money, effected domestically for cultural, scientific, educational, health, humanitarian, sport, religious, ecological, and other generally useful purposes to associations and other persons performing the named activities pursuant to special regulations, if they are higher than 2% of the revenue generated in the previous year is recognized as tax expenditure. By way of derogation, the amount may be higher than 2% of the revenue generated in the previous year, if it is given pursuant to decisions of competent ministries on financing special schemes and actions.

In addition, the Act on Amendments to the Profit Tax Act (Official Gazette, No. 115/16) introduced the possibility of a flat rate profit tax assessment for non-profit organizations performing a business activity which makes them tax payers. These organizations include, among others, sports clubs in the status of associations, sports communities and sports federations. The aforementioned amendment to the Act provides for principally non-profit-making organizations that are taxable profit tax payers based on the performance of an economic activity that they do not have to keep books in accordance with accounting regulations but can determine the tax base and the tax liability in a much simpler way on the basis of performance of that economic activity.

However, regardless of the above-mentioned tax reliefs, practice has shown that non-profit sports organizations make insufficient use of tax reliefs, while economic entities are not motivated enough to donate for sport purposes.

## 2.4. SPORT AND ATHLETES IN THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

### TEACHING PHYSICAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION

In the educational system of the Republic of Croatia, sport is integrated in compulsory classes of physical and health education in elementary school, secondary school and the first two years of higher education.

Although organized sporting activities in pre-school education are obligatory, it is worrying that they are often not implemented regularly and systematically. Taking into account that the basis for the child's entire development stems from its very earliest age, it is more than necessary that children carry out daily physical exercise. In regular programs of pre-school education, no provisions are made for expert kinesiologists, even though motor competences belong to key competencies that should preferably be acquired at an early age of a child's development (according to recommendations of the 2006 Council of the European Union and the European Parliament).

Pursuant Ordinance on the type of vocational qualification of professional staff and the type and level of professional qualifications of other staff in kindergartens (Official Gazette, No. 133/97), persons eligible to teach physical and health education in elementary school, pre-school educators and pre-school teachers can implement special, shorter sports programs in kindergartens. This, however, is not mandatory or in any way sufficient for the proper motor development of the child.

Physical and health education in elementary and secondary schools implies the implementation of compulsory physical and health education (hereinafter: PHE) and extra-curricular programs through school sports organizations. PHE is conducted in 70 school lessons (53 hours) per year from the 4th to the 8th grade of elementary school and in secondary schools, or in 105 school lessons (79 hours a year) per year for pupils from 1st to 3rd elementary school grades. Based on Eurydice's 2013 report "Physical Education and Sport in School in Europe", with the number of hours of PHE teaching, especially from the fifth grade of primary school to the end of secondary school, we unfortunately fall at the bottom of the European class. Some countries, such as France (108 hours a year), Austria (102 hours a year) or Poland (96 hours a year) teach almost double the mandatory hours of PHE in their education system.

Given the fact that a large number of children and young people are engaged in physical activity solely through the education system, it is undeniable that the number of PHE lessons in the education system is insufficient.

Persons who fulfill the conditions to teach, i.e., the teachers of physical and health education in elementary school, teach this compulsory course from the fifth grade of elementary school to the end of secondary school. Grades 1 to 4 in the primary school are taught by teachers of primary education classrooms.

Certain problems in teaching PHE stem from the curriculum which does not recognize the development of some utilitarian activities, such as training of non-swimmers, and which does not allow for adaptation of PHE teaching to the actual abilities and needs of students.

In higher education, a 30-hour course of physical and health education per semester is compulsory for a number of higher education institutions for first and second year students. At certain higher education institutions elective courses (sports) for students of senior years of study were introduced as well.

From all of the above, it can be concluded that, in order to ensure the quality of motor development of children of kindergarten age, it is necessary to anticipate the possibility of kinesiologists working as pre-school teachers in kindergartens. Likewise, the number of hours of PHE taught in the education system is insufficient and needs to be increased in the curriculum.

## SCHOOL SPORTS – EXTRACURRICULAR AND OUT-OF-SCHOOL SPORT ACTIVITIES

In addition to PHE teaching, primary and secondary schools also conduct extracurricular sports activities for their students. In order to improve their implementation, in 2006, based on the Sports Act, Croatian School Sports Federation was established as a national federation for the promotion and organization of various extracurricular and out-of-school sports activities.

According to the Sports Act, the basic unit for the implementation of extracurricular sports programs is the school sports organizations (hereinafter SSO). It is established by a school board in primary and secondary schools for the purpose of implementing extracurricular student sports activities and is not a legal entity but acts as part of the school. The management of an SSO is considered to be regular teaching for up to two hours a week for primary and secondary school teachers involved, and up to full-time hours of the direct educational work according to the number of hours of regular classes. If a PHE teacher is in charge of the maximum number of hours of regular classes, including two hours of extracurricular SSO activities, they may be responsible for up to 2 hours per week.

The school or the school sports organization currently have no possibility to pay extra (overtime) work of teachers and PHE teachers to carry out extracurricular activities, which is a problem in some schools because it limits the implementation of a larger number of extracurricular school sports activities. Even when financial resources exist, there are no legal options that would allow additional payment for teachers with a higher number of hours than prescribed.

According to CSSF data in Croatia, in 2018 there were 1,297 active school sports organizations (900 in primary schools, 397 in secondary schools).

CSSF organizes various extracurricular sports programs aiming to involve as many students in school sports activities, to promote health-enhanced physical exercise of students, that is, to create a habit of lifelong regular physical exercise.

The organization of school sports competitions is one of key programs. They are currently organized in 12 sports for elementary schools and 8 sports for secondary schools. Their integral part are school sports competitions at the level of municipalities, cities and counties, conducted by city and/or county school sports organizations. The State Championship of SSO, organized annually by school sports organizations, involves about 90,000 students in 9,830 teams. CSSF also organizes the national championship of SSO for students with intellectual disabilities, in which 315 students in 51 teams participated in the school year 2016/17.

Strong emphasis was also placed on international activities, that is, the participation of students at world school sports championships. Thus, in 2016 and 2017, 229 pupils in 25 teams participated in the world's school competitions.

In 2017, there were 20 county school sports organizations and the School Sports Organization of the City of Zagreb, which means that school sports organizations were established in all counties and in the City of Zagreb. The Sports Act foresees the existence of municipal and city school sports organizations as well, but at present there are only 24 city school sports organizations in Croatia. This is a big problem because according to 2015 data, 82 cities in Croatia do not allocate any funds for school sports.

According to CSSF's available data, about 120,000 students are involved in all programs and activities of school sports, which is about 24.90% of the total number of students in Croatia, which in 2017 amounted to 481,760 according to the data of the Central Bureau of Statistics.

All of the above data lead to the conclusion that the number of hours of regular PHE teaching and the number of hours of extracurricular school sports activities are both insufficient. In addition, PHE programs from the 1st to the 4th grade are not taught by kinesiologists, there is no systematic training of non-swimmers and students are insufficiently encouraged to do health-enhanced physical exercise, i.e., school-based sports activities for which programs already exist, such as Universal sports schools and Gymnasium. This especially applies to students with disabilities.

Since most students with disabilities do not attend PHE classes, it is necessary to offer them custom programs. In the organization of PHE classes, it is necessary to provide teaching assistants for students with disabilities in order to enable and ensure their participation and thus act proactively on the maintenance and improvement of their psychophysical condition.

Also, as an example of good practice for teaching PHE, it is necessary to include the use of polygons for physical activity of school children for schools with less material and technical resources, which would enable the implementation of PHE teaching and also physical activity outside the classroom.

## ACADEMIC SPORT

Pursuant to the Sports Act, student sports organizations operating at a higher education institution are associated in student sports federation that establishes and maintains a system of sports competitions within higher education institutions. The student sports federations of higher education institutions from the territory of the Republic of Croatia, in order to coordinate the activities of their members, organize the competitions and care for the students' status of athletes, join CASF with the status of national sports federation. CASF has twenty members and organizes sports and recreational activities for university students. CASF's activities are focused on the development of student sports in cooperation with its members on the basis of as many student athletes as possible, organization of national and international sports competitions, education, volunteerism and the achievement of top sports achievements at international competitions, primarily at the World University Games (Universiade) and World and European university championships.

CASF's biggest projects, organized on a yearly bases are: UniSports Finals (over 1,000 athletes), UniSport championship (over 2,000 athletes), Student Sport Days (in over 6 cities with more than 3,000 students), International rowing regatta Sveti Duje (Split, over 500 participants). Particular emphasis is placed on international activities. CASF is a member of European university sports association (EUSA) as well as International University Sports Federation (FISU).

The goal of UniSport is to make their competitions have an attendance as massive as possible and to help their members reach this goal as well in their city championships, thus creating a healthy atmosphere within academic sport and making physical activity and healthy living habits available to as many students as possible. UniSport HR competitions include teams from universities, colleges and polytechnics, made up of the best individuals from the city's university sports championships, individuals who are selected by the selector or coach of the sport who tracks their performance continuously throughout the entire competitive season. When it comes to international competitions, athletes can take part in European university championships as representatives of their universities, polytechnics or colleges (they must be winners in their sports at UniSport HR competitions of the previous academic year), while at world university championships or summer or winter World University Games they perform as national team ("Unisport Croatia").

The tradition of obligatory physical and health education started in the academic year 1963/64 and for students in the first two years of study. Elective physical education courses in senior years of study are also carried out at a smaller number of institutions. However, the problem is that for compulsory physical and health education at most faculties no ECTS credits are given and it is not included in the hours which creates a problem for students because they do not have an additional motivation to participate in this form of organized physical exercise and also creates a problem for the expert staff teaching these classes.



## EDUCATION OF ATHLETES

Dual career is a multidimensional concept that includes special conditions and professional support for education and sports career of athletes, i.e., their employment and sports career, for the purpose of pursuing career in sports or other professions after their athletic career.

Thus, the former Ministry of Science, Education and Sport of the Republic of Croatia, as one of the partners of the Croatian Olympic Committee and in co-operation with other partners, carried out the project "Categorized athletes in the education system" and prepared a "Recommendation on the study requirements for categorized athletes". The recommendation was made by the Rector's Office of the higher education institutions of the Republic of Croatia at the session that took place in Rijeka on 22 April 2009.

The aim of the project was to align the study requirements with categorized athletes' obligations with regard to preparatory and competitive activities and to enable a second career for categorized athletes after they complete their sports career. In addition to the project "Categorized athletes in the education system", the COC, in co-operation with the competent ministry, has carried out activities within the framework of another project: Athletes and Education 2012 - 2016, within which promotional days "For Career and After Sports Career" were organized in co-operation with CSSF and CASF, and an agreement was signed between the COC, the Croatian Rectors' Conference and CASF (2015). At the proposal of the Commission for the Implementation of the Agreement, on 4 November 2016, the Rectors' conference adopted the Rulebook of the Rectors' conference on student athletes studying at higher education institutions of the Republic of Croatia, regulating the rules and conditions of studying not only for categorized athletes but for all athletes studying at higher education institutions of the Republic of Croatia with the aim of further developing academic sports. The COC proposed and adopted on September 4, 2017, "National Program of the Development of Sports Career and Career following Sports Career 2017 – 2020".

Furthermore, pursuant to the Sports Act, Article 7, paragraph 5, which stipulates that an athlete competing for the Republic of Croatia and winning a medal at Olympic Games, Paralympic Games and Olympic Games of the Deaf is entitled to a scholarship grant for university studies, in 2017 for the first time, funds to subsidize tuition of top athletes at higher education institutions were provided by the state budget of the Republic of Croatia, and for academic years 2017/18 and 2018/19 the Central State Office for Sport invited applications for tuition fees to top athletes at higher education institutions.

In the educational programs of secondary education there are classes for athletes (grammar school program), in which teaching is adapted and a mentoring approach is provided for the daily obligations of students athletes. Students earn points for their athletic success based on which, along with their school marks, they win the right to enroll special classrooms for athletes. The criteria for this are set by national sports federations. However, athlete's education through elementary, secondary school and higher education is adapted in the high school system, in the athletes' departments, while the rest of the education system requires additional adjustments to support athletes.

## 2.5. SPORTS FACILITIES

Sports facilities are among the most important preconditions for pursuing any sporting activity. According to the Sports Act, sports facilities are considered to be furnished and equipped areas and buildings where sports activities are carried out. Croatian sports and Croatian athletes have recorded a whole series of top achievements, but unfortunately this was not followed with the adequate development of sports infrastructure.

The current Ordinance on spatial standards, normative provisions and town-planning and technical conditions for the planning of the sports facility network (Official Gazette, No. 38/91) was adopted in 1991, and it is evident that a new one is required.

The Sports Act, Article 66 (1) stipulates that the Croatian Parliament, upon the proposal of the Government of the Republic of Croatia, which previously obtains the opinion of the National Sports Council, the ULC(R)S authorities and the City of Zagreb, their affiliated sports communities and corresponding sporting federations, makes a decision on the sports facility network, while local and regional self-government units obtain information on the current state of sports facilities in their area, plan for reconstruction, maintenance and/or construction, and draft a spatial planning document. For this reason, it is necessary to revise the procedure for setting up a sports facility network.



A major problem occurs also with people with disabilities as most sports halls, unless they are built in the last ten years, are not adapted to wheelchair access. Inadequate sports facilities for practicing sport are found either at school level or through clubs. It is therefore vital, wherever possible, to carry out necessary interventions and alterations on existing sports facilities in order to overcome current deficiencies, i.e., to fully adapt the existing sports facilities to the needs of persons with disabilities. Also, all sports buildings need to be planned and designed in such a way that they are fully adjusted to the needs of people with disabilities, whether they are athletes, employees or spectators and visitors to these buildings. When making adjustments to existing sports facilities and planning and designing new sports facilities, the provisions of the Ordinance on ensuring access to the persons with disabilities and to persons with reduced mobility (Official Gazette, No. 78/13) should be applied.

The analysis of the construction and equipment of sports facilities at the city and municipality level was carried out based on data collected via online questionnaires. The data were obtained from units of local self-government in the period from 5 May to 26 June 2017. The initial call for participation in the survey was sent to the responsible persons in 555 units of local and county (regional) self-government, of which 285 responded, and 230 fully submitted the requested information. Data were also provided by 210 municipalities and 75 towns from 20 counties and the City of Zagreb. From the collected data, it is established that in practice, in the classification, recording and treatment of sports facilities different modes and approaches are applied as a result of non-fulfillment of legal obligations and standardized forms of data delivery. In view of the above, the analysis of the situation concerning sports facilities cannot be carried out precisely and the data collected cannot be analyzed in more detail. The new Sports Act requires the establishment of an information network for data collection (National Information System in Sports) and the monitoring and maintenance of sports facilities at the national, regional and local level (sports facilities network). Furthermore, it is necessary to regulate the obligation to provide data in standardized form, which will be used to improve the long-term unsustainable situation currently existing in this area, which must be bettered based on clearly identified needs, goals, priorities, indicators and plans. Additionally, the lack of specialized facilities and their inadequacy for athletic activities of people with disabilities is one of the factors contributing to their relatively low involvement in sports and physical activities beneficial for health.

The establishment of a system for collecting data on sports facilities is a fundamental prerequisite for the standardization of sports facilities and the definition of criteria and norms at the level of the Republic of Croatia.

## 2.6. PROFESSIONAL STAFF IN SPORT

The issues of professional staff who carry out the professional jobs in sports are extremely important for the future development of sports. Articles 9 and 10 of the Sports Act define professional staff in sport, both as coaches and as persons trained in sports (instructor, leader, etc.). Coaches sit at the top of the pyramid of professional staff in sport and make up the basis of professional staff in sports. From the point of view of strategic planning for the future development of sports in the Republic of Croatia, it was necessary to identify quality indicators of the current status of coaches and indicators of professional work in Croatian sports. Central State Office for Sport collected and analyzed data on the number and level of education of coaches, which were submitted by the national sports federations and programs, and the number of graduates who completed specific programs, provided by educational and professional training institutions in 2015 and 2016.

According to the Sports Act, a coach must hold at least a bachelor's degree, while a person trained to work in sports may instruct citizens in basic techniques of a particular sport or conduct citizen's sports recreation. The law stipulates that the work of a coach may also be performed by a person who has qualified for it through an institution for training professional personnel based on the licensing program of umbrella world or European associations of a specific sport; a person who has won a medal at the Olympic Games, world or European senior championships or who has worked as a coach for at least fifteen years by the date of entry into force of the Act, and has been professionally trained through an institution for training of sports personnel.

It follows from the above that in those sports in which the European or international umbrella sport associations did not adopt licensing programs, the jobs of programming and implementing the sports training can only be performed by persons who have acquired a public document on qualifications of higher education institutions, except in the case of persons who have won medals at Olympic Games, World or European Championships or persons who have worked as coaches for at least fifteen years and have been professionally trained through the institution for training of personnel.

"Study of Sport Qualifications Acquired through Sport Organizations and (Sport) Educational Institutions" (hereinafter: the Study), Croatia is one of the European Union countries with the most Bachelors of sports coaching who graduate annually and we are among the few countries with exclusively formal education for professional staff. Notwithstanding the above, we still lack a large number of qualified professional staff.

