España

Analytical description of the cases

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Case 1: Barcelona I

Country: Spain

City: Barcelona

Name of project / programme: **Street Soccer Barcelona**

Analytical description:

1. Broad notion of sport

Although the project focuses on soccer, its conception of "sport" is broad in practice: participation is open, flexible, and non-competitive (drop-in sessions, no fees, no strict membership). Soccer is framed as a tool for integration, socialisation, and health, not just performance. It integrates complementary elements: safe spaces, showers, snacks, health habits and personal follow-up. Therefore, it is rooted in a single sport but operationalised as a holistic integration practice.

2. Socio-spacial orientation

Street Soccer Barcelona has a high socio-spatial orientation. Stakeholders include neighbourhood social organisations, public institutions, and volunteers, though not always with formalised paid roles at neighbourhood level. Activities are held in public football fields across Barcelona, embedding the project in different neighbourhoods. Moreover, strong ties exist with local social entities that detect demand and refer youth to the program.

3. Cross-sectorality / intra-sectorality

In its development phase, the initiative was inspired by Younited Belgium and supported by local governments and neighborhood social entities. During implementation, it relies on strong cross-sectoral collaboration. The social sector takes the lead in supporting participants, while public administration (Diputació, Ajuntament, Generalitat) ensures funding and legitimacy. The sport sector, with contributions from INEFC and public football fields, provides infrastructure, and the private sector (companies and foundations) offers additional resources.

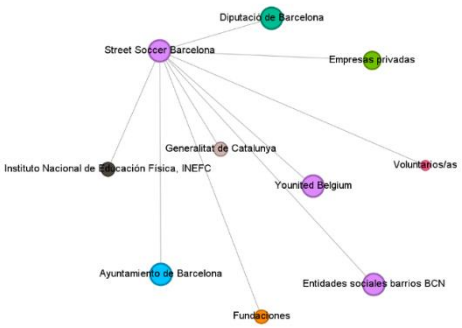


Figure 1. Street Soccer development network

4. Change of role (referring to the sport club(s))

The project itself occupies the role of a social-sport entity. It was created as new actor that combines sport and social integration, independent of existing clubs. Thus, the project bypasses sport clubs and operates as a hybrid social-sport NGO-type initiative.

5. Professionalisation

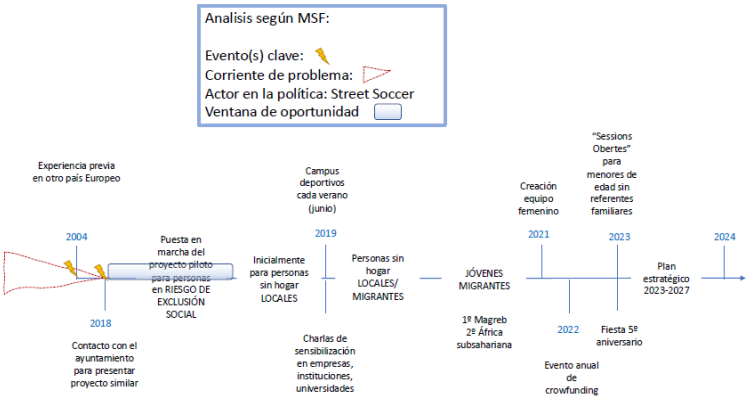
Some professionalization already exists such as a structured follow-up of participants, coordination with institutions and a fundraising network. However, it is currently dependent mainly on volunteers, thus, a more structural professional consolidation is needed in order to reduce reliance on precarious/voluntary engagement.

6. Role of engaged individual(s) – "the people on fire" / "Ildsjel"

The initiative was sparked by a passionate founder with international experience who adapted the model to the local context. In its early stages, it relied heavily on this "Ildsjel" — a deeply committed individual driving the project forward. While the structure has since evolved, the role of engaged individuals remains central, particularly the many volunteers who sustain daily activities. However, high volunteer turnover presents ongoing challenges. Although some knowledge and stability have been institutionalised through links with the municipality and social entities, the initiative remains somewhat vulnerable to the disengagement of key individuals.

7. Path dependency and change

Initially, the project was built on pre-existing practices, drawing inspiration from the Younited Belgium model, where football had already been established as a tool for social integration. A key focusing event occurred when the founder returned to Barcelona in 2018 and observed the visible rise in homelessness, which spurred the project's early direction. Over time, however, the increasing migration flows in Barcelona shifted the project's focus toward addressing the needs of migrant communities.



8. Representation and co-ownership

The project demonstrates a progression from representation to co-ownership. In the development phase, decision-making was largely top-down, led by the founder and institutions, with social entities voicing migrant youth needs, though direct youth representation was limited. Implementation, by contrast, enabled active participation in football sessions, while decision-making roles remained scarce. The creation of a women's team in 2021 marked a significant step towards inclusivity, and sensitisation initiatives with companies, universities, and institutions fostered broader community co-responsibility and shared ownership.

9. Funding

The main funding source of Street Soccer Barcelona is led by public sector bodies such as the Provincial Council and the City Council of Barcelona. Private companies and foundations provide secondary support, while sport-specific funding remains minimal, largely limited to infrastructure through INEFC. Resources are directed more toward social cohesion and integration than sporting goals, but sustainability is difficult because the demand is greater than the resources available.

Case 2: Barcelona II

Country: Spain

City: Barcelona

Name of project / programme: **Criquet Jove a BCN**

Analytical description:

1. Broad notion of sport

Criquet Jove a BCN clearly operates with a broad notion of sport, treating cricket not only as a competitive game but as a platform for intercultural dialogue, empowerment, and social transformation. The project incorporates cricket into school curricula, extracurricular activities, and public spaces, making it a tool for visibility, participation, and identity-building rather than restricting it to formal clubs or elite performance contexts. Its emphasis on gender equity—through the inclusion of girls and women—further expands the meaning of sport beyond physical practice, transforming it into a field of social innovation and cultural recognition.

2. Socio-spacial orientation

The project is strongly embedded in neighbourhoods across Barcelona, working within schools, institutes, and community spaces, while also using public parks and newly created cricket fields. Stakeholders include local social organisations, neighbourhood associations, schools, and the municipality, which facilitates both funding and infrastructure. This socio-spatial orientation is officially supported: the City Council of Barcelona plays a direct role in

funding and space provision, ensuring the initiative does not depend solely on voluntary individual engagement.

3. Cross-sectorality / intra-sectorality

Criquet Jove a BCN is characterised by a high degree of cross-sectoral collaboration. During its development phase, the Fundació per a l'Esport i l'Educació de Barcelona (FEEB), the Centre d'Estudis Africans i Interculturals (CEA), and the City Council provided the initial framework. In the implementation phase, the network widened to include schools, social entities from various neighbourhoods, the Catalan Cricket Federation, and the INEFC. These actors cover multiple sectors: sport, education, social services, cultural mediation, and public administration.

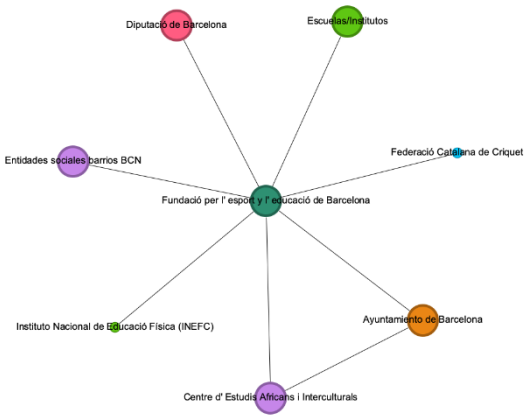


Figure 2. Criquet Jove implementation network

4. Change of role (referring to the sport club(s))

The role of traditional sports clubs in this initiative is limited, as cricket in Barcelona has not historically been integrated in the local club system. Instead, the Catalan Cricket Federation plays a role in legitimising and professionalising cricket while community organisations and schools take the lead in development and implementation. Thus, the sport federation aligns with social actors to substitute for the absence of conventional club structures.

5. Professionalisation

The project shows clear signs of professionalisation. Coaches and monitors are trained not only in cricket but also in intercultural sensitivity and gender equality, reflecting an educational as well as athletic mission. The institutional recognition of cricket as a sport in Barcelona and Catalonia creates new opportunities for career development and visibility. Moreover, organisational professionalisation is visible in the areas of evaluation, communication, and fundraising, with systematic monitoring and adaptation built into the

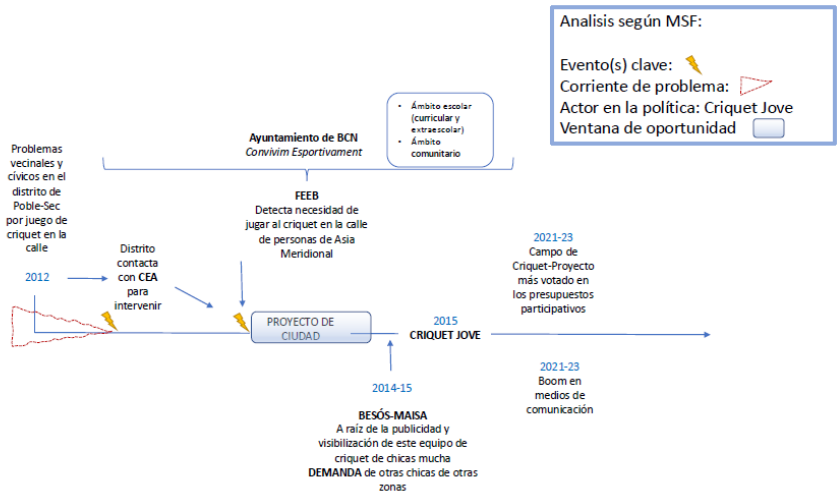
project. The creation of formal competitions and pathways also signals a step towards integrating cricket into Barcelona's recognised sports ecosystem.

6. Role of engaged individual(s) – "the people on fire" / "Ildsjel"

The initiative initially relied on committed individuals in CEA and FEEB who recognised both the conflicts around street cricket and the community's unmet needs. Over time, however, Criquet Jove a BCN has become more institutionalised, supported by paid professionals and a structured network of organisations. While this reduces dependency on a single "person on fire," challenges remain, as the project involves many dispersed entities whose coordination depends on active leadership. Knowledge is preserved through institutional frameworks, but long-term sustainability will require further investment in structured knowledge transfer and stable staffing.

7. Path dependency and change

Criquet Jove a BCN demonstrates strong path dependency shaped by key focusing events. The project originated in 2012 after neighbourhood conflicts over informal cricket games in Poble-Sec, which opened a window for intervention. In 2014–2015, the emergence of a girls' cricket team in Besós created visibility and demand for greater female participation. A decisive moment occurred in 2021, when the creation of a cricket field became the most-voted initiative in Barcelona's participatory budgeting, sparking extensive media coverage and institutional legitimacy. These milestones demonstrate how local tensions and opportunities shaped the project's trajectory and positioned cricket as both a cultural practice and a vehicle for social inclusion.



8. Representation and co-ownership

Representation of the South Asian community's needs was initially mediated by organisations such as CEA and FEEB, which acted as bridges between migrant communities and local institutions. Direct participation of community members in the design phase was limited. Over time, however, elements of co-ownership have emerged: young

people, particularly women, have taken on active roles as players, role models, and monitors within the initiative.

9. Funding

The funding structure of Criquet Jove a BCN is diverse and flexible, combining public, private, and community resources. The primary funding source is the Barcelona City Council, with complementary contributions from the Barcelona Provincial Council. Private entities and community resources play a smaller role, but their contributions add adaptability.

Case 3: San Cristóbal de La Laguna

Country: Spain

City: San Cristóbal de La Laguna

Name of project / programme: **Campus Sansofé**

Analytical description:

1. Broad notion of sport

Campus Sansofé operates with a broad and inclusive notion of sport. Football, basketball, and athletics are not conceived merely as competitive disciplines but as tools for socialisation, leisure, and integration. Training sessions, friendly matches, and informal play are valued equally alongside participation in official leagues, showing that the project prioritises participation, visibility, and inclusion over sporting performance.