## NUMBER AND STRUCTURE OF COACHES

The analysis of the Central State Office for Sport, based on data obtained from 50 national sports federations, showed that in 2016 compared to 2015, the number of coaches decreased by 0.31%, the same as the number of coaches without professional qualification, which decreased by 1.98%. The results of the analysis lead to the conclusion that the coaching profession does not hold a favorable position in the Croatian sports system and show that although the need for professional coaches is on the rise, their number in the system is not increasing, but is in a slight decline. One of the reasons for the decrease in the number of coaches certainly lies in their unfavorable employment status, since for most coaches this is not their primary occupation and since sports organizations are not stimulated through tax incentives to hire them. There is also the fact that training is inaccessible to them, due to the lack of programs for specific sports as well as for financial unprofitability. In order to protect professional work, it is necessary to reduce the number of coaches who work in sports without professional qualifications, that is, it is necessary to create conditions through the National Sports Program to enable persons who work in the sports system without qualifications to acquire them.

**TABLE 12: PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS OF COACHES IN NATIONAL SPORTS FEDERATIONS**

Total of 50 national federations	Year	Total number of coaches	Number of coaches with a university degree in kinesiology	Number of coaches with specialist professional study of kinesiology
	2015	5.116	742	424
	2016	5.100	868	372
	relation 2016/2015	<b>-0,31 %</b>	<b>16,98 %</b>	<b>-12,26 %</b>
	Year	Number of coaches with undergraduate professional or university study of kinesiology	Number of coaches with formal training programs in professional sports	Number of coaches without qualifications
2015	331	1.599	2.020	
2016	352	1.528	1.980	
relation 2016/2015	<b>6,34 %</b>	<b>-4,44 %</b>	<b>-1,98 %</b>	

Source: National sports federations

## EDUCATIONAL STRUCTURE OF COACHES

Analyzing the current state of education, i.e., the current educational structure of coaches in the Republic of Croatia is one of the most urgent problems. An analysis by the Central State Office for Sport showed that in 2015, the percentage of coaches without any professional qualification was 39.48% and in 2016, 38.82%. The largest share of coaches in the analyzed sample, almost 30% (CSOS), consists of coaches who are qualified to work in sports through various programs. The most educated coaching staff in the Republic of Croatia, that is, coaches who have acquired their professional qualifications by completing higher education programs, make up about 30% of coaches in the Croatian sports system. It is quite certain that there are considerable reserves, needs and opportunities to hiring these workers in the future. National sports federations must create the preconditions for hiring highly educated coaches.

**TABLE 13: NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS WHO HAVE COMPLETED THEIR TRAINING AND EDUCATION PROGRAM BY 2016**

	until 2013		2014		2015		2016	
	Sports	Recreation	Sports	Recreation	Sports	Recreation	Sports	Recreation
Number of participants who have completed the training program	5.193	1.290	45	158	368	257	342	317
Number of participants who have completed the higher education program	3.743	7.884	183	415	151	322	137	280
<b>Total</b>	<b>8.936</b>	<b>9.174</b>	<b>228</b>	<b>573</b>	<b>519</b>	<b>579</b>	<b>479</b>	<b>597</b>

Source: Faculties of kinesiology and adult education institutions

In the field of sports, a relatively small number of persons are educated annually, who can perform professional work in accordance with the currently valid legal regulations. Pronounced shortage of professional staff in the field of sports is a consequence of a systematic neglect of the field of professional work in sports in the last twenty years. Also, it can be seen from Table 13 that there are more professional staff in the field of recreation, i.e., health-enhanced physical exercise than in actual sports and sports branches.

Given that currently there are only 38 programs approved by the central authority responsible for education, which are implemented with the purpose to train coaches in certain sports and sports fields, it is also necessary to stimulate the providers of existing educational systems to open new programs to increase the number highly trained coaches, especially for sports where their lack is noticeable.

### EDUCATION, PROFESSIONAL TRAINING AND LIFELONG LEARNING OF COACHES

Due to the rapid global development of sports and all sports-related disciplines (psychology, technology, marketing, etc.), continuing education of coaches and other professionals in the field of sports is extremely important, and is achieved through lifelong learning.

Despite the positive fact that most sports federations have a licensing system in place, it is worrying that most national sports federations grant coaching licenses, that is, allow work to persons who do not meet the legal requirements for qualifications.

Taking into account the fact that there is a very large number of people who do coaching jobs without the necessary qualifications, it is necessary to build a much more efficient and higher-quality system of vocational education and training. Only a well-organized and efficient system of education, training and development can improve the system of sports preparation in each individual club, and consequently in the whole of Croatian sports.

Also, there is a lack of opportunities to acquire professional qualifications for coaches in sports of persons with disabilities, and therefore it is necessary to start developing systematic solutions, i.e., courses at kinesiology faculties or through institutions for education and professional development in sports.

### SOCIAL AND EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF COACHES

Particular attention should be paid to the social, employment and economic status of coaches. These issues are the most sensitive areas of future planning for the development of the coaching profession in the Republic of Croatia. Should a satisfying solution for a number of outstanding issues regarding the work and social status of coaches not be found, it will be difficult to expect a significant increase in the quality of coaches' work and consequently their educational status.

According to the data collected and available in the Study, 27.4% of coaches, which we can define as professionals, are hired to perform coaching jobs on the basis of employment contracts, that is, they are employed in sports clubs, whether on fixed term contracts or employment contracts of unspecified duration. The smallest share of coaches, 11.1%, is employed on a permanent basis. On the other hand, most coaches, as many as 72.6%, are not professional coaches, but are hired as part-time employees or volunteers. This means that very few coaches are able to achieve and realistically gain employment and ensure their existence in the coaching profession. Persons who have completed higher education in the field of kinesiology, i.e., the coaching profession, faced with the aforementioned fact, will prefer to seek material assurance of their existence and employment in other fields in which they can find employment in accordance with their acquired professional qualifications.

The low level of coaches' employability can be justified by the high employment costs for the sports club that would wish to employ a coach. The disadvantageous taxing position of coaches is also a complete disincentive. All of this is too much of a burden for clubs, which is also one of the key reasons why the Sports Act has shown deficiencies when it comes to professional staff over the last ten years.

In conclusion, according to the Study data, only 11.1% of coaches have a permanent employment contract which is a limiting factor for the development of sports, so there is a need for a planned approach to the problem of education and development of models of professionalization and financing of professional staff in the field of sports and physical activities beneficial for health.

## 2.7. HEALTH-ENHANCED PHYSICAL EXERCISE – SPORTING RECREATION

Sporting recreation is a sports activity of the population of all ages with the aim of maintaining health, vitality, social integration, competition or entertainment. With regard to the public interest, such effects and sports exercises are particularly important because regular and well-thought out sporting recreation is beneficial not only for the health of individuals but for the entire society as well. In addition to basic biological needs for movement being met through regular physical activity, it also affects the preservation and improvement of physical and mental health and the social components of the lives of children and young people, adults and elderly people.

In 2017, the Central State Office for Sport conducted a survey to determine the share of the population of the Republic of Croatia engaged in sports and recreational activities or some other form of physical activity. The survey showed that only 37.5% of the population of the Republic of Croatia over 15 years of age engages in some form of physical activity at least once a week, while 62.5% are completely inactive, i.e., they do not engage in any physical activity.

Survey results show a correlation between activity and age of residents - the older they are, the less they engage in sports, recreation or other physical activity. The most active are residents aged 15 to 20, while those over 60 are least physically active. Physical activity is equally practiced by women and men.

**TABLE 14: PHYSICAL ACTIVITY BY SEX AND AGE CATEGORY**

	Total	Sex		Age - categories					
		M	F	15-20	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61 and over
Number of respondents	1.000	477	523	100	129	157	182	169	263
Engaged in physical activity (%)	37,5	39,7	35,5	75,4	45,0	47,2	34,7	29,7	20,4
Not engaged in physical activity (%)	62,5	60,3	64,5	24,6	55,0	52,8	65,3	70,3	79,6

Most physically active people spend 1 to 2 times a week (28.2%) and 3 to 4 times a week (25.9%) exercising for 30 minutes to an hour. Slightly less than half (46.4%) prefer outdoor activities, and the most common motive for this is to improve their health status (61.4%).

**TABLE 15: FREQUENCY OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY BY GENDER AND AGE CATEGORY**

	Total	Sex		Age - categories					
		M	F	15-20	21-30	31-40	41-50	51-60	61 and over
Number of participants	1.000	477	523	100	129	157	182	169	263
5 times a week or more often (%)	9,3	8,9	9,7	18,3	8,9	8,8	5,6	9,8	8,7
3 to 4 times a week (%)	7,4	8,3	6,5	25,9	9,3	7,3	7,6	1,5	3,0
1 do 2 times a week (%)	12,4	12,6	12,3	28,2	11,8	18,1	11,6	11,7	4,4
1 do 3 times a month (%)	3,3	3,7	2,9	2,2	6,3	3,3	4,7	4,0	0,7
Less than that (%)	5,1	6,2	4,1	0,8	8,7	9,9	5,1	2,6	3,6
Never (%)	61,8	59,1	64,2	24,6	54,4	51,5	63,3	69,7	79,6
I do not know (%)	0,7	1,2	0,3	-	0,6	1,2	2,0	0,7	-

Some form of physical activity is more commonly practiced by residents of large cities, highly educated people in their thirties in higher positions and with higher incomes, and pupils and students between the ages of 15 and 20. For the majority of the population, the form of sports and physical activities they engage in does not require any monetary expenditure, and if they do allocate a certain amount of money for sports, recreation or other physical activities, it averages HRK 120 per month.

In order for most of population to start engaging in any form of physical activity, it is necessary to develop a positive attitude towards physical exercise. Many people are not in the habit of exercising regularly, and it is certainly necessary to raise awareness about the benefits of exercise and its importance for health. In order to achieve this, state administration bodies, local self-government bodies and various sectors such as education, health, transport, sports and others should be involved in this process.

It is necessary to establish a long-term system of talent identification and development, which will enable better selection and maintenance of standards of top sports achievements of Croatian athletes. Through the aforementioned, gifted children would be able to develop their potential to the maximum, and combined with the provision of conditions for popularized sports activity, we can expect the trend of sporting successes of Croatian athletes in international competitions to continue.

### THE IMPACT OF SPORTS ON HEALTH AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

The National Health Development Strategy 2012-2020 emphasizes that physical activity is one of the fundamental ways to improve people's physical and mental health and one that reduces the risks of many chronic noncommunicable diseases, mitigates their progression, and significantly benefits society by enhancing social interaction and engagement. In addition to its preventative effects, physical activity improves physical fitness, muscle strength and quality of life. This is especially important for the elderly because regular physical activity can increase their potential for independent living. For this reason, the Action Plan for the Control of Chronic Noncommunicable Diseases 2015-2020 states as its objectives, inter alia, "Stop the increase of physical inactivity by adopting and implementing national guidelines on physical activity for health" and "Promote physical activity for all age groups".

The Action Plan for the Prevention and Reduction of Obesity 2010 - 2012 emphasizes that obesity is most often the result of negative synergy of maladaptive eating habits and insufficient physical activity in both children and adults. The main objectives of the Action Plan are: promoting healthy lifestyle and improving health. It also emphasizes the responsibility of parents to encourage children to engage in physical activity and to provide them with the conditions to do so. Some of the necessary prerequisites for these kinesiological activities to be carried out are a high level of professional competence of sports personnel, availability and equipment of sports infrastructure, availability of sports equipment and the like.

### MEDICAL EXAMINATIONS

The importance and impact of every form of physical activity and sports on the health status of citizens, especially children involved in sports activities in sports clubs, as well as in the extracurricular school sports activities carried out in school sports organizations, are immeasurable. Unfortunately, serious consequences for the health and life of athletes are also possible when these activities involve persons who do not fit enough for the effort required by sports training, especially in some sports with a pronounced component of physiological load. It is also important to note that in the current financial crisis, it is important to make this kind of examination accessible to all citizens of the Republic of Croatia, and especially to children. It is necessary to ensure that in certain areas, especially in rural areas, where there is a shortage of medical specialists, the examination of athletes is organized in accordance with the rules of the profession.

It is also important to pay attention to obligatory medical examinations of school children, which determine their ability to participate in school sport competitions, whereby the general and specific medical capacity of the student to participate in school sport competitions is determined by a competent school medicine specialist, only exceptionally specialist pediatrician or an elected general practitioner and/or family medicine specialist. The scope of examination in school medicine, family medicine or pediatrics does not cover the scope of examination (overall clinical examination, electrocardiogram, spirometry, laboratory) according to European and global guidelines, so it needs to be upgraded and complementary to the examinations of occupational health and sports specialists in order to gain complete insight into the health and fitness of athletes at any level of sports during the competing period of school-age athletes. In order for children who perform regular systematic examinations and is not completely or partially exempt from physical and health culture education, therefore, they play football, handball, run longer stretches in class (aerobic load that can be high), to compete in school competitions, it is necessary to see a school medicine doctor to the extent that the doctor determines. Consideration should be given to cases when such a review may be sufficient for a child to perform for the club as well.

Therefore, it is important to emphasize that the basic premise of the care for athletes is the regulation of their healthcare through prescribed health checks. Furthermore, it is necessary to provide top athletes with timely availability of specialized medical experts, and top athletes of first category with a pension and health insurance coverage.



**“In 2017 according to a survey of Central State Office for Sport, only 37.5% of the population older than the age of 15 has been physically active”**

## 2.8. LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

The Sports Act is the basic legal act that regulates the sports system in the Republic of Croatia. The normative framework of the sports system is comprised also of bylaws adopted on the basis of the Sports Act, as well as a series of other regulations, which regulate the sports system directly or indirectly, most notably the Law on Associations.

Since its adoption in 2006, the Sports Act has been amended seven times, but these amendments have not resolved deficiencies specific to the sports system and, in accordance with the conducted procedure of ex-ante impact assessment of regulations in 2016, a new sports law is planned as a reform law. During March 2017, a public debate was held on the Statement of Impact Assessment of regulations and theses for sports act. As part of the process of assessing the effects of regulations for sports act, in addition to the public debate on the Statement of Impact Assessment of Regulations and theses for sports act, a public presentation of the said document was also held.

In total, 102 opinions, comments and proposals (e-Consulting and Public Presentation) were received, most of which were accepted.

The new Sport Act, in accordance with the conducted impact assessment, intends to carry out the categorization and evaluation of sports, to regulate the work of sports organizations, as well as the system of control and consequences of non-fulfillment of obligations by sports organizations, to raise the level of efficiency of umbrella sports organizations by more clearly defining public needs in sports and defining criteria for restrictions for administration and management costs financed by public funds. Furthermore, it is intended to establish a more efficient control over the use of budgetary funds for sports financing, to harmonize the necessary qualifications, i.e., the level of education according to the type and complexity of jobs in sports, and to adjust them to the real staffing needs, to harmonize and consolidate all subjects and data in sports into a single record, to regulate the issue of sports facilities and sports facilities network, to arrange the system of financing major international sports competitions in the Republic of Croatia based on clear criteria, to regulate the real needs for medical specialists, as well as medical examinations, to award sports scholarships to top athletes of the first category at the national level, define the employment status of professional athletes and coaches, including issues related to dual careers of athletes, enable sports activities through trades, define the consequences of guilt and criminal proceedings and obstacles and barriers for the membership in the bodies of competing sports organizations, sports federations and sports stock companies.





# 03

**SWOT ANALYSIS - STRENGTHS  
AND WEAKNESSES AND  
OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS  
IN THE SPORTS SYSTEM IN THE  
REPUBLIC OF CROATIA**

The analysis of the situation, as the initial step of drafting each strategic document, including the National Sports Program, is summarized in the SWOT matrix (internal factors - strengths and weaknesses; external factors - opportunities and threats) to highlight the key elements of sports most dependent on defining the vision and the objectives and elaboration of the Action Plan. Different inputs were used to create the matrix. First of all, it relied on expert opinions collected through qualitative research (7 workshops, 20 interviews), quantitative research on sports and recreational activities of citizens in the Republic of Croatia, as well as collected data on the state of sports facilities, the educational structure of coaches and financial allocations for public needs in sports on regional and local levels. Using all of these sources of data, in detecting strengths and opportunities as well as weaknesses and limitations, sports was considered in all three forms, namely: competitive sports, sports in the education system and health-enhanced physical exercise, or sports recreation.