2. Socio-spacial orientation

The initiative is highly socio-spatially oriented, as it takes root in specific neighbourhoods and relies on existing community infrastructures. Initially, training was held in spaces ceded by the University of La Laguna and later at the facilities of CD Tenerife. Today, access to local club facilities and public sports fields is crucial. Neighbourhood stakeholders include universities, local clubs, NGOs, and social organisations that identify and refer participants. However, there is no official role of neighbourhood management; instead, coordination depends on voluntary and ad hoc arrangements.

3. Cross-sectorality / intra-sectorality

Campus Sansofé demonstrates cross-sectoral collaboration between social, educational, and sporting sectors. In its development phase, volunteers and academics from the University of La Laguna and NGOs provided the backbone of the project. In implementation, local sports clubs (football, basketball, athletics) became essential partners, offering training

spaces and integration into competitions. Social organisations and NGOs continue to play a key role in identifying and referring participants, ensuring the social dimension is not lost.

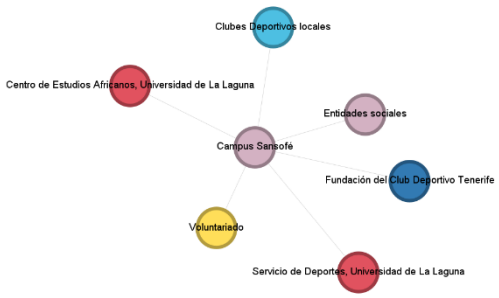


Figure 3. Campus Sansofé implementation network

4. Change of role (referring to the sport club(s))

Local clubs in Tenerife have adopted a new role as social actors, opening their doors to migrant participants and facilitating their entry into competitive sport. This does not mean a radical change of their identity, but rather an extension of their role from purely sport-focused organisations to inclusive community actors, taking on a wider role as contributors to social integration.

5. Professionalisation

Campus Sansofé is largely volunteer-driven and informally organised, therefore, professionalisation here is limited: there are no permanent staff, no structured fundraising strategies, and limited long-term planning capacities. The project's dynamism lies in flexibility, but this also limits its ability to develop sustained professional infrastructures.

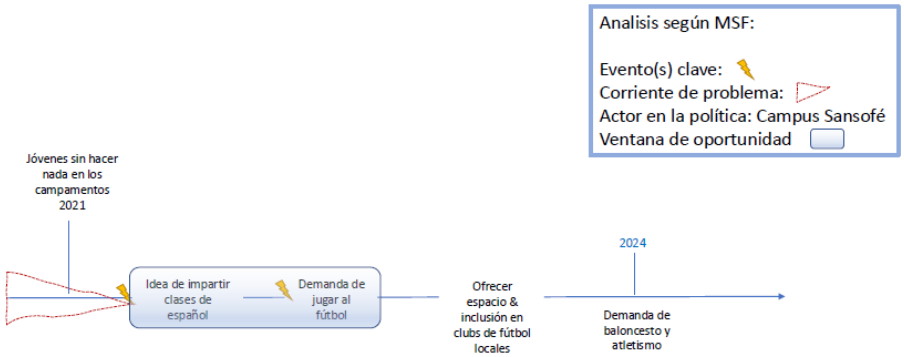
6. Role of engaged individual(s) – "the people on fire" / "Ildsjel"

Campus Sansofé heavily depends on motivated individuals and volunteers, many of whom are university staff or community activists. Their personal commitment sustains the initiative, from training organisation to liaising with clubs and institutions. Much of this work is unpaid and carried out voluntarily, meaning the project is vulnerable to burnout or turnover. While the University of La Laguna provides some structural support through legal coverage, knowledge transfer mechanisms remain weak. The risk is that the initiative's continuity depends too much on a small group of engaged individuals without institutional guarantees for long-term stability.

7. Path dependency and change

The project emerged from very specific focusing events and contextual needs. In 2021, during the management of refugee camps in Tenerife, young migrants expressed frustration at the lack of meaningful daily activities and explicitly requested opportunities to play football.

This demand opened a window of opportunity for academics and volunteers to intervene through sport. The subsequent involvement of CD Tenerife and access to formal facilities marked a turning point that allowed the initiative to grow.



8. Representation and co-ownership

From the outset, migrant youth themselves voiced their needs during educational sessions, making their representation central to the project's design. The initiative therefore reflects a bottom-up demand rather than being imposed from outside. In terms of co-ownership, some participants have become active in the organisation and play visible roles within teams, but formal responsibility largely remains with volunteers and local institutions.

9. Funding

The funding of Campus Sansofé is fragile with no single stable source. Occasional support comes from the Provincial Council of Tenerife, while the University of La Laguna and CD Tenerife contribute through facilities and organisational backing. Local clubs also provide resources, mainly by absorbing participants into their structures. However, the majority of activities are sustained through volunteer labour and community goodwill.

Case 4: Leintz Valley

Country: Spain

City: Leintz Valley

Name of project / programme: **Leintz Eskola Kirol Egokitua (LEKE)**

Analytical description:

1. Broad notion of sport

LEKE follows a broad and inclusive understanding of sport, as it is not limited to performance-oriented or competitive activities. Instead, the programme combines gym-

based sessions, swimming, leisure-oriented physical activity, and weekend events. Activities are adapted to the specific needs, interests, and abilities of children and young people aged 6 to 21, many of whom have functional diversity. Importantly, the project is embedded in the official Eskola Kirola (School Sport) programme, ensuring that adapted and inclusive sport is recognised as part of mainstream education rather than a separate, peripheral activity.

2. Socio-spacial orientation

The project is strongly anchored in the local socio-spatial context of the Leintz Valley (Gipuzkoa). It makes systematic use of neighbourhood infrastructures such as school gyms, swimming pools, and municipal facilities provided free of charge by local councils. Key neighbourhood stakeholders include schools, parent associations (AMPAs), local municipalities, and the Provincial Council of Gipuzkoa.

3. Cross-sectorality / intra-sectorality

LEKE represents a cross-sectoral collaboration between education, sport, social inclusion, and local government. The development phase was driven by the Federation of Adapted Sport of Gipuzkoa, the Provincial Council, municipalities, and schools. In the implementation phase, schools and AMPAs became particularly central, coordinating daily logistics and family engagement. The cooperative Athlon provides specialised instructors, while the Federation continues to support with training, technical expertise, and institutional leadership.