**“Key challenges to sports development in Republic of Croatia are - financing, health-enhanced physical exercise, caring about athletes, sports infrastructure, professional staff and management in sport”**

**TABLE 16: SWOT ANALYSIS**

INTERNAL FACTORS	
STRENGTHS (+)	
»»	traditional development of many sports
»»	continuous achievement of top sports results
»»	top athletes as promoters of the Republic of Croatia
»»	competition system in many sports for all ages in the education system
»»	financing umbrella sports organizations through the state budget of the Republic of Croatia
»»	basic funding of a large number of sports through the state budget of the Republic of Croatia
»»	Financing a large number of organizations through budgets of local and county (regional) self-government units
»»	improvement in the construction of school sport halls in the previous period
»»	increasing professional education in the field of health-enhanced physical exercise
»»	A system of categorization of athletes and scholarships at the state level
»»	A system of state rewards and permanent cash benefits
»»	Established independent state administration body responsible for sports care and development of the sports system in the Republic of Croatia - Central State Office for Sport
»»	Quality coaching staff for high-level quality sports
»»	Scientific research work and professional work in the field of sports
INTERNAL FACTORS	
WEAKNESSES (-)	
»»	Insufficiently clearly defined roles and tasks of individual stakeholders in the sports system
»»	The absence of a National Sports Information System with associated registers and a network of sports facilities
»»	Absence of legal obligation and standardized form of planning, monitoring and reporting of public needs in sports
»»	Trend of increasing administration in the sports system
»»	Underdeveloped volunteering culture

INTERNAL FACTORS	
WEAKNESSES (-)	
»»	Unfeasibility of certain provisions of the existing Sports Act
»»	Insufficient involvement of women at all levels
»»	Lack of categorization and funding of sports based on clear and quantified criteria
»»	Insufficiently defined purpose of public needs in sports
»»	Insufficient control over the use of state budget funds allocated for sports and inconsistency of the funding system
»»	Lack of coordination of allocations for sports between different sectors
»»	Uneven allocation of funds by units of local and county (regional) self-government
»»	Insufficient tax incentives for investments in sports and the existence of various para-fiscal levies that discourage investment in sports
»»	Absence of a legal possibility to exercise sports activity through trades
»»	Insufficient and/or irregular construction of sports infrastructure
»»	Unequal level of equipment for school sports halls and other sports halls
»»	Insufficient adaptation of facilities to persons with disabilities
»»	Mismatch between the educational and sports systems
»»	Insufficient care for dual career athletes
»»	Insufficient athlete healthcare system
»»	Undefined employment status of professional athletes and coaches
»»	The disparity between existing educational programs and actual staffing needs in sports
»»	Insufficient hours of physical and health education in the educational system
»»	Lack of investment in utilitarian activities
»»	Insufficient promotion of health-enhanced physical exercise
»»	Insufficient financial investment in health-enhanced physical exercise
»»	Insufficient number of planning documents at the local level
»»	The system of selection in sports as a limiting factor for the retention of more children in sports
»»	Insufficient absorption capacities (human resources, projects) to attract EU funds
»»	Insufficient awareness of the issue of violence in sports

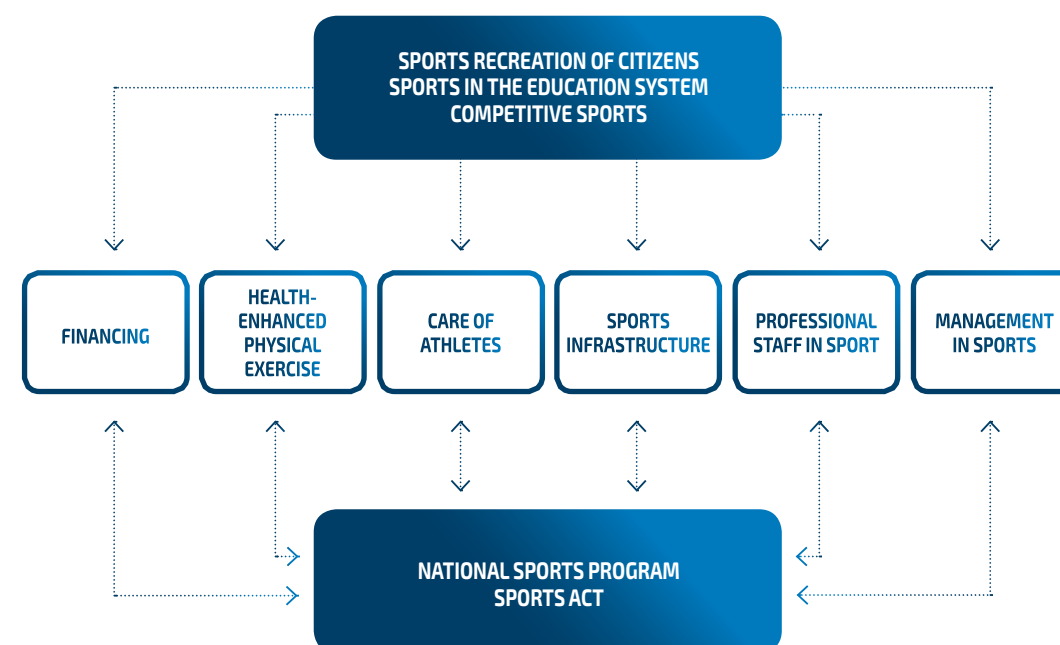
**TABLICA 16: SWOT ANALIZA**

EXTERNAL FACTORS	
<b>OPPORTUNITIES (+)</b>	
»»	Financing sports through EU funds
»»	Attracting potential investors through tax breaks
»»	Allocation of funds for sports, from public companies and other sports departments
»»	Better utilization of school sports infrastructure for extracurricular sports activities
»»	Training system for professional staff
»»	System of teaching physical and health culture and extracurricular school sports activities
»»	The positive impact of health-enhanced physical exercise on health
»»	Linking tourism and sports
»»	Recommendations from the World Health Organization (WHO) on the importance of sports and physical activity
»»	Favorable geostrategic location and climatic conditions for year-round outdoor sports activities
»»	Marketing utilization of rich sports heritage and athletes who continuously achieve top sports results
»»	Informatization of the sports system
»»	Cooperation with the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of the Interior
EXTERNAL FACTORS	
<b>THREATS (-)</b>	
»»	Failure to adapt the legislative framework (sports, tax, work, school, economic, etc.) for sports development needs
»»	Poor economic situation
»»	Non-validation of sports as an important social phenomenon and its economic, social, educational and health role
»»	Insufficient awareness of the importance of playing sports and maintaining health
»»	Stakeholder resistance to the reform of the sports and physical exercise system
»»	Failure to respect the competencies and opinions of sports professionals
»»	Poor demographic trends

With regard to the perception of sports in Croatia, all the studies conducted have yielded the expected results which show that the focus is on competitive, especially high-level sports, so the greatest number of advantages and disadvantages relate precisely to that part of the system in Croatia, which is involved in the organization and implementation of competitive, high-level sports. All of these strengths are a good basis for visioning and goal detection, while in the future weaknesses need to be minimized through measures and activities set out in the National Sports Program.

Regardless of the organizational form of sports, through the collected viewpoints of all stakeholders, several areas were clearly profiled that could be considered as areas of key challenges for the future development of sports in Croatia, such as - financing, health-enhanced physical exercise, care of athletes, sports infrastructure, professional staff and management in sports. All these areas need to be regulated through the National Sports Program and the legislative framework.

**GRAPH 1: ORGANIZATIONAL FORMS OF SPORTS AND AREAS OF KEY CHALLENGES**





# 04

## VISION AND MISSION

## 4.1. VISION

In defining a strategy for the development of an area, defining a vision is usually the first step, because it is precisely the vision that provides a concise answer to the question of what the future should be like, in this case the future of sports in Croatia. Designing a vision always starts with the most pronounced existing advantages, and emphasizes those characteristics of development that must be acted upon in order for the vision to be realized. It is often emphasized that the vision is an "image of an ideal future", however, it is more desirable to define the vision as "an image of a desired but also achievable future", or as a guiding principle, which can provide stronghold and motivation for all stakeholders in the sports system.

On what basis is it possible to build a vision of sports in Croatia? As shown by the SWOT matrix, Croatian sports has many advantages, among which the tradition of numerous sports, with loyal audiences and continuous top achievements, so it is expected that this tradition will continue in the future. As a consequence of many disadvantages, a small part of the population in Croatia is actively involved in health-enhanced physical exercise, so future goals, measures and activities must be oriented towards creating all the prerequisites for attracting people to physical exercise regardless of their age and health status. With this in mind, the vision can be defined as:



**Croatia is a country of sports as a way of life for all its citizens and a country recognizable for its achievements of top sports results.**



## 4.2. MISSION

Unlike a vision that represents an image of the future over a period of time, the mission is not time-bound and it represents the mode of accomplishing the vision. The mission is about action and behavior based on appropriate values and principles such as transparent and effective governance in sports with clear criteria for each of its segments, including funding, encouraging participation, advancement, achievement and evaluation of top sport results, modern and adapted infrastructure, care for athletes and creating a safe and stimulating environment for all participants, prevention and elimination of negative occurrences in sport, and adequate level of training of professional staff.

The mission of the entire Croatian sport can be defined as:



**Transparent and efficient management of the sports system so that all stakeholders continuously create the preconditions for the development of all manifestations/ organizational forms of sport.**





# 05

**GENERAL AND SPECIFIC  
OBJECTIVES WITH THE  
ASSOCIATED ACTION PLAN**

Considering the shortcomings and opportunities of Croatian sports identified in the Situation Analysis as well as the SWOT matrix, the overall development objectives in the period 2019–2026 are as follows:

- 1.** Provide prerequisites for the development of sports
- 2.** Improve health-enhanced physical exercise and increase the promotional value of sports
- 3.** Improve the care of athletes
- 4.** Establish a systematic and rational approach to managing sustainable sports infrastructure
- 5.** Improve the care for professional staff in sports
- 6.** Improve the management system in sports

The stated general objectives intend to establish a transparent and more efficient sports system in Croatia, to provide stable funding which will meet all public needs in sports and enable promotion and retention in sports of athletes and all sports professionals, as well as increase the number of citizens involved in health-enhanced physical exercise which will create a supportive environment contributing to demographic renewal. Croatia aspires to become a country where it is not only important to achieve a top sporting result, but it is also important to equip the system so that each individual can be involved in some sport activity throughout their life.

In this way, sports would become a much more important factor in a healthy lifestyle and in creating a healthier nation than is the case today.

The implementation of general objectives and related measures and activities will respect the principles of gender equality and encourage the creation of a level playing field for both female and male athletes.

The general objectives listed are explained in more detail below, also specific objectives are defined that should enable the reduction of deficiencies in Croatian sports and better exploitation of opportunities provided.

## 5.1. GENERAL OBJECTIVE 1

### 5.1. PROVIDE PREREQUISITES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF SPORTS

Notwithstanding the increased allocation to sports at the national level in the previous period, the current volatility and insufficient financial resources that would enable more intensive development of sports are an important limiting factor for all stakeholders in the sports system. In order to ensure in the future all the prerequisites for the development of sports at national, regional and local level, it is necessary to realize specific objectives:

- » clearly define the criteria for evaluating programs of public needs in sports and establish a categorization of sports
- » clearly define the use of funds for public needs in sports, the manner of allocation and control of spending
- » analyze and determine the possibility of increasing tax breaks for sports

In order to ensure financial stability for all sports practitioners, it is important to ensure the continued financing of public needs in sports, which would meet the developmental needs of sports in Croatia, from the local to the national level, as well as monitoring the use of these funds. Therefore, it is necessary to develop a unique financing model, which will also enable monitoring of the financing of sports activities at local and regional level, as is possible on the national level through the system of public needs in sports. It is also suggested that a recommendation be made for a minimum percentage of budgetary allocations at local and regional level. Such a budget allocation model would allow sports associations to plan their sports programs more efficiently, as well as act and achieve the necessary preconditions for the development of sports in all areas of the Republic of Croatia. At the national level, it is necessary to balance the allocations from the state budget of the Republic of Croatia with comparable EU Member States.

For the development of sports in the Republic of Croatia, it is necessary to create, among other things, organizational and administrative preconditions and remove barriers. This means carrying out a series of activities, adopting and harmonizing a series of regulations that will prescribe and standardize public needs in sports at the state level.

In order for the funds intended for sports in the Republic of Croatia to be used most effectively and be distributed more equitably, it is necessary to define a model for the categorization of sports and to adopt an ordinance on the criteria for the categorization of sports, as well as to establish the criteria for evaluating the program of public needs in sports. In addition to categorizing sports, a prerequisite for rational and quality use of funds for public needs in sports is a clear definition of the use of funds for public needs in sports, the manner of their allocation and control of spending.

With a view to intensifying the development of sports, it is necessary to enable tax breaks for clubs and athletes, as well as to encourage businesses to invest significantly more in sports than ever before by adopting measures that will encourage economic operators to invest in sports more than they have done so far.

It is a common occurrence that Croatian athletes with disabilities, when competing at international competitions, encounter sports rivals who, through the use of modern and higher quality sports aids (wheelchairs and prosthetics), give better sports performance. This is especially true for young athletes whose needs are different from those of the population not involved in sports, and for whom the supply of these aids is prescribed by Croatian Health Insurance Fund. In view of the above, it is necessary to enable the purchase of sports wheelchairs or sports prosthetic devices.

## **SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE 1.1.**

### **CLEARLY DEFINE THE CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING THE PROGRAM OF PUBLIC NEEDS IN SPORTS AND ESTABLISH A CATEGORIZATION OF SPORTS**

As a prerequisite for the long-term development of sports, the role and responsibilities of the stakeholder in the sports system, which have been vaguely defined by the current legal framework, should be strengthened through legislative framework because, with financial and other constraints, the system did not function as was expected.

In order to achieve a more transparent and efficient functioning of the system, it is necessary to align the program of public needs in sport with the National Sports Program, in such a way as to legally link the funding defined by the National Sports Program and the Program of Public Needs in Sport and to define precisely the tasks and roles of individual stakeholders. The Sports Act also needs to prescribe and standardize public needs in sports at the state level. In this way, the role and contribution of individual stakeholders will be clearer, and in order to monitor the manner and realization of the implementation of the National Sports Program and to ensure the implementation of measures, it is necessary to set up a national coordinating body to monitor implementation (for more details in Chapter 6, Implementation).

In order for the funds intended for sports in the Republic of Croatia to be effectively used and distributed in accordance with the needs and the performance achieved, it is necessary to adopt an ordinance on the criteria for the categorization of sports, as well as to establish the criteria for evaluating the program of public needs in sports. A detailed analysis of the situation in the field of sports in the Republic of Croatia will enable the identification of the objective needs and values of each individual sport at the national level, which will create preconditions for the development of rules on criteria for the categorization of sports, and on the basis of the ordinance, model would be created for the categorization of sports in the Republic of Croatia.

With the aim of developing and promoting the most successful and mass-scale sports in the Republic of Croatia, and based on the categorization of sports, it will be determined which sports are of national interest. National sports federations competent for sports of national interest will be financed by additional budgetary resources allocated directly from the central state administration body responsible for sports. In this way it will be possible to create better conditions for further work, mass character and achievement of top results in sports that will be categorized as sports of national interest on the basis of categorization, but all other sports will continue to be financed on the basis of publicly available criteria. On the basis of categorization, the actual achievements of each individual sport will be evaluated in a specially defined period of time, and the categorization will be renewed after a periodic evaluation of all sports, thus encouraging further development of all sports.

In order for the financing of public needs in sports to be rational and purposeful, it is necessary to lay down criteria on the basis of which programs of public needs in sports of umbrella sports organizations will be evaluated. In order for programs to monitor the real needs in sports, it is necessary to constantly monitor the results of the programs of public needs in sports and regularly analyze the program criteria.

The implementation of measures and activities within this specific objective will depend on the availability of funding in each implementation year.

1.1. CLEARLY DEFINE THE CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING THE PROGRAM OF PUBLIC NEEDS IN SPORTS AND ESTABLISH A CATEGORIZATION OF SPORTS					
Measure/ Modes of implementation	Activity	Indicator	Implementation deadline	Responsible authority	Executor
1.1.1. Harmonize the program of public needs in sports with the NSP	The Sports Act prescribes and standardizes public needs in sports at the state and local levels	Prescribed standards for the content of public needs in sport	2019	Central State Office for Sport	Central State Office for Sport, ULC(R)S, COC, CPC, CDSF, CSSF, CASF, sports federations, sports communities clubs and sports organizations
	Legally connect the funding defined by the NSP with the Program of Public Needs in Sport	Provisions in the Sports Act connected	2019	Central State Office for Sport	Central State Office for Sport, ULC(R)S, COC, CPC, CDSF, CSSF, CASF, sports federations, sports communities clubs and sports organizations
	Establish a national coordinating body to monitor the implementation (funding) of the NSP	National coordinating body established	2020	Central State Office for Sport	Central State Office for Sport

1.1. CLEARLY DEFINE THE CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING THE PROGRAM OF PUBLIC NEEDS IN SPORTS AND ESTABLISH A CATEGORIZATION OF SPORTS					
Measure/ Modes of implementation	Activity	Indicator	Implementation deadline	Responsible authority	Executor
1.1.2. Establish sports categorization	Develop a situation analysis in the field of sports for the purposes of sports categorization	Situation analysis developed	2019	Central State Office for Sport, COC, CPC and CDSF	Central State Office for Sport, COC, CPC and CDSF
	Adopt a Ordinance on the criteria for sports categorization	Ordinance adopted	2020	Central State Office for Sport	Central State Office for Sport, COC, CPC and CDSF
	Define sports of national interest	Defined sports of national interest	2020 - ongoing	Central State Office for Sport	Central State Office for Sport and national federations
	Encourage the development of sports of national interest	Ensured conditions for the development of sports of national interest	2020 - ongoing	Central State Office for Sport	Central State Office for Sport and national federations
1.1.3. Establish criteria for evaluating programs of public needs in sports at the state and local levels	Adopt bylaws for evaluation criteria	Bylaws adopted	2020	Central State Office for Sport and ULC(R)S	Central State Office for Sport, ULC(R)S, COC, CPC, HSSG, CSSF and CASF
	Constantly monitor the results of Programs of public needs in sports and analyze them, and thus revise program criteria every four years	Analyzed and revised programs	Ongoing	Central State Office for Sport and ULC(R)S	Central State Office for Sport, ULC(R)S, COC, CPC, CDSF, CSSF, CASF and sports communities

## SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE 1.2.

### CLEARLY DEFINE THE PURPOSE OF THE FUNDS FOR PUBLIC NEEDS IN SPORTS, ALLOCATIONS AND CONTROL OF THE SPENDING OF FUNDS

The analysis of the situation showed that financial resources intended for sports should be earmarked for this purpose, so this specific objective relates to the creation of preconditions for rational and quality allocation of funds for public needs in sport and a clear definition of the purpose of funds for public needs in sport, as well as the manner of allocation and control of spending of allocated funds.

In order to standardize the procedure for allocating funds for public needs in sport from public sources, it is necessary to prescribe the characteristics of the program and the procedure for proposing and allocating funds for public needs in sport, as well as to prescribe justified costs within each individual public need in sport in such a way that costs and public needs are clearly and unambiguously defined. In order to achieve better control over the use of public funds for public sport purposes, it is necessary to define unique forms and reporting procedures for programs and funds spent for public sport purposes, at national, regional and local level.