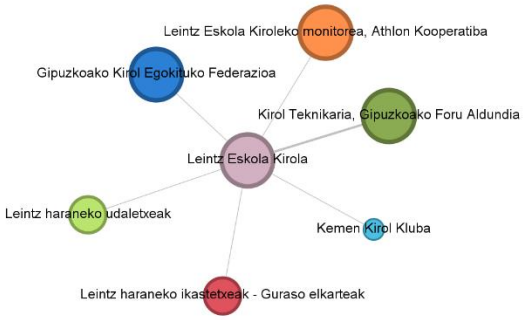


Figure 4. LEKE implementation network

4. Change of role (referring to the sport club(s))

LEKE does not primarily involve traditional sport clubs, but rather schools and adapted sport organisations. The Federation of Adapted Sport of Gipuzkoa, in particular, has gone beyond its original responsibility of promoting competitive adapted sport to lead a systemic change in school sport, embedding inclusivity and adaptation as part of mainstream educational practice, thus broadening their role to become social actors.

5. Professionalisation

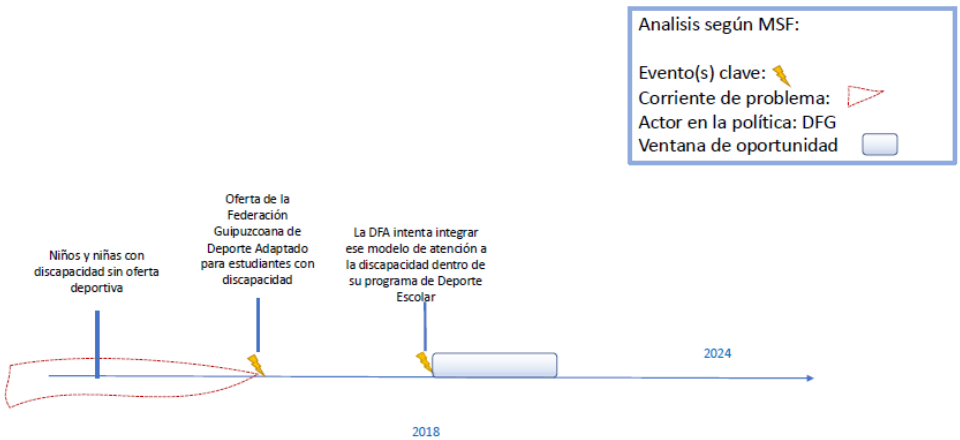
A key strength of LEKE lies in its progressive professionalisation. Instructors are hired through the Athlon cooperative and are trained specifically in inclusive pedagogy, adapted sport, and special education. The Federation provides systematic training, follow-up, and technical guidance. Professionalisation is also visible in the strong organisational planning and coordination mechanisms between schools, families, and local institutions. However, challenges remain in recruiting sufficient specialised staff and in updating activity offerings to match children's evolving needs.

6. Role of engaged individual(s) – "the people on fire" / "Ildsjel"

While the programme benefits from motivated and conscious staff, its sustainability is not overly dependent on a single "heroic" individual. Instead, collective commitment and distributed responsibility are key features. Teachers, instructors, school directors, AMPAs, and federation staff all share responsibility. Nonetheless, the strong involvement of highly committed instructors and school staff plays a central role in ensuring a positive and flexible implementation. The programme has built-in structures for knowledge transfer (training, coordination meetings, federation oversight), reducing vulnerability to turnover.

7. Path dependency and change

The origins of LEKE reflect path dependency shaped by earlier practices and focusing events. In 2016–2017, the Gipuzkoa Federation of Adapted Sport piloted activities for students with functional diversity. Building on this foundation, in 2018 the Provincial Council attempted to integrate adapted offers directly into the mainstream School Sport Programme. This institutional window of opportunity gave rise to EKE (Eskola Kirola Egokitua, adapted sport) and EKI (Eskola Kirola Inklusiboa, inclusive sport). LEKE emerged as the first territorial pilot in the Leintz Valley, combining these models and pioneering the "bridge offer" that allows fluid transition between adapted and inclusive pathways.



8. Representation and co-ownership

In the development phase, representation was primarily institutional, with the Federation and Provincial Council advocating for children with functional diversity. Families and schools also voiced needs through AMPAs. In the implementation phase, co-ownership is more visible, as schools have integrated LEKE into their Educational Project (PEC) and families actively participate in daily support and coordination. Children's own agency is promoted by giving them choices (adapted, inclusive, or mixed pathways), allowing their voices and preferences to shape their sporting trajectories.

9. Funding

The programme's funding model is mixed, with contributions from schools (via quotas), municipalities (subsidies and free use of facilities), and the Provincial Council of Gipuzkoa (provincial-level subsidies). Importantly, the Federation provides technical and institutional backing rather than direct funding. As in other cases, the bulk of financial support comes from education and social cohesion budgets rather than from the sports sector alone. This diversified model ensures continuity but also requires ongoing negotiation between stakeholders.

Case 5: San Sebastián

Country: Spain

City: San Sebastián

Name of project / programme: **Hegalak**

Analytical description:

1. Broad notion of sport

Hegalak adopts a very broad and innovative notion of sport, positioning physical activity as both a tool for inclusion and a form of health promotion. The project goes beyond competitive or recreational sport by inserting rehabilitation, functional training, mental health support, and even some high-performance opportunities for Paralympic athletes. Its principle of *reverse inclusion*—designing facilities and programmes for people with disabilities in such a way that everyone else also fits—transforms the traditional understanding of accessibility in sport.

2. Socio-spacial orientation

The centre is strongly rooted in its local context in San Sebastián, both spatially and socially. It is located in a central and privileged urban area, ensuring visibility and accessibility. Municipal authorities initially ceded the space, and the Fundación Hegalak Zabalik (a partnership between the city council, provincial government, and the Gipuzkoa Federation of Adapted Sport) ensures that neighbourhood needs are integrated. Users (2,200 active

members) reflect the diversity of the surrounding community, and specialised programmes are also offered for people with disabilities referred from other municipalities.