In order to ensure more efficient and appropriate financing of sports at all levels, it is necessary create an information network of different public administration bodies which allocate financial resources for sport, in order to create an efficient and rational system, which will guarantee the optimal use of the funds. To this end, a separate coordination body will be set up to coordinate allocations from all central government sources, while local and regional government will provide data to help identify problems and real needs. The main objective will be to coordinate the activities of public bodies that allocate funds from public sources in order to allocate them to the real needs of sports and athletes.

The stability of the financing of sports through the state budget of the Republic of Croatia and the budgets of ULC(R)S is reflected through the realization of public needs in sports, which meet the real needs of the development of sports in Croatia. In accordance with the results obtained from the analysis of publicly released financial statements of expenditures according to the functional classification of the Ministry of Finance, it is necessary to make a more detailed analysis of the allocation of funds for public needs in sports at local and regional level and to draw up a recommendation on the minimum allocation of the amount of budgetary allocations for the financing of sports at level of ULC(R)S.

Also, it is necessary to consider the possibility of amending the Act on Games of Chance to allow the increase of sports financing with additional earnings collected from betting on sports events, i.e., to try to separate the income from games of chance and sports betting, in order to achieve a clear monitoring of sports betting taxation and directing the collected taxes towards clubs and national sports federations with the purpose of using them to work with children (youth facilities), maintaining sports infrastructure and covering the costs of bookkeeping and auditing. Also, consideration should be given to allowing online betting services to foreign organizers of games of chance and regulating the percentage of sports betting allocations for sport.

The implementation of measures and activities within this specific objective will depend on the availability of funding in each implementation year.



SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE	1.2. CLEARLY DEFINE THE PURPOSE OF THE FUNDS FOR PUBLIC NEEDS IN SPORTS, ALLOCATIONS AND CONTROL OF THE SPENDING OF FUNDS					
	Measure/ Modes of implementation	Activity	Indicator	Implementation deadline	Responsible authority	Executor
1.2.1. Define more clearly the purpose of the funds, standardize the planning, proposal, allocation, control and reporting process for public needs in sports at the state and local level		Stipulate eligible costs within a particular public need in sports	Stipulated eligible costs	2020	Central State Office for Sport and ULC(R)S	Central State Office for Sport, ULC(R)S, COC, CPC, CDSF, CSSF, CASF, sports federations, sports communities, clubs and sports organizations
		Prescribe the characteristics of the program and the procedure for proposing and awarding funds for public needs in sports	Prescribed appearance of the program and the procedure for proposing	2020	Central State Office for Sport and ULC(R)S	Central State Office for Sport, ULC(R)S, COC, CPC, CDSF, CSSF, CASF, sports federations, sports communities, clubs and sports organizations
		Analyze allocations for programs at local and county (regional) level	Analysis conducted	2020	Central State Office for Sport	Central State Office for Sport
		Make a recommendation on minimum allocation for programs at local and county (regional) level	Recommendation made	2020	Central State Office for Sport	ULC(R)S
		Define uniform reporting forms and procedures for programs and funds spent for public needs in sports at national, regional and local levels	Forms and procedures defined	2020	Central State Office for Sport, ULC(R)S	Central State Office for Sport, ULC(R)S, COC, CPC, CDSF, CSSF, CASF, sports federations, sports communities, clubs and sports organizations

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE	1.2. CLEARLY DEFINE THE PURPOSE OF THE FUNDS FOR PUBLIC NEEDS IN SPORTS, ALLOCATIONS AND CONTROL OF THE SPENDING OF FUNDS					
	Measure/ Modes of implementation	Activity	Indicator	Implementation deadline	Responsible authority	Executor
1.2.2. Establish a system of coordination of allocations for sports from different public sources		Create an information network of allocations from public sources	Information network created	2020	Central State Office for Sport	Central State Office for Sport, state administration bodies and other providers of public funds
		Establish a coordinating body for the use of funds from public sources	Established coordinating body	2019	Central State Office for Sport	Central State Office for Sport, state administration bodies and other providers of public funds
		Develop an analysis of the allocation process at all levels and propose rationalization measures	Analysis developed and proposed measures	2020 - 2021	Central State Office for Sport	Central State Office for Sport and ULC(R)S



## SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE 1.3. ANALYZE AND DETERMINE THE POSSIBILITY OF INCREASING TAX BREAKS FOR SPORT

For the purposes of regulating the entire taxing system for sports in Croatia, it is necessary to conduct an analysis both in the Republic of Croatia and in the countries of the European Union, and make a comparison on the basis of which, following good practice examples, the tax system in the Republic of Croatia would be regulated in order to increase tax reliefs for sports.

The income tax system prescribes a number of non-taxable receipts for athletes, with payers needing to be from the sports system or, in certain circumstances, state or local government bodies, while the same is not prescribed for professional work in sports. It is necessary to analyze the situation and determine whether it is possible to prescribe the same for professional work in sports, as it is necessary to examine the possibility of allowing part-time work through non-taxable limit, but also through provisions on contributions. In addition, it is necessary to encourage businesses to invest in sports through tax breaks, customs breaks and the abolition of parafiscal levies that discourage businessmen who want to invest in sports, as well as clubs or federations, and clearly define sports tax breaks.

Furthermore, the possibility of applying a reduced rate of value added tax to tickets for sporting events should be analyzed. As an additional possibility of tax benefits, it is necessary to analyze whether more favorable payments of benefits to individuals in the sports system can be made.

The implementation of measures and activities within this specific objective will depend on the availability of funding in each implementation year.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE	1.3. ANALYZE AND DETERMINE THE POSSIBILITY OF INCREASING TAX BREAKS FOR SPORT				
	Measure/ Modes of implementation	Activity	Indicator	Implementation deadline	Responsible authority
1.3.1. Develop a detailed analysis of the tax system that has a direct or indirect impact on sports, propose new tax measures	Analyze the tax system in the Republic of Croatia as well as in other EU countries and make comparative analysis of examples of good practice	Conducted analysis	2020	Ministry of Finance and Central State Office for Sport	Ministry of Finance and Central State Office for Sport
	Propose tax reform measures	Adopted measures	2020	Ministry of Finance and Central State Office for Sport	Ministry of Finance



## 5.2. GENERAL OBJECTIVE 2

### IMPROVE HEALTH-ENHANCED PHYSICAL EXERCISE AND INCREASE THE PROMOTIONAL VALUE OF THE SPORT

According to the study "Financing Sports in the Republic of Croatia" (Institute of Public Finance, 2012), households allocate 0.33% of their total personal consumption to sports recreation. Taking into account that the countries that allocate the most to sports recreation spend on average about 2% of total personal consumption, it can be said that the Republic of Croatia is at the bottom of the scale. In addition, too few children are involved in regular sports through the education system, and Croatia has not used its many potentials to develop various forms of sports tourism. In order for this to change in the following period, it is necessary to:

- » encourage health-enhanced physical exercise
- » encourage universal sports school programs and ensure that high-efficiency physical activity training is provided
- » increase the number of opportunities for health-enhanced physical exercise within the education system.

Promoting health-enhanced physical activity and supporting the population in regular physical activity throughout their lives will improve the health of individuals and the entire community, one of the most important priorities of every country. Co-financing health-enhanced physical activity programs and conducting educational campaigns on the importance of physical activity beneficial for health will increase the number of beneficiaries involved in any type of physical activity for the purpose of improving their health status.

Given that sport is most accessible through the education system, it is necessary to encourage and enable as many children and young people as possible to participate in the training system in educational institutions from the level of pre-school to higher education, with the aim of influencing their complete psychophysical status.

It is necessary to take special care of children and young people in the sports system and to protect them from any kind of violence and to provide them with a safe environment while engaging in sports activities.

By organizing promotional activities and better integrating tourism and sports, it will be possible to market different products based on different sports and recreational activities as well as sports education on the domestic and international markets.

## SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE 2.1. ENCOURAGE HEALTH-ENHANCED PHYSICAL EXERCISE

Through promoting physical activity and encouraging regular physical activity throughout life, the health of individuals, the local community, and the entire nation would improve. Considering many unhealthy aspects of modern life, especially life in cities, it is necessary to constantly emphasize the positive effects of sports activities on the physical and mental health of individuals, which is largely absent in Croatia, given the constant encouragement of competitive sports. Programs such as the National program Healthy Living, which promotes health-enhanced physical activity of all ages, are not sufficiently encouraged.

Continuous provision of funds for co-financing sports and recreational activities, both at the state and local level, will increase the number of users involved in physical activity on a daily basis. Organizing European Week of Sport, aimed at encouraging participation in sports and physical activity for everyone, regardless of age, origin or fitness, will encourage the population to exercise regularly, thereby increasing the number of beneficiaries.

The implementation of educational campaigns, programs and promotional activities in cooperation with other state administration bodies, local and county (regional) self-governments will promote programs and projects for physical activity adapted to daily life, e.g., at school, at work, in active transportation to school or workplace and more, which can be facilitated by creating conditions for the free use of sports facilities for children and young people.

The implementation of measures and activities within this specific objective will depend on the availability of funding in each implementation year.



**“Regular practicing of physical activity improves health and quality of life of each individual”**



SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE	2.1. ENCOURAGE HEALTH-ENHANCED PHYSICAL EXERCISE				
Measure/ Modes of implementation	Activity	Indicator	Implementation deadline	Responsible authority	Executor
2.1.1. Encourage the implementation of health-oriented physical exercise programs	Encourage the implementation of state-level sports and recreational programs	Increase the number of beneficiaries and programs free of charge for children	Ongoing	Central State Office for Sport	Sports organizations
	Develop an action plan for health-oriented physical training	Developed action plan	2021	Central State Office for Sport, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Science and Education, Croatian Institute of Public Health	Central State Office for Sport, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Science and Education, Croatian Institute of Public Health
	Encourage implementation of sports and recreational programs at the local and regional level	Increased number of beneficiaries and programs free of charge for children	Ongoing	ULC(R)S and sports communities	Sports organizations
	Organization of the project European Week of Sport	Increased number of beneficiaries involved	Ongoing	Central State Office for Sport and European Commission	Central State Office for Sport and legal persons in the sports system

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE	2.1. ENCOURAGE HEALTH-ENHANCED PHYSICAL EXERCISE				
Measure/ Modes of implementation	Activity	Indicator	Implementation deadline	Responsible authority	Executor
2.1.2. Encourage the population to exercise	Running educational campaigns on the health benefits of physical exercise	Increase the number of beneficiaries involved	2020 - ongoing	Central State Office for Sport and Croatian Institute of Public Health	Central State Office for Sport, Croatian Institute of Public Health and legal persons in the sports system
	Encourage the implementation of programs for recreational sports in tourism	Increase in number of sports programs in tourism	2020 - ongoing	Ministry of Tourism and tourist associations	ULC(R)S
	Promoting active modes of transport (hiking, rollerblading, cycling) from home to school, college, workplace, etc.	Number of campaigns launched	2020 - ongoing	Ministry of the Sea, Transport and Infrastructure	ULC(R)S
2.1.3. Encourage interdepartmental cooperation in the field of sports	Link culture to the field of sports	Preservation of sports heritage	Ongoing	Ministry of Culture and Croatian Sports Museum	Croatian Sports Museum

## SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE 2.2.

### ENCOURAGE PROGRAMS OF UNIVERSAL SPORTS SCHOOLS AND ENSURE THAT HIGH-EFFICIENCY PHYSICAL ACTIVITY TRAINING IS PROVIDED

One of the notable shortcomings in the SWOT analysis is the lack of investment into utilitarian activities (e.g., swimming lessons). Since physical activity is an important part of a healthy lifestyle and a means of preventing illness and disability, it is clear that improving health status can be achieved by raising awareness of the importance of daily exercise.

A large number of children in the Republic of Croatia have the opportunity to learn how to swim only through the implementation of organized programs. Swimming is one of the basic human needs and has a comprehensive impact on the human body. Quality, safe and professional swimming lessons have a positive effect on safety, confidence, as well as emergency management. Drowning prevention and the ability to use the skill of swimming, whether for sports, recreation or rehabilitation, greatly contributes to the quality of life. This will be achieved by co-financing the non-swimmers' training programs and the implementation of the non-swimmer's training program "Croatia Swims" in cooperation with the Croatian Swimming Federation, with the aim of teaching non-swimmers swimming, taking into account that non-swimmers include non-swimmers with disabilities as well.

By co-financing, encouraging and implementing extracurricular sports programs implemented by the Croatian School Sports Federation, it is necessary to increase the number of schools implementing the Universal Sports School and Gymnasium programs and to stimulate the work of sports organizations implementing universal sports school programs in order to create better conditions for regular sports activities through education system and through non-institutional sports as well.

The implementation of measures and activities within this specific objective will depend on the availability of funding in each implementation year.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE	2.2. ENCOURAGE PROGRAMS OF UNIVERSAL SPORTS SCHOOLS AND ENSURE THAT HIGH-EFFICIENCY PHYSICAL ACTIVITY TRAINING IS PROVIDED				
Measure/ Modes of implementation	Activity	Indicator	Implementation deadline	Responsible authority	Executor
2.2.1. Ensure that high-utilization physical activity training is provided in emergency situations	Increase the number of schools participating in the Universal Sports Schools and Gymnasium	Increase in the number of schools	Ongoing	Central State Office for Sport and CSSF	CSSF and school sports federations
	Encourage the implementation of universal sports schools programs	Number of beneficiaries	Ongoing	Central State Office for Sport and ULC(R)S	Sports organizations
	Encourage the implementation of universal sports schools programs for children with disabilities	Number of beneficiaries	Ongoing	Central State Office for Sport and CSSF, CPC and CDSF	CSSF
2.2.2. Ensure the implementation of systematic training of non-swimmers	Co-financing non-swimmers' swimming lessons	Number of persons who have completed the program	Ongoing	Central State Office for Sport and ULC(R)S	Sports organizations
	Design and implementation of the program "Croatia Swims"	Number of persons who have completed the program	Ongoing	Central State Office for Sport and Croatian Swimming Federation	Swimming clubs
2.2.3. Encourage active-healthy transport sports programs that have an impact on reducing greenhouse gas emissions	Encourage the implementation of active healthy transport training programs	Number of persons included in the programs	2020 - ongoing	Central State Office for Sport and Ministry of the Sea, Transport and Infrastructure	ULC(R)S

## SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE 2.3.

### INCREASE THE NUMBER OF OPPORTUNITIES FOR HEALTH-ENHANCED PHYSICAL EXERCISE WITHIN THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

The best way to popularize sports for children and young people is to get them to participate in the sports system through educational institutions. Already in the pre-school education, through primary, secondary and higher education, children and young people should be involved in various forms of organized sports activities.

It is necessary to create conditions to increase the number of different sports in the system of inter-class and inter-school competitions and to involve those students who do not participate in competitions in the activities of school sports societies in accordance with their needs and interests. Amendments to the legislation should ensure prerequisites for the inclusion of sports organizations into the work of school sports organizations in such a way that they can participate in the implementation of their programs, so that this is not reserved only for those teachers of physical and health education who cannot cover all programs because of the standard of hours assigned to them by legislative framework. This will result in an increase in the number of sports programs offered to children and young people, as well as an increase in the number of beneficiaries. All of the above will ensure the promotion of sports through the educational system.

By educating kinesiologists to work with people with disabilities, especially children and students with disabilities, people with disabilities will be integrated into the school and academic sports system through increased number of sports programs offered to them and through providing quality sports personnel. In addition to introducing additional courses on training with persons with disabilities in kinesiology faculties and in training programs for sports coaches, coaches should be provided with lifelong learning opportunities to acquire and supplement the necessary knowledge and skills to work with children/students with disabilities and athletes with various types of disabilities, e.g., opportunity to learn sign language.

The primary objective of school and academic sports is not and should not be solely the competition of school sports societies, but rather to encourage and create the best possible conditions for regular sports activities in order to improve health improvement and to acquire healthy life habits. Increasing the number of sports programs will increase the number of beneficiaries in recreational sports.