3. Cross-sectorality / intra-sectorality

Hegalak is a highly cross-sectoral initiative. It brings together public authorities (municipality, provincial council and public health service), the sports sector (adapted sport federation), private companies (through sponsorship and CSR projects), and social foundations. In the development phase, collaboration was led by the Gipuzkoa Federation of Adapted Sport and municipal authorities. In the implementation phase, the private operator *Kirola eta Gaitasuna* manages the centre, supported by a multidisciplinary professional team of 38 (physiotherapists, doctors, coaches). Private companies increasingly contribute through sponsorship of targeted inclusion programmes.

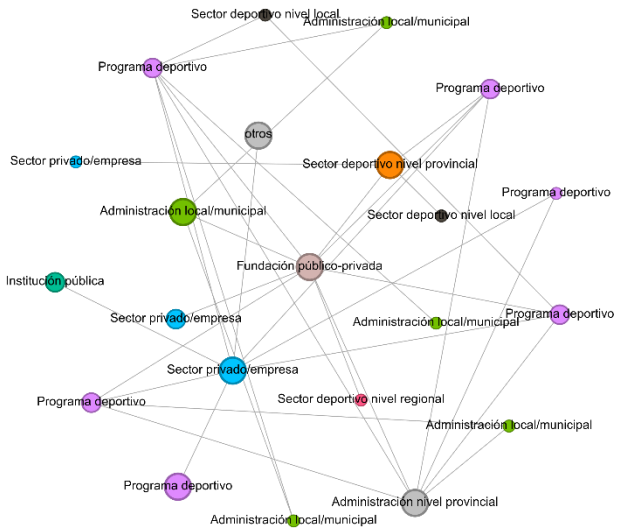


Figure 5. Hegalak implementation network

4. Change of role (referring to the sport club(s))

Rather than a traditional sports club, Hegalak operates as a specialized sports centre. Its operational model aligns with organizations that assume a broader social role. This is made possible through the work of the Fundación Hegalak Zabalik, which is funded by the San Sebastián City Council, the Regional Council of Gipuzkoa, and the Gipuzkoa Federation of Adapted Sport. The foundation subsidizes programs for people with disabilities and those at risk of social exclusion. By doing so, it ensures the long-term viability of these initiatives, which, from a purely commercial standpoint, would not be financially sustainable for the private company that manages the centre. In this way, Hegalak effectively addresses the needs of populations that are often excluded from mainstream sports practices. The Gipuzkoa Federation of Adapted Sport, originally focused on promoting competitive adapted sport, has been a key driver of this systemic change, co-founding the foundation and embedding inclusion and health promotion into its mission.

5. Professionalisation

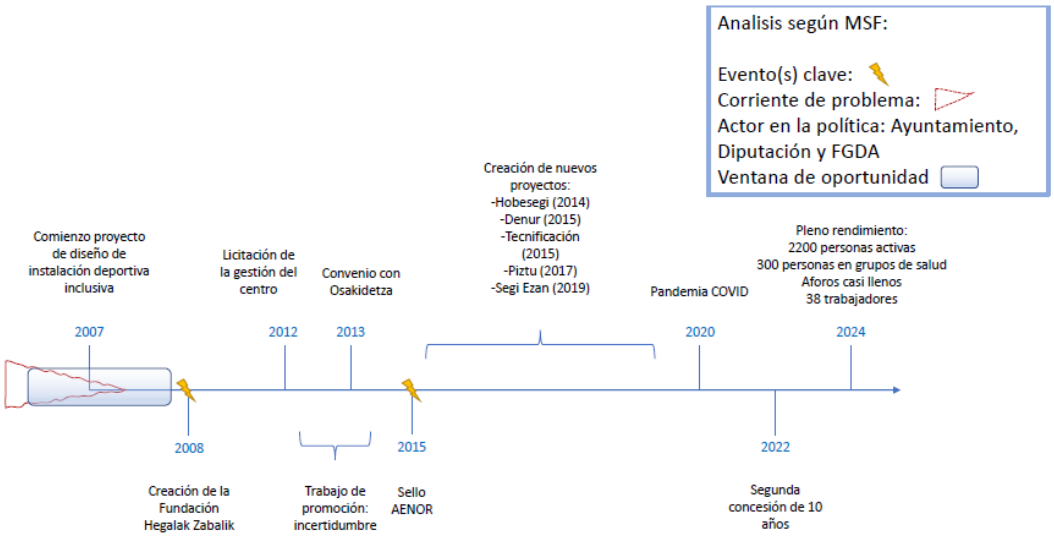
Professionalisation is one of Hegalak's strongest features. A multidisciplinary team of 38 **paid professionals** delivers services that combine sport, health, and rehabilitation. Staff specialise in adapted sport, inclusive pedagogy, physiotherapy, and medicine. Beyond technical expertise, the organisation has also professionalised project management, evaluation, and partnership building. The AENOR universal accessibility certification (2015) further demonstrates professionalisation in infrastructure and governance.

6. Role of engaged individual(s) – "the people on fire" / "Ildsjel"

While Hegalak benefits from highly motivated leaders and staff, the initiative is not dependent on a single individual. Its governance is collective, secured by the Fundación Hegalak Zabalik and the operational company *Kirola eta Gaitasuna*. Processes for knowledge transfer, continuous training, and supervision are institutionalised. Still, the project's founding figures within the Gipuzkoa Federation of Adapted Sport played a crucial initial role in pushing for its creation.

7. Path dependency and change

In 2007, the Federation of Adapted Sport flagged the absence of facilities for people with special needs. This catalysed municipal action (granting of a 500 m² facility), which later expanded through investment from the city, provincial government, and financial institutions (Kutxa). The creation of the Fundación Hegalak Zabalik in 2012 institutionalised the project, giving it a long-term concession of land and sustainable governance. The broader European and Spanish debates on accessibility and inclusion, combined with Paralympic sport visibility, created a window of opportunity for its development.



8. Representation and co-ownership

Representation occurred strongly in the development phase, with the Gipuzkoa Federation of Adapted Sport advocating for the needs of people with disabilities. In the implementation phase, co-ownership is realised through active participation of users, who shape programme design, benefit from tailored offers, and remain involved over the long term. Families and vulnerable groups (e.g. women at risk of exclusion, people with visual impairments) co-develop pilot initiatives that later become permanent parts of the programme.