The implementation of measures and activities within this specific objective will depend on the availability of funding in each implementation year.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE	2.3. INCREASE THE NUMBER OF OPPORTUNITIES FOR HEALTH-ENHANCED PHYSICAL EXERCISE WITHIN THE EDUCATION SYSTEM				
	Measure/ Modes of implementation	Activity	Indicator	Implementation deadline	Responsible authority
2.3.1. Enable daily physical exercise through regular teaching and extracurricular activities	Adopt a protocol for improving the integration of students with disabilities and health difficulties into physical education classes	Protocol adopted, number of education programs	2022	Croatian Institute of Public Health, Ministry of Science and Education	Practitioners of school medicine, Education and Teacher Training Agency
	Make it possible to pay compensation for the increased volume of professional work in school sports societies	Payment is made possible	2021	Ministry of Science and Education	Ministry of Science and Education
2.3.2. Encourage the establishment of school sports organizations at the local level	Establish school sports federations at the local level	Number of established federations	Ongoing	ULC(R)S, schools and school sports organizations	ULC(R)S, schools and school sports organizations



SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE	2.3. INCREASE THE NUMBER OF OPPORTUNITIES FOR HEALTH-ENHANCED PHYSICAL EXERCISE WITHIN THE EDUCATION SYSTEM				
Measure/ Modes of implementation	Activity	Indicator	Implementation deadline	Responsible authority	Executor
2.3.3. Improve the work of school sports organizations in accordance with the needs and interests of students	Increase the number of sports in the system of school and inter-school competitions	Number of sports	Ongoing	Central State Office for Sport and school sports organizations	School sports organizations
	Involve students who do not participate in competitions in the activities of school sports organizations	Number of students in school sports organizations	Ongoing	ULC(R)S, schools and school sports organizations	ULC(R)S, schools and school sports organizations
	Provide legal preconditions for the inclusion of sports associations in the work of school sports organizations	Number of sports organizations	2021	Ministry of Science and Education	Ministry of Science and Education
	Organization of work of school sports organizations on weekends and holidays	Number of working days of school sports organizations on weekends and holidays	Ongoing	ULC(R)S, schools and school sports organizations	ULC(R)S, schools and school sports organizations
	Promote school sports as a health-enhanced physical exercise	Number of campaigns held	Ongoing	Croatian School Sports Federation	Croatian School Sports Federation and school sports organizations
	Educate students about healthy lifestyles and healthy living habits	Number of campaigns held	Ongoing	Croatian Institute of Public Health, Croatian School Sports Federation	Croatian Institute of Public Health, Croatian School Sports Federation
	Encourage student excellence through performances at international school sports competitions	Number of teams at international school sports competitions	Ongoing	Central State Office for Sport and Croatian School Sports Federation	Croatian School Sports Federation
	Involve Croat students from abroad in the program activities of the Croatian School Sports Federation	Number of students involved	2020 - ongoing	Central State Office for Croats Abroad, Central State Office for Sport	Central State Office for Croats Abroad, Croatian School Sports Federation

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE	2.3. INCREASE THE NUMBER OF OPPORTUNITIES FOR HEALTH-ENHANCED PHYSICAL EXERCISE WITHIN THE EDUCATION SYSTEM				
Measure/ Modes of implementation	Activity	Indicator	Implementation deadline	Responsible authority	Executor
2.3.4. Integrate persons with disabilities into the school and academic sports system	Increase the number of sports programs for persons with disabilities	Number of persons included in the programs	2023	Central State Office for Sport, Croatian Institute of Public Health, Croatian School Sports Federation, Croatian Academic Sports Federation, Croatian Paralympic Committee and Croatian Deaf Sports Association	Croatian School Sports Federation, Croatian Academic Sports Federation and teams of school and adolescent medicine
	Increase the number of deaf children involved in school sports	Number of students involved	Ongoing	Ministry of Science and Education, Croatian Institute of Public Health and Central State Office for Sport	Croatian School Sports Federation and Croatian Deaf Sports Association
	Additional education of kinesiologists to equip them to work with persons with disabilities	Introduced or added course at higher education institutions	2023	Faculties of kinesiology	Faculties of kinesiology
	Increase the number of sports programs	Number of programs	2021	Central State Office for Sport and Croatian School Sports Federation	Croatian Academic Sports Federation and university sports organizations
2.3.5. Increase the number of students enrolled in the academic sports system	Increase in percentage of students involved in recreational sports	Percentage of students	Ongoing	Central State Office for Sport and Croatian Academic Sports Federation	Croatian Academic Sports Federation, university sports organizations and federations

### 5.3. GENERAL OBJECTIVE 3 IMPROVE THE CARE OF ATHLETES

In the focus of the future development of sports in Croatia, it is necessary to ensure all preconditions for athletes to be satisfied with their position in society, so that they can educate themselves, work, and stay healthy. In order for this objective to be attained, it is necessary to:

- » encourage dual careers of athletes
- » ensure a stable system of scholarships and look after the care of high-level athletes
- » improve the status of under-represented groups in the sports system
- » increase the use of scientific methods in the field of athletes' care and top athletic performance.

Thus, the care of athletes extends into several areas which have been proven to be extremely important for the careers of athletes, but also important for the period following the end of their sports careers. As is mentioned, the areas in which the care of athletes should be improved are the following: dual-careers of athletes, health care, employment status, systematic and timely scholarships, and the status of under-represented groups in the sports system.

All of these areas need to be regulated so that top athletes are provided with optimal conditions for success during their sports careers, but also with opportunities for other successful careers and in other areas of life and to take on other roles in sports.

#### SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE 3.1. ENCOURAGE DUAL CAREERS OF ATHLETES

One of the greater problems many athletes face after completing a sports career is adapting to a different lifestyle than the one they lead during their careers. In order for this adjustment to be as effective as possible and to make it easier for athletes to integrate into other segments of life, the dual career of athletes should be encouraged.

One way to achieve this goal is to provide the necessary conditions for education during and after the end of their sports career, that is, to envisage in the new Sports Act the adoption of regulations of the ministry responsible for education in order to ensure special conditions and professional support for the education of athletes.

Also, it is necessary to provide material conditions for the education of current and former top athletes at institutions of higher education in all professions, or for them to attend adult education programs to obtain professional qualifications to work in sports.

The implementation of measures and activities within this specific objective will depend on the availability of funding in each implementation year.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE	3.1. ENCOURAGE DUAL CAREERS OF ATHLETES					
	Measure/ Modes of implementation	Activity	Indicator	Implementation deadline	Responsible authority	Executor
3.1.1. Regulate athletes' rights during schooling	Develop an action plan on a system of sports and career planning after sports	Developed action plan	2021	Central State Office for Sport, COC, CPC and CDSF	COC, CPC, CDSF and national sports federations	
	3.1.2. Encourage the education of former and current top athletes	Provide material resources for education	Secured funds	Ongoing	Central State Office for Sport	Central State Office for Sport
	3.1.3. Care for the employment of top athletes after completing a sports career	Conclude employment agreements for top athletes	Concluded agreements	Ongoing	Ministry of Defence, Ministry of the Interior, state administration bodies, COC, CPC, CDSF and national sports federations	Ministry of Defence, Ministry of the Interior state administration bodies, COC, CPC, CDSF and national sports federations
	Draft recommendation on allowing absenteeism from work for athletes to participate in the activities of national selections	Recommendation drafted	2020	Central State Office for Sport	Athletes' employers	

## SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE 3.2. ENSURE A STABLE SYSTEM OF SCHOLARSHIP SCHEME AND CARE FOR THE TOP ATHLETES

In order to support top athletes' careers with a stable scholarship scheme it is necessary to introduce measures to regulate the scholarships scheme, to introduce the employment status of professional athletes, to introduce mandatory contributions for top athletes of the 1st category, as well as a health care system for athletes. In addition, a possibility of introducing a closed pension fund for Croatian sports (Pillar III) is envisaged, which would encourage athletes and coaches, clubs and alliances to invest in the voluntary pension insurance of the athletes and coaches and thus significantly improve the status of athletes and coaches after the end of their careers, adjusting the retirement age to their actual needs.

The new sports act will stipulate awarding scholarships for athletes in the 1st and 2nd categories and a specific decision will determine the amount of the monetary part of the sports scholarship. The aforementioned act will also stipulate the introduction of employment status for professional athletes so it is necessary to harmonize regulations in the field of sports with those in the field of labor and pension legislation.

Continuous monitoring and analysis of the development programs for athletes – according to clearly defined criteria and on the basis of information collected by umbrella sports organizations – will bring forth an effective model for monitoring the success of development programs for athletes at all levels.

In order to introduce the healthcare for athletes, it is necessary to adopt, in cooperation with the Ministry of Health, an ordinance on medical examinations of athletes.

Encouraging the purchase of sports equipment for local level sports associations from part of the state budget revenues from games of chance will create better conditions for training, and thus for the mass inclusion of children and youth into the sports system, which is a prerequisite for creating good sports results.

It is necessary to ensure the urgent handling of matters concerning the conclusion of contracts of underage athletes in accordance with the provisions of the Family Act (Official Gazette No. 103/15). Namely, there is a possibility that the career of a young athlete may be questioned because prior to the conclusion of the contract between the child and the other person, the approval of the court to represent the child when concluding the contract is required, which in practice takes longer than the set deadlines.

The implementation of measures and activities within this specific objective will depend on the availability of funding in each implementation year.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE	3.2. ENSURE A STABLE SYSTEM OF SCHOLARSHIP SCHEME AND CARE FOR THE TOP ATHLETES				
	Measure/ Modes of implementation	Activity	Indicator	Implementation deadline	Responsible authority
3.2.1. Award scholarships for top athletes	Introduce a unique state scholarship for athletes in the 1st and 2nd categories	Introduced scholarship	2020	Central State Office for Sport	Central State Office for Sport
	Award scholarships to top athletes at the local level	Number of athletes supported by scholarships of the ULC(R)S	Ongoing	ULC(R)S	ULC(R)S
3.2.2. Encourage sporting excellence and implement development programs through umbrella sports organizations	Award scholarships to Olympic, Paralympic, and Olympic candidates of deaf athletes	Number of athletes beneficiaries of scholarships	Ongoing	Central State Office for Sport, COC, CPC, CDSF	COC, CPC, CDSF
	Identify young sports talents and include them in development programs based on the criteria	Number of athletes involved	Ongoing	Central State Office for Sport, COC, CPC, CDSF and national sports federations	National sports federations and sports institutes
	Encourage professional work with top athletes	Number of professionals involved in the incentive system and results	Ongoing	Central State Office for Sport, COC, CPC, CDSF, sports communities	COC, CPC, CDSF, national sports federations, sports federations and clubs
3.2.3. Improve and introduce performance criteria for individual development programs for athletes	Monitor the effectiveness and fulfillment of the set goals of the development programs	Level of effectiveness	Ongoing	Central State Office for Sport, COC, CPC, CDSF and national sports federations	COC, CPC, CDSF and national sports federations
	Develop a model for monitoring development programs for athletes	Model developed	2020	COC, CPC, CDSF and national sports federations	COC, CPC, CDSF and national sports federations

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE	3.2. ENSURE A STABLE SYSTEM OF SCHOLARSHIP SCHEME AND CARE FOR THE TOP ATHLETES				
	Measure/ Modes of implementation	Activity	Indicator	Implementation deadline	Responsible authority
3.2.4. Encourage performances at international sports competitions and preparation of top athletes and national selections	Encourage preparation of top athletes	Number of athletes involved	Ongoing	Central State Office for Sport, COC, CPC, CDSF and national sports federations	COC, CPC, CDSF and national sports federations
	Encourage participation of athletes in the Olympics, other multisport competitions, World Championships, European championships and other international competitions	Number of athletes involved	Ongoing	Central State Office for Sport, COC, CPC, CDSF and national sports federations	COC, CPC, CDSF and national sports federations
3.2.5. Introduce a healthcare system for athletes	Adopt a ordinance on medical examinations of athletes	Ordinance adopted	2020	Ministry of Health and Central State Office for Sport	Ministry of Health and Central State Office for Sport
3.2.6. Introduce the employment status of professional athletes	Harmonize the regulations in the field of sports with regulations in the field of labor and pension legislation	Harmonized regulations with the introduction of the employment status of professional athletes	2020	Central State Office for Sport	National sports federations and sports clubs
	Introduce a closed pension fund for top athletes (Pillar III MIO) to encourage the investments of athletes, clubs, national sports federations, umbrella sports organizations	Closed pension fund for Croatian sports introduced	2021	Ministry of Labour and the Pension System and Central State Office for Sport	Pension funds, COC, CPC, CDSF, national sports organizations and sports clubs

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE	3.2. ENSURE A STABLE SYSTEM OF SCHOLARSHIP SCHEME AND CARE FOR THE TOP ATHLETES				
	Measure/ Modes of implementation	Activity	Indicator	Implementation deadline	Responsible authority
3.2.7. Introduce pension and health insurance for top athletes in 1st category	Resolve to approve pension and health insurance compensation	Compensation approved	2020 - ongoing	Central State Office for Sport	Central State Office for Sport
3.2.8. Act urgently in matters concerning the conclusion of contracts for minor athletes in accordance with Family Law	Monitoring the effectiveness of the measure	Accelerating the out-of-court proceedings for court approval for representation of a child at the conclusion of a contract	2019 - ongoing	Ministry of Justice	Ministry of Justice, court and national sports federations
3.2.9. Provide prerequisites for training athletes at the local level	Encourage the procurement of sports equipment for local level sports organizations through the state budget of the Republic of Croatia	Number of pieces of sports equipment ensured	Ongoing	Central State Office for Sport	County Sports Communities and Local Level Sports Organizations



### **SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE 3.3.** **IMPROVE THE STATUS OF LESS REPRESENTED GROUPS IN THE SPORTS SYSTEM**

The less represented groups in the sports system face daily obstacles preventing them from doing not only competitive sports but also sports that would improve their health.

For this reason, besides supplying of sports facilities with special sports equipment, it is necessary to systematically encourage umbrella sports organizations (CPC and CDSF) of persons with disabilities to expand their activities to as many sports as possible, according to the opportunities and dispositions of the persons with disabilities. Moreover, it is necessary, in cooperation with the umbrella sports organizations, competent state bodies and civil society organizations of persons with disabilities, to constantly improve the existing programs and to develop new sports rehabilitation programs for all persons with disabilities.

As sport is one of the best ways for social engagement and inclusion of individuals, it is necessary to increase the involvement of socially vulnerable groups in the sports system by co-financing sports programs that involve these groups.

It is necessary to define which areas of public needs in sports for persons with disabilities the program must cover, and the manner of realization of sports and recreational activities for persons with disabilities, from national to local level. By incorporating the aforementioned into the National Sports Program, special attention is paid to providing disabled athletes with equal conditions for sport and recreational sport with the rest of the population. It is also necessary to define the frameworks and the ways of organizing disability sports competition systems, thus enabling children and young people with developmental difficulties to engage in sport and organized physical activity by involving them with various development programs. Furthermore, and relating to the strategic areas of work, goals, activities, organization, work organization and international status of the Special Olympics Croatia, it is necessary to enable the same to act as the Croatian National League of Special Olympics for Persons with Intellectual Disabilities.

The implementation of measures and activities within this specific objective will depend on the availability of funding in each implementation year.



SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE	3.3. IMPROVE THE STATUS OF LESS REPRESENTED GROUPS IN THE SPORTS SYSTEM				
	Measure/ Modes of implementation	Activity	Indicator	Implementation deadline	Responsible authority
3.3.1. Increase inclusion of persons with disabilities into sports system	Extend the activity of CPC and CDSF to as many sports as possible, according to the abilities of disabled persons	Increase the number of sports and persons involved in sports activities	Ongoing	CPC and CDSF	CPC, CDSF, sports organizations of deaf and persons with disabilities
	Provide sports facilities with special sports equipment	Number of equipped sports facilities	Ongoing	Central State Office for Sport and ULC(R)S	ULC(R)S
	Develop sports and rehabilitation programs for all persons with disabilities	Developed programs	Ongoing	Central State Office for Sport, ULC(R)S and CPC	ULC(R)S, CPC, CDSF and organizations of persons with disabilities
3.3.2. Increase the involvement of socially vulnerable groups in the sports system	Encourage the implementation of sports programs involving socially vulnerable groups	Number of persons involved	Ongoing	Central State Office for Sport	Central State Office for Sport and ULC(R)S

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE	3.3. IMPROVE THE STATUS OF LESS REPRESENTED GROUPS IN THE SPORTS SYSTEM				
	Measure/ Modes of implementation	Activity	Indicator	Implementation deadline	Responsible authority
3.3.3. Encourage, promote and care for sports, and sports and recreational activities for persons with disabilities	Define an alliance for the care of persons with intellectual disabilities	Defined alliance responsible for the care of people with intellectual disabilities	2019	Central State Office for Sport	Central State Office for Sport
	Plan and implement sports activities for persons with disabilities, and ensure the participation of disabled athletes at Paralympics, Deaflympics, and European and world championships, and other international competitions and preparations	Number of athletes involved and results	Ongoing	Central State Office for Sport, CPC and CDSF	CPC and CDSF
	Harmonization, encouragement, and activity of national, county and city sports organizations in disability sports	Number of established and active national, county and city sports organizations of persons with disabilities	Ongoing	CPC and CDSF	CPC, national, county and city sports organizations of persons with disabilities
	Organize and regulate the competition system in disability sports	General acts passed for regulating the competition system for persons with disabilities	2020	CPC and CDSF	CPC and CDSF
	Ensuring the conditions for procurement of sports orthopedic aids	Funds secured	Ongoing	Central State Office for Sport	CPC
	Ensure material resources for education of coaches who train athletes in development programs	Implementing development programs in sport for persons with disabilities	Ongoing	Central State Office for Sport, CPC and CDSF	CPC and CDSF



## SPECIAL OBJECTIVE 3.4. INCREASE THE APPLICATION OF SCIENTIFIC METHODS IN THE AREA OF ATHLETES' CARE AND TOP SPORTS RESULTS

It is undisputed that top sports today have a very high social popularity and have become important, if not essential, global segment of the entertainment industry into which much money is invested and whose participants are, in addition to health-enhanced physical exercise, often turned to achieving top sports results. At the top of the pyramid are those with successful results (a few), and towards the bottom are those less successful (whose number is incomparably higher), which makes victory especially valuable. Talent, family support, material and technical conditions, as well as professional staff, are the foundation of success, but in practice, this is often not enough to achieve top results in a particular sport or field of sport. The race for top results, fueled by dizzying amounts of money, marketing and the expectations of society to win and overcome, led to the necessity of a scientific approach in sports. The training that participants in sporting activities undergo nowadays is often carried out at endurance limits and poses a risk to the athletes' health. In order to maximize the effects and reduce the risks of participation in training processes, they should be based on exact kinesiological facts and indicators. To achieve the best results in sport, it is necessary to have: material and technical prerequisites, staff, knowledge, scientific knowledge about the character of the sport itself, as well as knowledge of the influence of certain factors and training operators on the success in a particular sport. The scientific approach involves early talent detection, planned approach to the organized training process, thorough and successive monitoring, as well as verification of anthropological status of athletes through all the stages of their athletic career. It is, therefore, necessary to define centers of athletic excellence for the implementation of scientific knowledge in sport, and to encourage the application of scientific knowledge in sport.