9. Funding

Hegalak's funding model is mixed and innovative. The foundation (comprising the city council, provincial government, and Gipuzkoa Federation of Adapted Sport) provides structural backing and legal frameworks. The operator generates revenue primarily through memberships and service fees, while public subsidies cover targeted social programmes for vulnerable groups. Increasingly, private companies contribute sponsorship, funding specialised initiatives. Thus, funding stems not only from sport but also from health, social inclusion, and corporate social responsibility budgets.

Case 6: Oarsoaldea (Lezo-Pasaia-Oiartzun)

Country: Spain

City: Oarsoaldea (Lezo-Pasaia-Oiartzun)

Name of project / programme: **KOZ (Sport Orientation Service)**

Analytical description:

1. Broad notion of sport

The KOZ model embraces a broad and inclusive notion of physical activity. Rather than restricting itself to competitive or performance-oriented activities, it integrates physical activity in diverse formats, ranging from gentle mobility exercises for older adults to group walks in natural environments, strength and balance sessions, or referrals to local sports clubs. This wide understanding positions physical activity as a tool for health, social connection, and wellbeing, making it accessible to people with chronic conditions, socio-economic disadvantages, or low prior engagement in sport.

2. Socio-spacial orientation

KOZ services are rooted in the everyday infrastructures of the municipalities where they operate. They make use of community-based settings such as municipal sports centres, health clinics, neighbourhood associations, and public spaces, ensuring accessibility and proximity to participants' living environments. The neighbourhood orientation is institutionalised rather than dependent on voluntary engagement: each municipality appoints professionals (KOZ specialists) who are employed to connect the service with health centres, social services, and local sports organisations. By embedding activity into familiar,

nearby spaces, KOZ reduces barriers to participation while also strengthening community networks.

3. Cross-sectorality / intra-sectorality

The KOZ initiative is a clear example of cross-sector collaboration. From its origins, it has brought together the health sector (Osakidetza and health professionals), the social sector (municipal social services, associations), and the sports sector (municipal sports services, local clubs, etc.). While in the development phase health and sports actors played the central role (with doctors prescribing activity and municipalities hosting facilities), the implementation phase broadened collaboration by systematically integrating social services and community associations. This cross-sectoral structure ensures that inactivity is addressed not only as a health issue, but also as a social one, requiring tailored responses across sectors.

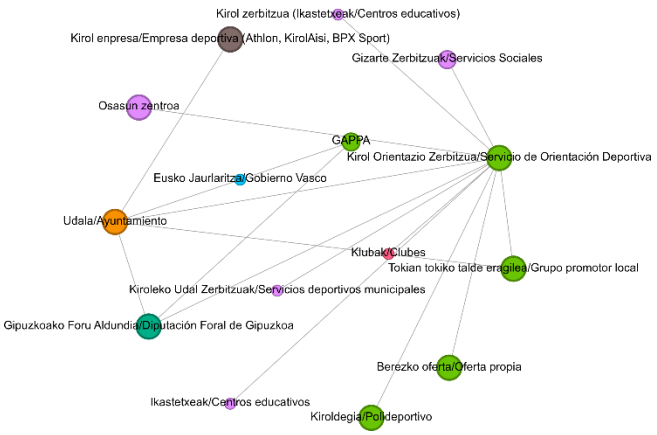


Figure 6. KOZ implementation network

4. Change of role (referring to the sport club(s))

The KOZs do not function like traditional sports clubs. Their operation is based on directing and guiding people—everyone, from those who are initially inactive to active individuals seeking to change their habits—towards practices that will ensure their long-term adherence and improve their quality of life.

5. Professionalisation

Professionalisation is one of KOZ's strongest features. From its methodological guide (developed in 2018) to its integration into regional policies, the initiative has formalised training for KOZ specialists, standardised referral protocols, and introduced scientific monitoring tools. Professionals are trained to combine knowledge of physical activity with community engagement and social care, effectively creating a new professional profile. Additionally, the programme has advanced in areas such as evidence-based evaluation, fundraising from multiple public sources, and communication strategies. These processes

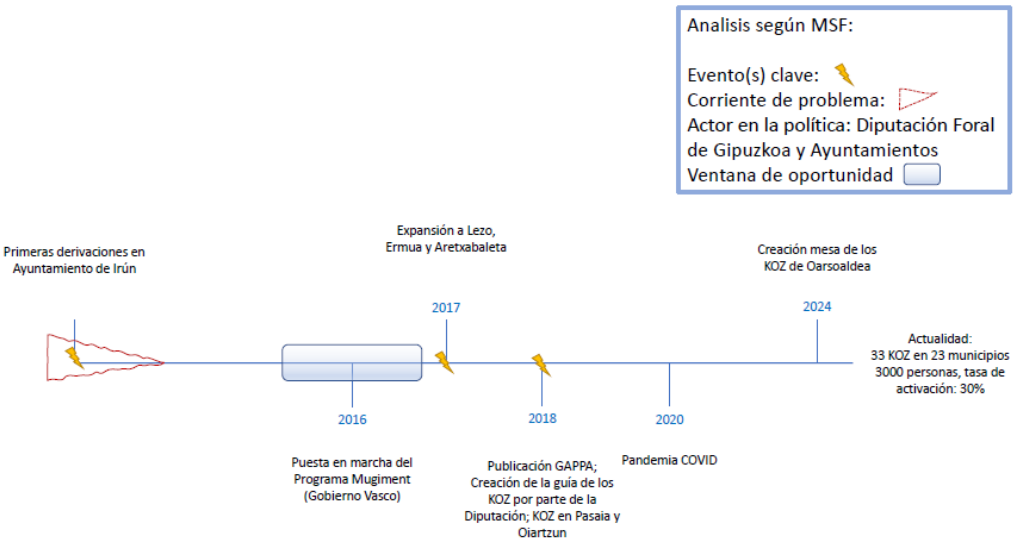
demonstrate how the initiative has moved from a pilot phase towards a professionalised, sustainable service.

6. Role of engaged individual(s) – “the people on fire” / “Ildsjel”

While individual highly motivated individuals were crucial in the early stages — particularly in Irun’s 2013 pilot — KOZ has deliberately institutionalised those roles to avoid dependency on single “Ildsjel” figures. Today, specialists are contracted and paid, and their responsibilities are inserted within municipal structures. Knowledge transfer is secured through methodological guides, training sessions, and regional coordination from the Regional Council of Gipuzkoa and the Basque Government’s Mugiment programme.

7. Path dependency and change

KOZ builds on existing practices of physical activity and municipal sport services but innovates by formalising the connection between health, sport, and social care. The first pilot in Irun in 2013 acted as a starting point, showing proof of concept. A key focusing event was the regional political recognition — materialised in the Mugiment strategy (2016) — that inactivity was a public health challenge requiring intersectoral responses. The COVID-19 pandemic also affected its development, highlighting the risks of inactivity and isolation, and reinforcing the legitimacy of KOZ as a preventive and community-based solution.



8. Representation and co-ownership

Representation of target groups has been indirect but systematic. Needs were primarily voiced through health and social professionals, who identified vulnerable populations such as older adults, women, or people facing socio-economic barriers. However, during the implementation phase, co-ownership emerged: participants not only joined activities but also shaped them through feedback loops, and in some cases, groups became self-organised (e.g., walking groups or peer-support sessions). While formal decision-making remains in the

hands of institutions, the participatory dimension has grown, with users increasingly influencing the nature and direction of activities.

9. Funding

KOZ is sustained by a mixed funding model. Municipal budgets provide the base infrastructure and staff contracts, the Gipuzkoa Provincial Council contributes strategic funding, and the Basque public health system supports integration with health services. This means that a large share of funding comes from health and social policy, not solely from sports departments. Most activities are free of charge for participants, eliminating economic barriers. The collaborative nature of the funding model — anchored in public institutions — is one of the programme's guarantees of sustainability, although challenges remain in securing long-term stability.

Case 7: Madrid

Country: Spain

City: Madrid

Name of project / programme: **Dragones de Lavapiés**

Analytical description:

1. Broad notion of sport

The Dragones de Lavapiés project embodies a broad notion of sport. While football remains at the center, the club redefines itself as a tool for inclusion, activism, and community building. Participation is not limited to competitive matches: initiatives such as La Liga Ganberra (LGTBIQ+ inclusive league), mixed-gender teams, and solidarity matches illustrate that sport is a vehicle for expressing diversity and challenging social inequalities. Football here is less about elite performance and more about fostering belonging, intercultural exchange, and shared identity within a multicultural neighborhood.

2. Socio-spacial orientation

The project is deeply rooted in the Lavapiés neighborhood, one of Madrid's most diverse districts. From its origins, it brought together families, local associations, schools, and municipal institutions to design inclusive sport opportunities. The club's activities take place in private facilities and municipal facilities that have been transformed into community hubs where tutoring, intercultural workshops, and solidarity gatherings are organized.

3. Cross-sectorality / intra-sectorality

Dragones operates at the intersection of multiple sectors: grassroots sport, education, social work, migration and refugee support, and activism against racism. During the development phase, families and neighborhood associations were central actors. As the club expanded, alliances grew stronger, involving the City of Madrid, NGOs such as FARE Network, and

international initiatives like Common Goal. The implementation phase now also engages universities, corporate sponsors with social responsibility programs, and cultural organizations.

4. Change of role (referring to the sport club(s))

In this case, the club itself is the social innovator. Unlike traditional football clubs, Dragones redefines its role explicitly as a social actor. Rather than focusing only on competition and membership, the club prioritizes inclusion, activism, and community engagement. It is not a case of opting out or playing a minor role within a broader project: the club is the project, and its development reflects a deliberate transformation of what a football club can represent in society.

5. Professionalisation

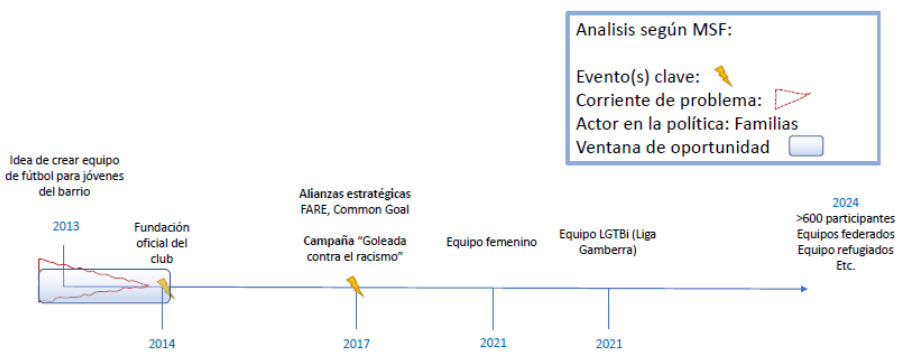
Professionalisation is visible in specific areas, although the project retains a strong grassroots character. The appointment of a sports coordinator and structured management bodies reflects a shift towards organizational maturity. Some staff and volunteers have developed skills in grant writing, fundraising, diversity and anti-racism training, and project evaluation. However, professionalisation is partial and challenged by unstable funding, which limits the ability to employ staff systematically or secure long-term sustainability.

6. Role of engaged individual(s) – “the people on fire” / “Ildsjel”

The project has relied heavily on the passion and commitment of key individuals—parents, volunteers, and community leaders—since its foundation. Much of the coordination remains unpaid or poorly compensated, with significant tasks carried out voluntarily. This reliance on “people on fire” is both a strength, in terms of authenticity and grassroots ownership, and a risk, as the continuity of programs can be jeopardized by burnout or staff turnover.

7. Path dependency and change

Dragones builds on pre-existing traditions of neighborhood self-organization in Lavapiés and on Spain’s grassroots football culture. The founding families adapted these traditions to address perceived exclusions in conventional football schools. Several events shaped the club’s trajectory: the refugee crisis of 2015, which inspired the creation of teams for young asylum seekers; growing national debates on racism in football; and the COVID-19 pandemic, which highlighted inequalities in children’s physical activity.



8. Representation and co-ownership

Representation of the target group was central from the outset: the founding families were themselves members of the neighborhood, and decisions about the project were made collectively. This ensured that the voices of children, migrants, and diverse communities were present from the development phase. In the implementation phase, co-ownership is evident in participatory governance: families, volunteers, and players help shape decisions, organize solidarity activities, and even represent the club in external networks.