The implementation of measures and activities within this specific objective will depend on the availability of funding in each implementation year.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE	3.4. INCREASE THE APPLICATION OF SCIENTIFIC METHODS IN THE AREA OF ATHLETES' CARE AND TOP SPORTS RESULTS				
Measure/ Modes of implementation	Activity	Indicator	Implementation deadline	Responsible authority	Executor
3.4.1. Encourage the application of scientific knowledge in sport	Encourage cooperation with sports institutes through athlete development programs	Established cooperation	2020 - ongoing	Central State Office for Sport, COC, CPC, CDSF and national sports federations	National sports federations and sports institutes
	Develop the national model for detection of sports talents	Model developed	2021	Central State Office for Sport, COC, CPC, CDSF and national sports federations	Sports institutes, national sports federations, National Centre for External Evaluation of Education
	Inclusion of scientific and research professionals in working with national representations	Number professionals involved	Ongoing	COC, CPC, CDSF and national sports federations	National sports federations
	Encourage participants in the sports system to apply scientific methods and use services of sports institutes	Number of participants	2020 - ongoing	ULC(R)S	Legal entities in the sports system

## 5.4. GENERAL OBJECTIVE 4 ESTABLISH A SYSTEMATIC AND RATIONAL APPROACH TO MANAGING A SUSTAINABLE SPORTS INFRASTRUCTURE

Along with insufficient funding, inadequate, obsolete and poorly maintained sports infrastructure has been highlighted as one of the main disadvantages when it comes to sport in the Republic of Croatia, so this area needs to be regulated through a new legislative framework. It is, therefore, necessary to:

- » establish a network of sustainable sports facilities
- » adapt the number and equipment of sports facilities to the real needs in sport
- » increase the number of sports facilities and renovate the existing sports infrastructure.

### SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE 4.1. ESTABLISH A NETWORK OF SUSTAINABLE SPORTS FACILITIES

In the Republic of Croatia, there is no network of sports facilities to define the situation in that area, and it is necessary to adopt a special ordinance on the network of sports facilities. This will ensure their accurate overview and it will be possible, through the National Information System in Sport, to connect the networks at the local level into a unique network of sports facilities in Croatia. This will give an accurate overview of the real needs in the area of sports facilities, and according to the indicators obtained, it will be possible to draft plans, and establish priorities and goals in order to achieve the standardization of infrastructure conditions for sports and health-enhanced physical exercise across the territory of the Republic of Croatia.

The implementation of measures and activities within this specific objective will depend on the availability of funding in each implementation year.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE	4.1. ESTABLISH A NETWORK OF SUSTAINABLE SPORTS FACILITIES				
	Measure/ Modes of implementation	Activity	Indicator	Implementation deadline	Responsible authority
4.1.1. Define the procedure for establishing a network of sports facilities	Adopt a ordinance	Ordinance adopted	2020	Central State Office for Sport	Central State Office for Sport and ULC(R)S
4.1.2. Connect the networks of sports facilities at the local level into a unique network of sports facilities at the national level through the National Sports Information System	Establish a network of sports facilities at the local level (each local level for their area)	Established network	2020	ULC(R)S	ULC(R)S
	Establish a network of sports facilities at the national level	Established network	2020 - 2021	Central State Office for Sport	Central State Office for Sport and ULC(R)S



## SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE 4.2. ADAPT THE NUMBER AND EQUIPMENT OF SPORTS FACILITIES TO THE REAL NEEDS IN SPORT

In order to be able to align the number and equipment of sports facilities with the real needs in sport, it is necessary to more precisely define the planning, programing, construction requirements, maintenance, safety, as well as construction standards and norms. For this reason, it is necessary to prescribe the adoption of special ordinance for planning, programing, construction requirements, maintenance and safety for each individual sport in cooperation with the Ministry of Construction and Physical Planning and sports organizations.

Considering the spatial planning and organization of space at all levels according to special regulations of spatial planning, it is important to consider the optimization of the entire lifecycle of a sports facility, with the inclusion of the costs of maintenance and energy resources in order to achieve the designed characteristics during use.

Also, for the purpose of adapting sports facilities for persons with disabilities, it is necessary to provide funds for co-financing the construction works for the implementation of the same, as well as to encourage the equipping of sports facilities according to those needs.

The implementation of measures and activities within this specific objective will depend on the availability of funding in each implementation year.



SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE	4.2. ADAPT THE NUMBER AND EQUIPMENT OF SPORTS FACILITIES TO THE REAL NEEDS IN SPORT					
	Measure/ Modes of implementation	Activity	Indicator	Implementation deadline	Responsible authority	Executor
4.2.1.	Prescribe the requirements for construction, maintenance and safety of sports facilities	Adopt a ordinance	Ordinance adopted	2020	Ministry of Construction and Physical Planning and Central State Office for Sport	Ministry of Construction and Physical Planning and Central State Office for Sport
4.2.2.	Set standards and norms for construction of sports facilities	Adopt a ordinance	Ordinance adopted	2020	The Ministry of Construction and Physical Planning, the Central State Office for Sport and national sports organizations	The Ministry of Construction and Physical Planning and the Central State Office for Sport
4.2.3.	Determine the needs for sports facilities as well as the additional equipment of existing sports facilities	Conduct analysis	Analysis conducted	2021	Central State Office for Sport and ULC(R)S	ULC(R)S
4.2.4.	Adapt sports facilities for persons with disabilities	Encourage implementation of construction interventions on sports facilities	Number of adapted sports facilities	Ongoing	Central State Office for Sport and JLP(S)S	Central State Office for Sport and JLP(S)S
4.2.5.	Encourage the equipping of sports facilities according to the needs	Encourage the equipping of sports facilities	Number of equipped sports facilities	Ongoing	Central State Office for Sport and ULC(R)S	Central State Office for Sport and ULC(R)S
4.2.6.	Encourage cooperation with the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of the Interior for the use of sports infrastructure	Establish cooperation around the use of those facilities that can be utilized for sports purposes in terms of the development of military, police and civilian sports	Number of contracted facilities	Ongoing	Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of the Interior, COO, CPC, CDSF and national sports organizations	Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of the Interior, COO, CPC, CDSF and national sports organizations

## SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE 4.3. INCREASE THE NUMBER OF SPORTS FACILITIES AND RENOVATE EXISTING SPORTS INFRASTRUCTURE

Regarding the network of sports facilities and the Ordinance on the Network of sports Facilities, an analysis of sports facilities will be carried out by each ULC(R)S in its area. Based on the analysis, funds will be provided to finance and/or co-finance the construction of national sports centers for a sport or group of sports, along with the funds for co-financing of construction interventions in the ULC(R)S area. Co-financing of a new or renovation of the existing sports infrastructure will contribute to the planned and systematic solution of problems in the area of sports facilities, and enable the development of certain sports whose infrastructure in the country is insufficient or poorly maintained, and its quality not tailored to the development needs in sport. When conducting the analysis of the sports facilities and their condition, as well as developing a network of sports facilities (new sports facilities, national sports centers, headquarters of umbrella sports organizations, etc.), an adequate permanent space should be ensured for the presentation of sports heritage of national significance, as well as adequate spaces for presentation of sports heritage of local significance, in order to contribute to raising awareness about the educational and cultural dimension of sport and its importance for the society as a whole.

The implementation of measures and activities within this specific objective will depend on the availability of funding in each implementation year.



SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE	4.3. INCREASE THE NUMBER OF SPORTS FACILITIES AND RENOVATE EXISTING SPORTS INFRASTRUCTURE				
	Measure/ Modes of implementation	Activity	Indicator	Implementation deadline	Responsible authority
4.3.1. Adjust the real needs with the regulations at the local and national levels	Plan the construction and/or a construction intervention on a sports facility at the level of the Republic of Croatia, in accordance with the regulations	Number of plans developed	2021 - ongoing	Central State Office for Sport	Central State Office for Sport
	Plan the building and/or a construction intervention on a sports facility at the level of the local community in accordance with the regulations	Number of plans developed	2021 - ongoing	ULC(R)S	ULC(R)S
4.3.2. Define the fund allocation procedure	Adopt a ordinance	Ordinance adopted	2020	The Central State Office for Sport and the Ministry of Construction and Physical Planning	The Central State Office for Sport and the Ministry of Construction and Physical Planning
4.3.3. Construction of national sports centers in accordance with the needs of a sport or group of sports	Encourage the construction of national sports centers in accordance with the needs of a sport or group of sports	Number of national sports centers built	2021 - ongoing	Central State Office for Sport	Central State Office for Sport, national sports federations, COC, CPC, CDSF, CSSF, CASF
4.3.4. Construction and/or construction intervention on a sports facility of interest to the local community	Encourage construction and/or construction intervention on a sports facility of interest to the local community	Number of built and/or renovated sports facilities	Ongoing	Central State Office for Sport and ULC(R)S	Central State Office for Sport and ULC(R)S

## 5.5. GENERAL OBJECTIVE 5

### IMPROVE THE CARE OF PROFESSIONAL STAFF IN SPORT

An important and one of the key challenges of further development of sport is the quality of professional staff in sport. Future sports development, which is expected in Croatia, is not possible without the continuous education of coaches, as well as all other sports experts who must be able to remain up to speed with the development dictated by international umbrella organizations, the multidisciplinary character of sports, as well as its economic effects.

In order to make progress in the area of professional staff, it is necessary to:

- » adjust the legislative framework relating to professional staff
- » provide education and training of professional staff in sport, in accordance with the needs in sport
- » harmonize educational programs with the real educational needs in sport and foster further training.

Given that the most important institutions of the European Union (Council of the European Union, European Parliament, European Commission), as well as a large number of non-governmental organizations, have adopted a number of documents and decisions regarding the status, education and employment of professional staff, it is necessary to enable professional work in sport through lifelong learning programs for persons who have completed some of the qualifying and training programs, with the aim of improving the development of professional staff in sport. Pursuant to the above, it is necessary to also harmonize the level of professional qualifications with the European Qualifications Framework, i.e., with the European Framework of Coaching Competence and Qualifications, considering certain specifics. It is necessary to create a unique, applicable, educational framework for education in the professional qualification training program, in the part that is common (general) for all programs and implemented by adult education institutions. By creating a single educational framework, learning outcomes would be standardized to ensure a measurable level of competences that arise from completed training programs for performing professional work in sport.

In addition, it is necessary to regulate the legal work status of professional coaches, which is insufficiently and inadequately defined in the Sports Act and, through further elaboration of the planned activities, ensure the regularization of the status of coaches and other professional staff in sport who are not employed in the sports system.



## SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE 5.1. ADAPT THE LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR PROFESSIONAL STAFF

In order to meet the needs of a qualified professional staff, and in accordance with the demands of sport, which shows that almost 40% of professional staff do not have the lowest level of formal education for work in sport, it is necessary to adapt the provisions of the Sports Act, that is, to create a legislative framework that will enhance the structure of representation of professional staff in sport, in line with the real needs.

Vaguely defined terms of professional work in sport, as well as the educational conditions that are non-applicable in practice, have resulted in a shortage of professional staff in the sports system, which needs to be changed by prescribing more clearly defined professional work and occupations in sport. Furthermore, in order to ensure the conditions for lifelong learning and training of professional staff, it is necessary to identify legal entities that will take care of the licensing system in sport, with the aim of improving the quality of professional staff in the area of sports, both through formal and non-formal and informal learning. It is also necessary to equalize the provisions on professional staff for all sports, sports institutions and public documents so that their acquisition is accessible to everyone under equal conditions. In order to better define the legal work status of coaches, the legislative framework will harmonize the regulations in the area of sport with regulations in the area of labor and pension legislation.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE	5.1. ADAPT THE LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK FOR PROFESSIONAL STAFF				
Measure/ Modes of implementation	Activity	Indicator	Implementation deadline	Responsible authority	Executor
5.1.1. Edit the legal provisions concerning the professional staff	Amend the provisions of the Sports Act related to the professional staff, in accordance with the actual needs	Provisions in the Sports Act amended	2019	Central State Office for Sport	Central State Office for Sport
	Compile a list of legal entities authorized to carry out licensing procedures for professional staff in sport	List compiled	2020	Central State Office for Sport	The Central State Office for Sport, COC, CPC, CDSF, national sports federations and other legal entities in the sports system
	Equalize the provisions on professional staff for all sports, sports institution and public documents	Provisions in the Sports Act amended	2019	Central State Office for Sport	Central State Office for Sport
	Harmonize sports regulations with regulations in the area of labor legislation, considering the particularities of sports	Regulations harmonized by introducing legal work status of professional coaches	2020	Central State Office for Sport	National sports federations and sports clubs



## SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE 5.2. ENSURE THE EDUCATION AND TRAINING OF PROFESSIONAL STAFF IN SPORT, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE NEEDS IN SPORT

It is necessary to provide education, upskilling and training to professional staff in sport, in accordance with the real needs in sport. Pursuant to the above, it is also necessary to develop curricula and programs of professional studies and training programs for personnel, whose learning outcomes will enable the education and training. In order to be able to approach the development of these programs in accordance with the current needs in the Republic of Croatia, it is first necessary to analyze the state of professional staff in sport, as well as the need for professional staff.

The implementation of measures and activities within this specific objective will depend on the availability of funding in each implementation year.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE	5.2. ENSURE THE EDUCATION AND TRAINING OF PROFESSIONAL STAFF IN SPORT, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE NEEDS IN SPORT				
Measure/ Modes of implementation	Activity	Indicator	Implementation deadline	Responsible authority	Executor
5.2.1. Determine the real needs of professional staff in sport	Analysis of the needs for professional staff in sport	Analysis conducted	2020	Central State Office for Sport	COC, CPC, CDSF, CSSF, CASF, national sports organizations and sports communities
	Analysis of the state of professional staff in sport	Analysis conducted	2020	Central State Office for Sport	COC, CPC, CDSF, CSSF, CASF, national sports federations and sports communities
5.2.2. Develop curricula and programs according to defined needs	Develop curricula and programs of professional studies in sport	Number of programs	2021	Accredited higher education institutions	Accredited higher education institutions
	Develop programs for training of the professional staff in sport	Number of programs	Ongoing	Adult education institutions	Adult education institutions



## SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE 5.3. HARMONIZE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS WITH THE REAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS IN SPORT AND ENCOURAGE UPSKILLING

By adopting a ordinance on the required level of qualification of professional staff, the minimum level of competence for acquiring professional qualifications in sport will be adjusted and standardized. The development of occupational standards and qualification standards for professional staff in sport is necessary in order for the acquired qualifications in the field of sport to establish an appropriate level within the Croatian Qualification Framework and indirectly through the European Qualifications Framework, thereby confirming the relevance, quality, recognition and comparability of qualifications across the European Union, and ensure compliance with the needs of the labor market.

In order to better define the educational cycle with clearly defined learning outcomes, the ordinance will prescribe the educational framework for training programs in the part that is common (mandatory part) for all sports training programs and specify the content and structure of a particular program. The expert committee will be responsible for evaluating and providing expert opinion on individual training programs in sport, as well as their compliance with the level of qualification after the completion of formal education. Adopting a ordinance on licensing of professional staff, conducting seminars for professional training in sport, as well as increasing the number of persons with acquired professional qualifications in the area of sport will ensure a more balanced development of sport in the Republic of Croatia. It is necessary to include all persons who have completed some of the initial education programs and who perform certain professional work in sport in the process of lifelong learning, for them to acquire higher levels of competence based on the necessity of the continuous acquisition of new knowledge, skills and abilities beyond the initial education. It is necessary that the umbrella sports organizations, national sports federations, and associations of sports workers also have the obligation of professional training, which must aim at the continuous professional growth and development of each member through organizing of various forms of acquiring new knowledge, such as informal lifelong learning programs (seminars, workshops, forums, expert meetings, etc.).

Securing financial support for tuition costs for persons wishing to complete adult education programs for acquiring professional qualifications for sporting activities and for institutions conducting programs for training professional staff in sport, for conducting programs in sports where there is a great lack of professional staff, will encourage education, training and upskilling, as well as an increase in the number of trained professional staff. Also, securing the funds for recruitment of professional staff at the local level, through the funds of the State Budget of the Republic of Croatia, extracted from the revenue from games of chance, will facilitate the local sports level associations to carry out activities with qualified professional staff.

Each sport for the persons with disabilities is divided into several classification categories, which makes athletes classified in similar functional groups that allow fair competition. Specially trained classifiers conduct the sorting into categories. Classifiers training is performed by authorized bodies of international sporting associations that manage sports. It is of a sports interest to have as many persons trained as possible to carry out the classification activities in as many sports so that we, as a state, could be present in that area of expertise as well. Practice has shown that there is a shortage of competent experts - coaches who would possess the knowledge and skills needed to achieve top results in sports for persons with disabilities. It is of strategic interest to include into a training program for sports coaches a course covering the area of that same sport for persons with disabilities. Furthermore, it is also strategically important for every physical education teacher to acquire additional knowledge and skills in order to provide higher quality physical education for pupils with developmental difficulties and disabilities, and for that an additional course at the faculties of kinesiology would need to be introduced.

The implementation of measures and activities within this specific objective will depend on the availability of funding in each implementation year.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE	5.3. HARMONIZE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS WITH THE REAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS IN SPORT AND ENCOURAGE UPSKILLING				
	Measure/ Modes of implementation	Activity	Indicator	Implementation deadline	Responsible authority
5.3.1. Adjust and standardize the minimum level of competences for acquiring professional qualifications in sport	Adopt a ordinance on the required qualification level of professional staff	Ordinance adopted	2020	Central State Office for Sport and Agency for Vocational Education and Adult Education	Central State Office for Sport and Agency for Vocational Education and Adult Education
	Develop occupational standard and a qualification standard for professional staff in sport	Developed occupational standard and the qualification standard for professional staff in sport, in accordance with the Croatian Qualification Framework	2023	Central State Office for Sport	Central State Office for Sport and the Ministry of Labour and Pension System
	Establish an expert commission for giving opinions on training programs	Commission established	2019	Central State Office for Sport	The Central State Office for Sport and the Agency for Vocational Education and Adult Education

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE	5.3. HARMONIZE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS WITH THE REAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS IN SPORT AND ENCOURAGE UPSKILLING					
	Measure/ Modes of implementation	Activity	Indicator	Implementation deadline	Responsible authority	Executor
5.3.2. Encourage education, training and upskilling, as well as recruitment of professional staff in sport		Adopt ordinance on licensing of qualified staff	Ordinance adopted	2020	National sports federations and other legal persons in the sports system	National sports federations and other legal persons in the sports system
		Conduct seminars for training of professional staff in sport	Number of seminars	Ongoing	COC, CPC, CDSF, CSSF, CASF, national sports federations, associations of sports workers	COC, CPC, CDSF, CSSF, CASF, national sports federations, associations of sports workers
		Increase the number of persons with acquired professional qualifications in the area of sports	Increased number of persons with acquired qualifications	Ongoing	Central State Office for Sport	Institutions for adult education
		Encourage local sports associations to hire professional staff	Number of employed persons	Ongoing	Central State Office for Sport	County sports communities and sports organizations at local level
		Encourage classifier licensing for each sport in the system of sports for disabled persons	Number of licensed persons increased	Ongoing	Central State Office for Sport and CPC	CPC
		Encouraging the acquisition of professional qualifications for work with persons with disabilities in sports and recreational activities	Increased number of persons who have completed programs	Ongoing	Central State Office for Sport, Agency for Vocational Education and Adult Education, faculties of kinesiology	Accredited higher education institutions and adult education institutions
		Compile a letter to facilitate leaves of absence for trainers and expert team members due to their participation in national selection activities	Letters compiled	2020	Central State Office for Sport	Employers of athletes

## 5.6. GENERAL OBJECTIVE 6 IMPROVE THE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM IN SPORT

In order to minimize all shortcomings related to the management system in sport, three specific objectives have been defined:

- » more clearly define the roles and tasks of individual stakeholders in the sports system
- » harmonize and connect public sports registers
- » strengthen the management and administrative capacities of participants in the sports system.

For the development of sports in the Republic of Croatia it is necessary to ensure, among other things, organizational and administrative prerequisites, as well as to remove barriers.

The foundations for a rational and quality sports management system are certainly the registers and records (prescribed by law), which will become the basis of the National Information System in Sport. It is necessary to carry out activities that will regulate the work of sports associations and harmonize them with sporting activities from the Sports Act, then regularize the registration of sports organizations in the Association Register and carry out a whole series of activities that require mutual harmonization, all with the aim of developing the National Information System in Sport.

In addition to improving administrative measures and reducing administrative barriers, it is also necessary to educate participants in the sports system by implementing a number of educational programs focused on legislative and legal as well as financial and accounting activities in sport. Furthermore, it is necessary to educate participants in the sports system to better and more effectively maintain and manage sports facilities, to maximize engagement and foster the development of strategic documentation, as well as educate for applying for and using the EU funds (from education and support in the preparation of applications to supporting potential participants in the implementation itself). Following contemporary marketing trends, special attention needs to be devoted to education in order to promote sports as a socially desirable lifestyle.

## SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE 6.1. MORE CLEARLY DEFINE THE ROLE AND TASKS OF INDIVIDUAL PARTICIPANTS IN THE SPORTS SYSTEM

In view of the ambiguously prescribed tasks and responsibilities of the National Sports Council, and in relation to the importance of this professional and advisory body, the Sports Act needs to more precisely regulate the tasks and responsibilities of the National Sports Council and simultaneously prescribe professional qualifications, number of members and method of selecting the members of the National Sports Councils. With the more clearly prescribed tasks of the National Sports Council, for the purpose of better and more effective management in sport, it is also necessary to define more clearly the tasks of umbrella associations, national sports associations and other legal/natural persons in the sports system.

One of the weaknesses of the existing sports management system in Croatia is related to the exceptionally low proportion of women in management but also in other sports positions. Through drawing up action plans and various incentive measures, it is necessary to approach the ratio of 30% of women by 2020, which is also demanded by the International Olympic Committee (IOC).

For the purpose of preventing conflicts in sports arenas and promoting the culture of non-violence, it is necessary to improve the cooperation of all participants relevant to the above mentioned issues and to draw up a joint Action plan for the implementation of educational measures program in the prevention of violence in sport, sports competitions and beyond, with the aim of educating children and young people. Prevention of violence should include the suppression of all forms of violence: verbal, nonverbal, sexual and physical. Furthermore, through the analysis of the provisions of the Act on the Prevention of Disorder at Sports Competitions (Official Gazette, No. 117/03, 71/06, 43/09 and 34/11), the need to amend the legal provisions will be established with the aim of better effectiveness in the prevention of violence in sport.

At the same time, it is also necessary to encourage volunteering as one of the important factors for the development of the sports system, which will be achieved through the adoption and implementation of incentive measures by the state and the business sector. Also, the effective fight against doping in sport is one of the key elements for preserving integrity and improving the system of management in sport. Quality planning and implementation of anti-doping measures in sport requires the engagement and co-ordination of various bodies which, depending on their area of activity, can contribute to the improvement of the anti-doping system.

The implementation of measures and activities within this specific objective will depend on the availability of funding in each implementation year.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE	6.1. MORE CLEARLY DEFINE THE ROLE AND TASKS OF INDIVIDUAL PARTICIPANTS IN THE SPORTS SYSTEM				
	Measure/ Modes of implementation	Activity	Indicator	Implementation deadline	Responsible authority
6.1.1. Harmonize the tasks and composition of the National Sports Council with legislative tasks	Define the tasks and responsibilities of the National Sports Council more precisely	Defined tasks in the Sports Act	2019	Central State Office for Sport	Central State Office for Sport and National Sports Council
	Prescribe the level of professional qualifications, the number of members and the way of selecting members to the National Sports Council	Level prescribed	2019	Central State Office for Sport	Central State Office for Sport and National Sports Council



SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE	6.1. MORE CLEARLY DEFINE THE ROLE AND TASKS OF INDIVIDUAL PARTICIPANTS IN THE SPORTS SYSTEM					
	Measure/ Modes of implementation	Activity	Indicator	Implementation deadline	Responsible authority	Executor
6.1.2. More clearly define the tasks of individual participants in the sport system		Establish the national coordination body of county and local sports communities	Body established	2020	Central State Office for Sport	Central State Office for Sport and sports communities
		Prescribe the tasks of umbrella sports organizations	Tasks prescribed	2019	Central State Office for Sport	Central State Office for Sport, COC, CPC, CDSF, CASF and CSSF
		Prescribe the tasks of national sports organizations	Tasks prescribed	2019	Central State Office for Sport	Central State Office for Sport and national sports federation
		Prescribe the tasks of local sports communities and organizations	Tasks prescribed	2019	Central State Office for Sport	Central State Office for Sport, sports communities and sports organizations
		Make a recommendation on the ways of allocating resources for sports infrastructure and programs for public needs in sport	Recommendation made	2020	Central State Office for Sport	ULC(R)S
		Prescribing the tasks of other legal/natural persons in sport	Tasks prescribed	2019	Central State Office for Sport	Central State Office for Sport

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE	6.1. MORE CLEARLY DEFINE THE ROLE AND TASKS OF INDIVIDUAL PARTICIPANTS IN THE SPORTS SYSTEM					
	Measure/ Modes of implementation	Activity	Indicator	Implementation deadline	Responsible authority	Executor
6.1.3. Encouraging gender equality in sport		Developing action plans for inclusion of increased number of women in sport	Action plans developed	2020	Central State Office for Sport, COC, CPC, CDSF, CASF and CSSF	COC, CPC, CDSF, CASF, CSSF, national sports federations and sports organizations in local and county (regional) self-governing units
		Encouraging inclusion of women in sport (workshops, round tables, TV shows)	Number of women in sports	2020 - ongoing	COC, CPC, CDSF, CASF and CSSF	COC, CPC, CDSF, CASF, CSSF, national sports federations and sports organizations in local and county (regional) self-governing units
6.1.4. Preventing conflicts in sport arenas and encouraging the culture of nonviolence		Enhance the cooperation of all participants by developing a joint Action Plan for the implementation of education measures program in the prevention of violence in sport, at sporting events and beyond	Action plan developed	2020 - ongoing	Central State Office for Sport, Ministry of Internal Affairs	Central State Office for Sport, Education and Teacher Training Agency, Ministry of the Interior - Police Directorate, Ministry of Justice, Croatian Institute of Public Health, COC, CPC, CDSF, CSSF, CASF, adult education institutions and national sports federations
		Analysis of the provisions of the Act on the Prevention of Disorder at Sports Competitions	Analysis conducted	2021	Central State Office for Sport, Ministry of Internal Affairs	Ministry of Internal Affairs

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE	6.1. MORE CLEARLY DEFINE THE ROLE AND TASKS OF INDIVIDUAL PARTICIPANTS IN THE SPORTS SYSTEM				
	Measure/ Modes of implementation	Activity	Indicator	Implementation deadline	Responsible authority
6.1.5. Increase the number of volunteers in the sports system	Improve the existing and develop new effective mechanisms to improve volunteering	Establish a coordinating body	2020 - ongoing	Central State Office for Sport, Croatian Volunteer Development Centre, COC, CPC, CDSF, CASF and CSSF	COC, CPC, CDSF, CASF, CSSF, national sports federations, county and city sports organizations, and Croatian Volunteer Development Centre
	Establish effective mechanisms for monitoring the volunteering activities in Croatia	Monitoring model adopted	2020 - ongoing	Central State Office for Sport	Central State Office for Sport, Croatian Volunteer Centers Network
6.1.6. Improve co-operation between responsible bodies in combating doping in sport	Establish an effective mechanism for planning and monitoring activities in the area of combat against doping in sport	Coordinating body established	2020 - ongoing	Central State Office for Sport, the Ministry of Health and Croatian Institute of Public Health	Central State Office for Sport, Ministry of Health, Croatian Institute of Public Health, COC, CPC, national sports federations



## SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE 6.2. SYNCHRONIZE AND CONNECT PUBLIC SPORTS REGISTERS

The SWOT analysis showed a lack of information and continuous monitoring of various indicators of development and progress in sport, as well as data inconsistencies. Data from different registers that are important for the functioning of legal and natural persons in the sports system point to the need to align and connect the registers, but also to redefine the existing and often unclear classifications of legal and natural persons from the sports system in individual registers.

The goal of establishing the National Information System in Sport (NISiS) is to ensure a permanent and structured collection of data on all segments of sport in the Republic of Croatia, and to enable the public bodies responsible for planning the development and management of the sports system at all levels – but also to the wider Croatian public – systematic monitoring of relevant indicators about the sports system. There is currently a lot of data that, in their own way and in accordance with their respective rules, are collected by individual organizations but which are not harmonized and coordinated. A range of sports-related data exist also in certain public registers such as the Registry of Associations, the Registry of Sporting Activities, which each county manages separately, then the commercial courts register and the data of the Ministry of Finance, Tax Administration, also not mutually harmonized. All of the above shows a lack of harmonization and consistency in managing sports data. By setting up core registers and creating new registers and sub-registers, it will be possible to obtain a clear real-time picture of all relevant data about the state of the entire sports system, and will thus facilitate the financing of programs and projects, above all umbrella sports organizations. National Information System in Sport (NISiS) will provide a clear picture of the state of each sport, the professional work, popularity and success of the individual sport, and a comprehensive overview of the Croatian sports system will be available in one place. Project beneficiaries will be all legal and natural persons in the sports system, as well as all the public bodies that finance public needs in sport. Through this system, the manner of spending the funds will be visible and more easily measurable, but also the success of some sports organizations and athletes. In order to clearly stipulate the obliged entities for system data entry and the ways of tracking and editing of certain information important for the sports system, it is necessary to adopt an ordinance on the National Information System in Sport, which will prescribe the establishment, organization and authority of the information system in sport, type, content and the form of information collected, as well as determine system administrators and their obligations.



One of the largest public registers that contains information on sport and which is not within the sphere of competence of sports authorities is certainly the Register of Associations, where there is a significantly larger number of sports organizations than really active, as indicated by a significantly smaller number of member organizations of national sports federations, a smaller number of organizations registered in the Registry of Associations, and ultimately a significantly smaller number of sports organizations registered in the Registry of Sporting Activities. It follows from the above that all active organizations from the Registry of Associations that carry out a sports activity and are not registered in the Registry of Sporting Activities, violate the Sports Act. Therefore, the new sports act should clearly define the types of sports organizations and require that organizations be established and entered into the Register of sports organizations based on that classification, with the aim of harmonizing data and classifying organizations.

The implementation of measures and activities within this specific objective will depend on the availability of funding in each implementation year.



SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE	6.2. SYNCHRONIZE AND CONNECT PUBLIC SPORTS REGISTERS					
	Measure/ Modes of implementation	Activity	Indicator	Implementation deadline	Responsible authority	Executor
6.2.1. Harmonize classifications and connect the registers of the Republic of Croatia		Harmonize the Classification of Associations' Activities with sporting activities and sports organizations as defined by the Sports Act	Classification harmonized	2021	The Ministry of Administration	The Ministry of Administration and the Central State Office for Sport
		Improve descriptions of sporting activities in the National Classification of Activities	Descriptions improved	2021	The Croatian Bureau of Statistics	The Croatian Bureau of Statistics and the Central State Office for Sport
6.2.2. Develop a National Information System in Sport with the relevant registers		Enter the data into the basic registers and records of the National Information System in Sport	Data entered	2019	Central State Office for Sport	Central State Office for Sport, COC, CPC, CDSF, CASF, CSSF, ULC(R)S and national sports federations
		Adopt a ordinance on the National Information System in Sport	Ordinance adopted	2020	Central State Office for Sport	Central State Office for Sport, COC, CPC, CDSF, CASF, CSSF, ULC(R)S and national sports federations
		Create new registers and sub-registers of the National Information System in Sport	Registers and sub-registers created	2020 - ongoing	Central State Office for Sport	Central State Office for Sport, COC, CPC, CDSF, CASF, CSSF, ULC(R)S and national sports federations

### SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE 6.3. STRENGTHEN THE MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATIVE CAPACITY OF STAKEHOLDERS IN THE SPORTS SYSTEM

Administrative work in sports organizations is often, due to the lack of knowledge and insight into the current changes in the sports system, at a lower level of effectiveness than optimal, which was confirmed by the participants of the held workshops as well. In order to strengthen the administrative capacity of all participants in sport and improve the efficiency of their work, it is necessary to run educational programs in various areas of sport, from strategic planning to specific areas, particularly financial, legislative and those related to marketing. At the same time, where there is not enough capacity in legal entities in the sports system, it is necessary to plan and provide the normative framework and financial conditions that will enable the employment of the appropriate professional staff. In this way, it is possible to achieve the optimal administrative and organizational capacity of legal entities in the sports system for performing all the tasks that fall within the scope of their obligations and responsibilities.

In order to achieve better and more systematic development, it is necessary to produce strategic documentation at the national, county and local levels so that, by harmonizing and producing development documents systematically, it is possible to plan and uniformly improve the sports system at all levels. It is also necessary to ensure an ongoing dialogue of participants in sport, umbrella sports organizations and representatives of the Republic of Croatia in international sports bodies, so that the knowledge necessary for the development of sport is continuously disseminated and used in sporting practice.

Over the past few years, Croatia has been the third country of the European Union by the number of approved projects through Erasmus+ sports programs, but there are still many possibilities as well as different ways of drawing on the EU funds. In order to improve the competencies and capacities for drawing on the EU funds and participating in the EU programs, it is necessary to continuously organize workshops on how to apply, to provide support to potential beneficiaries and participants in successfully submitting projects, as well as to provide funds for the co-financing of projects from the EU funds. As participants are not satisfied with the existing possibilities of drawing on funds (SWOT- weaknesses), it is necessary to plan measures and a series of activities to ensure the growth trend of drawing on the EU funds and participation in the EU programs. Furthermore, for the purpose of updating the sports potential, it is necessary to make the best use of the role of athlete as an ambassador of prosperity in different aspects of social life, and in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs in achieving foreign policy goals. In order to encourage self-employment of professional staff in sports and the development of sports, it is necessary to create such an opportunity through craft in the next period.

By enabling and recognizing craft as a legal form for carrying out some sports activities, it will greatly facilitate those same activities in terms of tax and other benefits, and thus encourage young people to an entrepreneurial approach to sports, especially in the area of sports recreation (pilates centers, smaller fitness centers, etc.). This will enable professionals in sport to provide the most cost-effective form of self-employment, and flat-rate tax payments as in other activities, thereby boosting greater economic activity in the sports system.