9. Funding

Funding comes from a diverse but unstable mix of sources. While a share derives from sports-related subsidies (municipal sport programs, small contributions from federated competition), much of the support comes from outside the sports sector. International networks (e.g., FARE, Common Goal), social cohesion and integration funds, and occasional EU projects have contributed significantly. Donations and solidarity events supplement these resources. However, the lack of consistent public institutional funding creates structural vulnerability: the club demonstrates social impact but struggles to secure stable resources for professional staff and adequate infrastructure.

Case 8: Valencia

Country: Spain

City: Valencia

Name of project / programme: **Club Deportivo LGTBI+ Samarucs**

Analytical description:

1. Broad notion of sport

Samarucs embraces a broad understanding of sport. While it competes in federated disciplines such as swimming, volleyball, athletics, and taekwondo, the club also organizes recreational activities, inclusive training sessions, and cultural events like the Jocs Taronja. The club also sees sport as a way to increase the visibility of the collective, aiming to normalize its presence in sports and in society at large. Sport is not limited to performance but serves as a safe space for identity expression, empowerment, and community building. By offering both leisure and competitive options across 16 disciplines, Samarucs demonstrates that sport can be at once athletic, social, and political.

2. Socio-spacial orientation

The club is closely tied to the city of Valencia and its sports infrastructure. It has built a strong relationship with the municipality, which provides access to public sports facilities at reduced rates. The Jocs Taronja biennial tournament also positions Samarucs as a regional reference, bringing visibility to LGTBI+ inclusion in Mediterranean sport. Neighborhood-level

ties are less central than in other grassroots clubs, but the orientation is urban and community-driven: Samarucs transforms public facilities into visibly inclusive and welcoming spaces, thereby reshaping how local sports venues are perceived and used.

3. Cross-sectorality / intra-sectorality

The Samarucs network spans across sectors: grassroots sport, municipal institutions, feminist organizations, and broader LGTBIQ+ networks. In the development phase, the initiative was largely intra-sectoral, emerging from a small group of athletes who wanted safer sporting contexts. In the implementation phase, however, cross-sectorality became stronger, involving the City Council of Valencia, international LGTBIQ+ sport networks, and cultural and activist groups. Samarucs has also engaged with educational and training institutions through workshops, extending its reach beyond sport.

4. Change of role (referring to the sport club(s))

Samarucs represents a clear example of a sports club assuming the role of social actor. From the moment it institutionalized its name as Club Deportivo LGTBI+ Samarucs in 2009, it embraced visibility and activism, carrying rainbow flags into federated competitions and organizing its own inclusive events.

5. Professionalisation

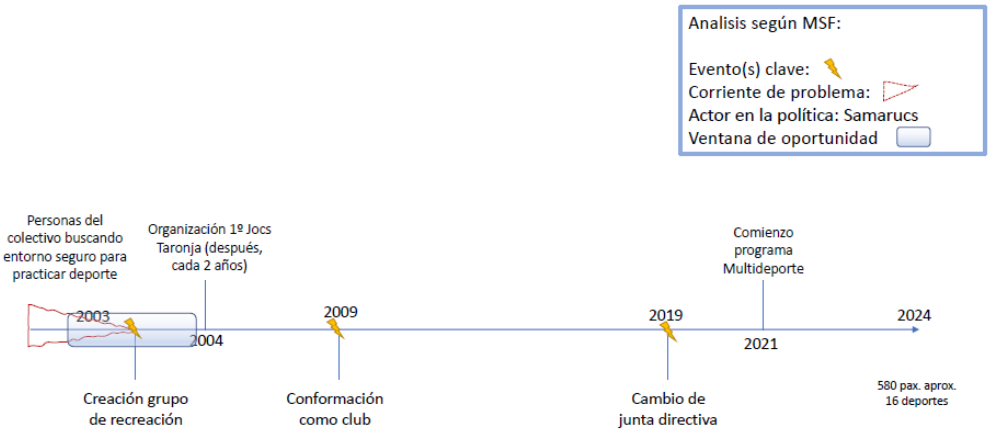
While Samarucs remains largely volunteer-based, elements of professionalisation have emerged. Coordinators have taken on structured responsibilities for managing activities, and governance has become more formal, with a gender-balanced board integrating feminist perspectives. Members have developed skills in event organization, fundraising (through tournaments and workshops), and inclusive communication strategies.

6. Role of engaged individual(s) – “the people on fire” / “Ildsjel”

Like many grassroots organizations, Samarucs relies heavily on the commitment of highly engaged individuals, particularly board members and coordinators. Much of the work is voluntary, reflecting dedication to both sport and LGTBIQ+ rights. The presence of strong leaders has ensured continuity and growth, especially after the leadership renewal in 2019 that spurred expansion.

7. Path dependency and change

The club builds on pre-existing traditions of recreational sport and LGTBIQ+ organizing in Valencia. Its early years (2003–2009) established a safe recreational network, later institutionalized with official registration and the creation of federated teams. Focusing events shaped its trajectory: the decision to explicitly include “LGTBI+” in its name in 2009 gave visibility and political meaning to its mission; international growth of LGTBIQ+ sport events inspired the Jocs Taronja; and more recently, rising debates about trans inclusion in sport opened the window for the Multisport Program for Trans Youth in 2021.



8. Representation and co-ownership

From the beginning, representation was embedded, as Samarucs was founded by and for LGTBIQ+ athletes. Needs were not mediated by professionals but articulated directly by participants who lacked safe spaces in mainstream sport. Co-ownership is equally visible: the club operates on a self-management model where members actively participate in decision-making, governance, and activity organization. The gender-balanced board and feminist approach to governance reinforce this sense of shared responsibility, while the growing inclusion of allies beyond the LGTBIQ+ community broadens ownership without diluting its activist core.

9. Funding

Samarucs maintains financial sustainability primarily through membership fees, which are deliberately kept affordable and complemented with scholarships to avoid exclusion. Additional funding comes from events such as the Jocs Taronja and training workshops, with all income reinvested into the community. The partnership with the City of Valencia, granting access to public facilities at reduced rates, is a crucial institutional support. Unlike many sports clubs, Samarucs does not rely on corporate sponsorships, which allows it to safeguard its independence and activist identity.