The implementation of measures and activities within this specific objective will depend on the availability of funding in each implementation year.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE	6.3. STRENGTHEN THE MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATIVE CAPACITY OF STAKEHOLDERS IN THE SPORTS SYSTEM					
	Measure/ Modes of implementation	Activity	Indicator	Implementation deadline	Responsible authority	Executor
6.3.1. Improve the efficiency of work in sports organizations		Carry out educational programs in various areas of sport (financial and accounting, legal, management and maintenance of sports facilities, marketing in sport)	Number of persons attending educational programs	2020 - ongoing	Central State Office for Sport, COC, CPC, CDSF, CASF, CSSF	Central State Office for Sport, COC, CPC, CDSF, CASF, CSSF, sports communities and education agencies in special areas
		Organize a National Sports Forum - a platform for dialogue between national institutions and sports participants to discuss current issues in the area of sport	Forum organized	2020 - ongoing (annually)	Central State Office for Sport, COC, CPC, CDSF, CASF and CSSF	Sports organizations, representatives of the Republic of Croatia in international sports bodies and other participants in the sports system
		Encourage the use of state property for the work of national sports federations	Number of lease contracts signed	Ongoing	National sports federations	Ministry of State Property and national sports federations

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE	6.3. STRENGTHEN THE MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATIVE CAPACITY OF STAKEHOLDERS IN THE SPORTS SYSTEM					
	Measure/ Modes of implementation	Activity	Indicator	Implementation deadline	Responsible authority	Executor
6.3.2. Produce strategic documents at national, county and local levels		Harmonize sports development documents at the local and county (regional) levels with National Sports Program	High degree of complementarity with National Sports Program achieved	2020 - ongoing	ULC(R)S	ULC(R)S and sports communities
		Produce development documents in the field of sports and physical activity beneficial for health at the local and county (regional) levels	Number of development documents produced	2020 - ongoing	ULC(R)S	Sports communities
		Encouraging the development and alignment of operational plans in the area of sport and physical activity useful for health	Number of produced and harmonized plans	2020 - ongoing	Central State Office for Sport and ULC(R)S	Legal persons from the sports system
		Develop a protocol for dealing with violence among children in sports clubs	Protocol developed	2020	Central State Office for Sport, the Ministry of Justice and the Croatian Institute for Public Health	National sports federations and sports organizations
6.3.3. Encourage a greater number of applications for the EU funds		Organization of workshops on how to apply for the EU funds	Number of workshops	Ongoing	Central State Office for Sport, the Agency for Mobility and the EU Programs	Central State Office for Sport, COC, CPC, CDSF, CSSF, CASF and the Agency for Mobility and the EU Programs
		Support potential users and participants in successful project application	Number of accepted projects	Ongoing	Central State Office for Sport, state administration bodies	Legal persons from the sports system

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVE	6.3. STRENGTHEN THE MANAGEMENT AND ADMINISTRATIVE CAPACITY OF STAKEHOLDERS IN THE SPORTS SYSTEM					
	Measure/ Modes of implementation	Activity	Indicator	Implementation deadline	Responsible authority	Executor
6.3.4. Encourage international cooperation in the field of sport		Ensure the necessary conditions for participation in decision-making processes and activities of the European Union and the Council of Europe	Number of meetings and activities	Ongoing	Central State Office for Sport	Central State Office for Sport, COC, CPC, CDSF, CSSF and CASF
		Provide the necessary conditions for participation in relevant international bodies in the area of sport	Number of meetings and activities	Ongoing	Central State Office for Sport	Central State Office for Sport, COC, CPC, CDSF, CSSF and CASF
		Establish a body in charge of sports diplomacy	Body established	2020	Central State Office for Sport, Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs	Central State Office for Sport, Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs
		Encourage the organization and promotion of international sports competitions in Croatia	Number of competitions organized	Ongoing	Central State Office for Sport, the Ministry of Tourism and the Ministry of Culture	Croatian National Tourist Board, Croatian Sport Museum, COC, CPC, CDSF, CSSF, CASF, national sports federations and other legal entities from the sports system
6.3.5. Enable sports activities through craft		Create legal basis for carrying out sports activities through craft	Sports Act revised	2019	Central State Office for Sport	The Central State Office for Sport and the Ministry of Economy, Entrepreneurship and Crafts



**06**

**IMPLEMENTATION**

An important task of the National Sports Program is to ensure the implementation and defining of the monitoring and reporting system, as well as defining the external evaluation system of the implementation itself. The monitoring of the implementation of the National Sports Program is a continuous process which can offer an insight into the progress of the planned activities, i.e., the possibility of determining what has been achieved in relation to the planned, with the aim of a timely correction of the implementation process of the National Sports Program. Information on the state of execution of all planned measures and activities is important for the National Sports Program responsible authorities, but also for the general public for the transparency of the implementation process.

Given the inter-departmental nature of the sports area and the process of adoption, and especially for the process of operationalization of the National Sports Program, there is a critical need for inter-sectoral cooperation. Therefore, as part of promotion activities of the sports management system, the establishment of a national coordinating body for implementation monitoring is planned, involving representatives of all departments that play a part in sport or provide preconditions for functioning of the sports system in the Republic of Croatia (Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Labor and Pension System, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Construction and Physical Planning, Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, Ministry of State Property).

Given the fact that the National Sports Program is adopted for the first time in Croatia, and taking into account the obligation to adopt the Annual Program for the Implementation of the National Sport Program, as well as reporting about it to the Central State Office for Sport, pursuant to the Article 2 of the Sports Act, it is necessary to define the bases of the monitoring and reporting system, and the external evaluation system as initial steps that should enable oversight of the implementation of the National Sports Program.

## 6.1. MONITORING AND REPORTING SYSTEM

For the purposes of monitoring the implementation of the National Sports Program, a monitoring system will be set up based on indicators proposed within the framework of measures and activities of the National Sports Program. Some of these indicators are already being monitored, and some must be tested, along with identifying a starting point in the first year of implementation of the National Sports Program, for those measures and activities that are being carried out continuously throughout the National Sports Program. The monitoring of public policies through indicators is initiated through the budgetary process during the accession of the Republic of Croatia to the European Union, and since 2009, the state administration bodies and all beneficiaries of the State Budget of the Republic of Croatia have been obliged to develop strategic plans with indicators.

Pursuant to Article 8 of the Regulation on the Internal Organization of the Central State Office for Sport (Official Gazette, No. 118/16, 85/18 and 40/19) and Article 2, paragraph 8 of the Sports Act, the competent authority of the monitoring system is the Central State Office for Sport and its main tasks will be:

- » data collection and database update
- » preparation of periodic reports
- » monitoring the realization of the National Sports Program through the reports of the competent authority/co-authority for the measures and activities of the Annual Program of Implementation of the National Sports Program
- » drafting of the Proposition of the Annual Program of Implementation of the National Sports Program, with sources of funding and impact assessment for each year, as well as reports on its execution.

Based on the above, it is possible to plan the reporting process on the implementation of the National Sports Program for each calendar year, which will monitor the effects of planned measures and activities. The following reporting periods for the implementation of the National Sports Program can be planned:

- » by 1 April of the current year for the previous year, all competent authorities/co-authorities for specific measures and activities shall submit reports on the effects of the implementation of the programs within their competence to the Central State Office for Sport.



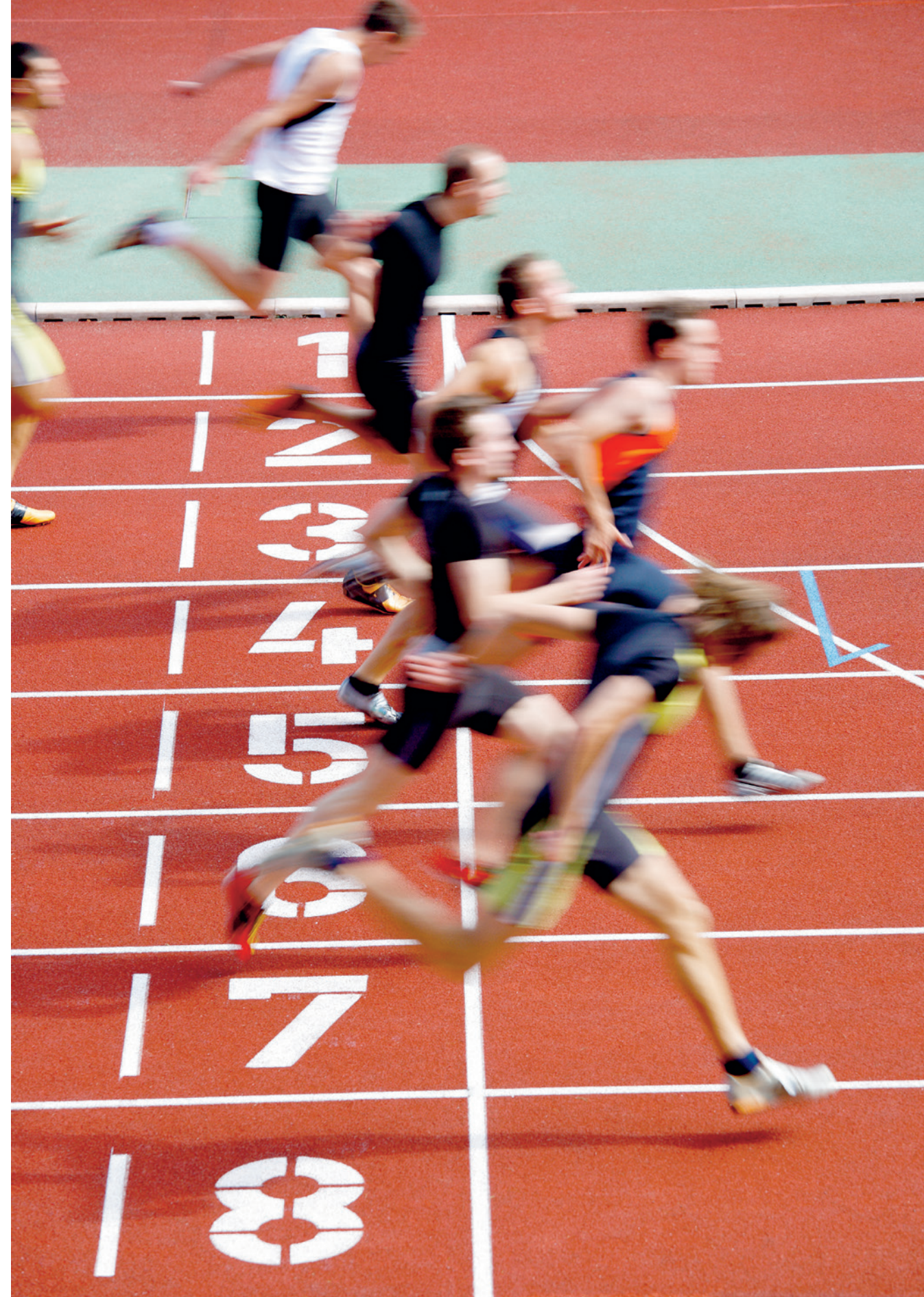
## 6.2. NATIONAL SPORTS PROGRAM IMPACT ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

Impact assessment will be carried out during and after the implementation of the National Sports Program. Evaluation during implementation is adaptable and implementers can independently suggest what will be evaluated and when. Evaluation thus becomes a management method that helps in the execution of the National Sports Program.

Evaluation during the implementation helps decision-makers determine any implementation deficiencies during implementation and, if necessary, plan the required steps if changes are needed. In any case, the evaluation results are always useful when starting the next planning cycle and can serve as the starting information in the developing of the next sports program.

Evaluation during the implementation will be carried out on the basis of the impacts report and implementation of the measures from the Annual Program for the Implementation of the National Sports Program. Please note that it is necessary to make a clear distinction between the Public Sports Program in accordance with the Article 75 of the Sports Act and the Annual Implementation Plan of the National Sports Program. Namely, the purpose of funding the public needs in sport at the state level is defined more precisely by the Program of public needs in sports that the Croatian Parliament adopts at the proposal of the Government of the Republic of Croatia, and which is adopted together with the State Budget of the Republic of Croatia and measures from the National Sports Program. The annual program of implementation of the National Sports Program contains an overview of determined goals, measures and activities that state bodies and bodies of local and county (regional) self-governing units, umbrella sports organizations, national sports federations and sports communities plan to implement in the given year, as well as the evaluation of the same.

Evaluation after implementation will assess the overall impact of the National Sports Program, its effectiveness, the sustainability and success of the planned measures and activities.



A high-angle, top-down photograph of a group of people, likely athletes, with their hands stacked in a circle. The hands are of various skin tones and are positioned in the center of the frame. The people's faces are visible around the perimeter, looking towards the center. They are wearing blue and orange athletic wear. The background is a bright, indoor setting with large windows.

**“Through measures and activities from the National Sports Program, reducing deficiencies will be allowed in the Croatian sport and seizing the opportunities provided”**



# 07

CONCLUSION

The National Sports Program is an essential strategic document based on which it will be possible to adequately plan and continuously care about the development of Croatian sport by systematic and strategic thinking founded on quantified data on the state of the system. Its production is also prescribed by the Sports Act.

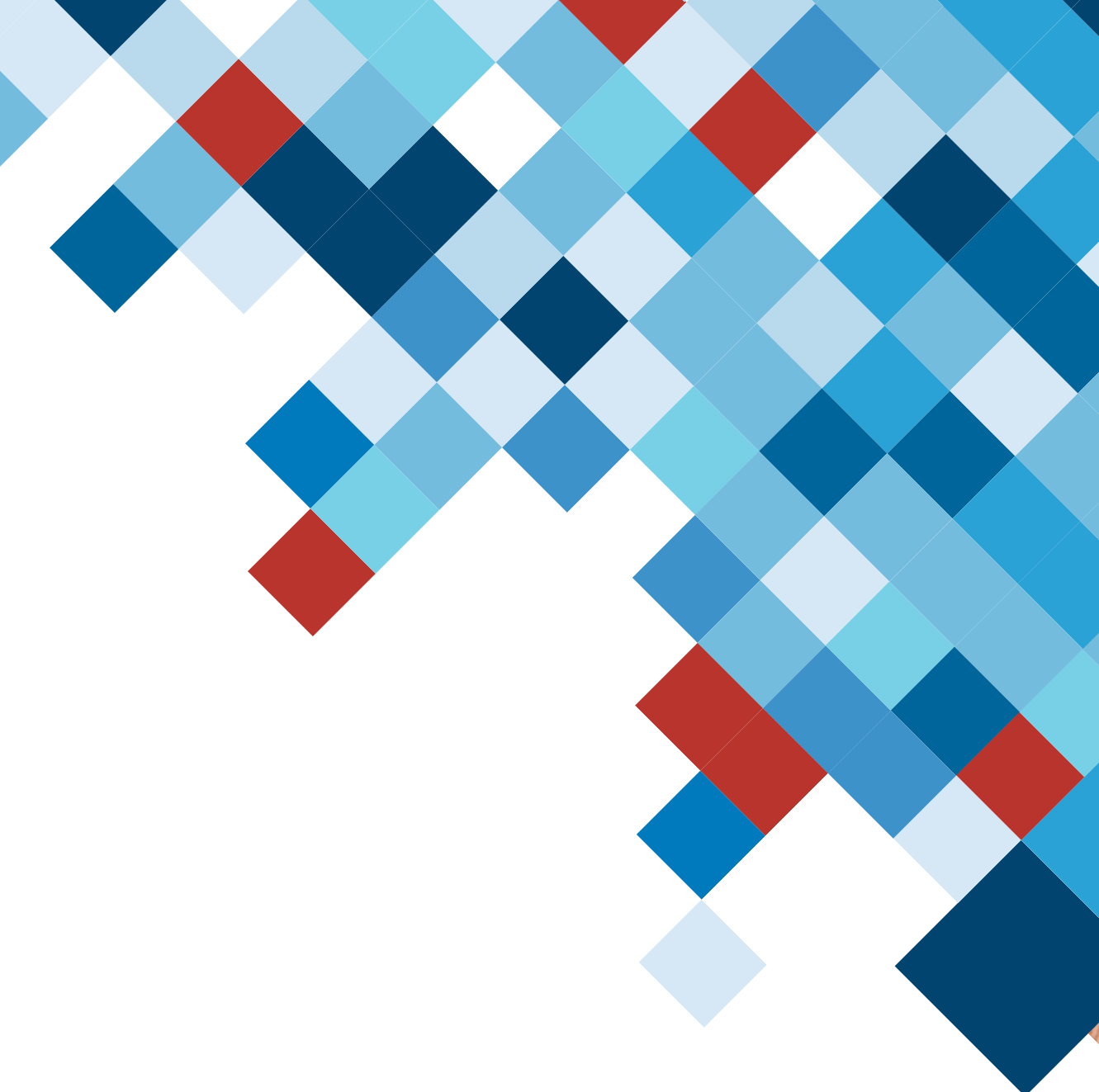
On the basis of available data and workshops held with all participants in the sports system, as well as interviews with experts, a Situation Analysis was made, a vision and mission were defined, as well as general and specific objectives, which were elaborated through measures and activities in the National Action Program. All research and other bases used in the development of the National Sports Program are available on the web site of the Central State Office for Sport ([www.sdus.gov.hr](http://www.sdus.gov.hr)).

"The National Sports Program 2019-2026" is the first strategic document in the history of Croatian sports at the national level and provides tools and meets the requirements for achieving national objectives in sport, setting out the clear roles, tasks and responsibilities of all stakeholders in the sports system as well as those outside the sports system that are key to the realization of the outlined objectives. The National Sports Program prescribes 6 general and 19 specific objectives, which include 63 measures and 148 activities, which should enable the reduction of the disadvantages in Croatian sport and exploitation of opportunities offered in the period from 2019 to 2026. It is important to point out that the Situation Analysis was derived from the available data, which was a limiting factor, while the SWOT analysis was based on the data collected, the research as well as the attitudes of the workshop participants. Special attention has been devoted to the harmonization of all identified disadvantages in Croatian sports with measures and activities, so that adequate measures have been determined in the National Sports Program for the solving of each of the identified weaknesses, ensuring the consistency of this document.

In the final chapter of the Implementation, the National Sports Program 2019-2026 ensures its operationalization and unites all stakeholders in the sports system in its realization, so that in 2026 Croatia could truly be a country of sport as a way of life for all its citizens, and a country recognizable for its top sports achievements.







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CENTRAL STATE  
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