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Social Inclusion and Volunteering in Sports Clubs in Europe

EU Funded Research Project 2015-2017

**Summary of findings presentation to the Games & Sports Division
of the Sport & Recreation Alliance**

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Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
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EUROPEAN RESEARCH PROJECT 2015 – 2017

FINDINGS FOR POLICY MAKERS AND PRACTITIONERS IN ENGLAND AND WALES

Social Inclusion and Volunteering in Sports Clubs in Europe

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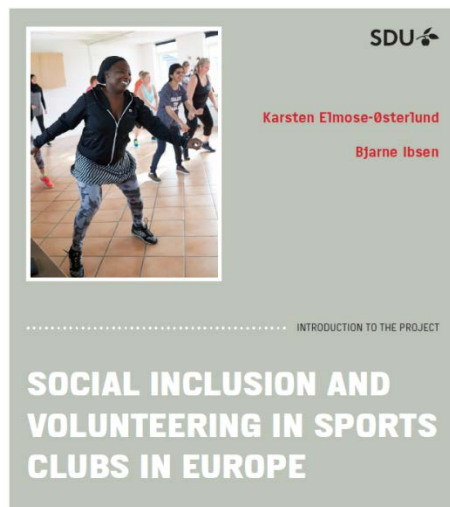
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The University Of Sheffield.

Plus, several other reports published:



SPORTS CLUB POLICIES IN EUROPE

Bjarne Ibsen, Geoff Nichols and Karsten Elmose-Østerlund



CHARACTERISTICS OF EUROPEAN SPORTS CLUBS

Christoph Breuer, Svenja Feiler, Ramon Llopis-Goig and Karsten Elmose-Østerlund



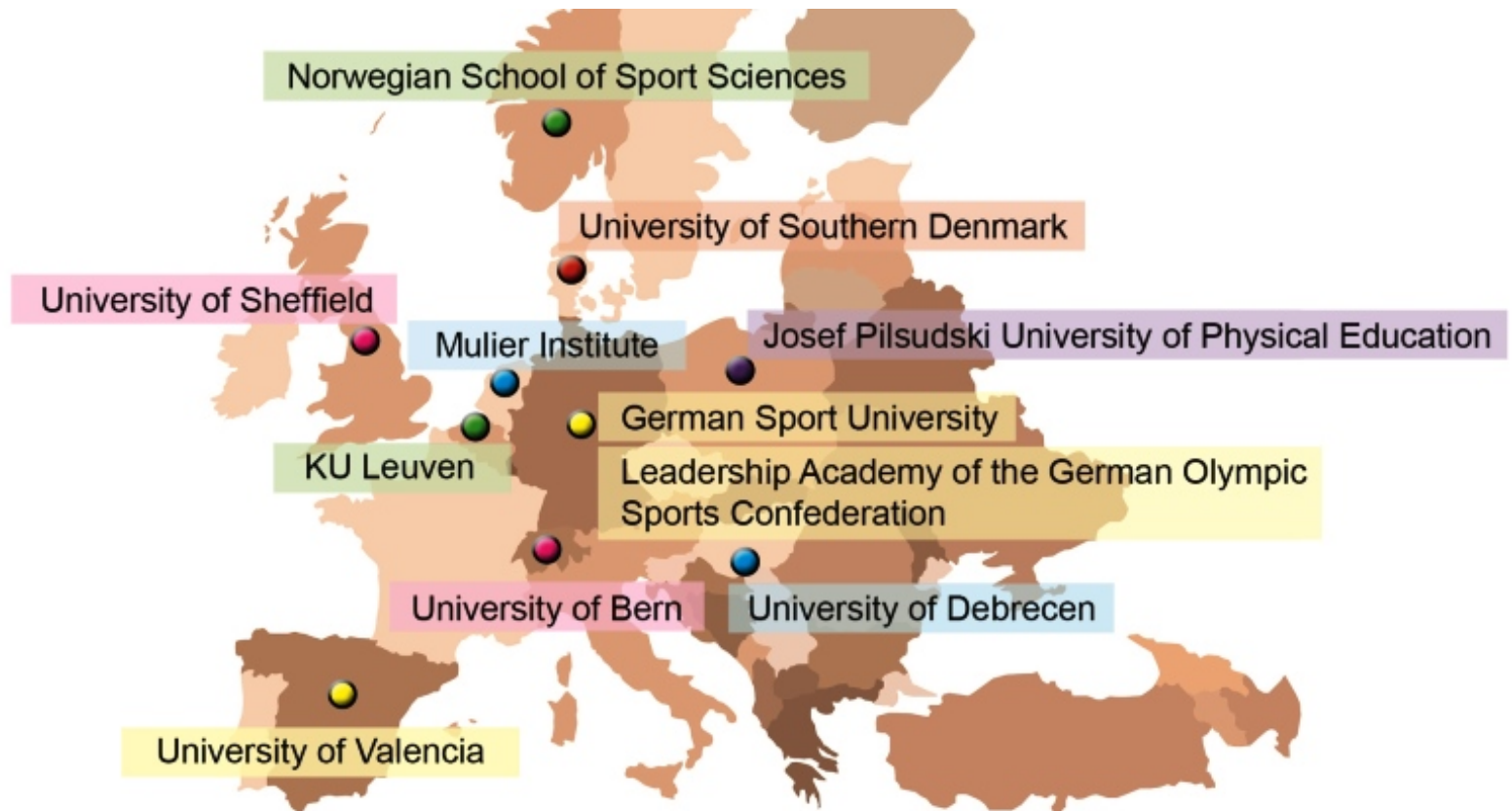
Visit the project website: <http://www.sdu.dk/SIVSCE>



1. Background to the European project.
2. Comparing sport policies – to show what might be done in UK.
3. Indication of other results
 - 1) Comparing sports clubs – to show strengths and weaknesses.
 - 2) Good practice in promoting volunteering and social inclusion
 - 3) English case study clubs



Ten project partners





Methods

- WP1.** Sports club policy analysis.
- WP2.** Sports club survey (35,790 clubs)
- WP3.** Member and volunteer survey (13,082)
- WP4.** Overall analysis of the results.
- WP5.** Examples of good practice (3 per country)
- WP6.** Handbook with suggestions for practice.
- WP7.** European and national conferences.

Why this matters

- 62,000 + sports clubs in England
- Contribution to sports participation – with associated benefits
- Contribution to social capital - a set of social relationships and shared enthusiasms to provide a collective resource

Differences across Europe

| | Sports club participation (%) | Participation in voluntary work that supports sport (%) |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| Netherlands | 27 | 18 |
| Switzerland | 25 | 22 |
| Denmark | 25 | 18 |
| Germany | 24 | 10 |
| Belgium | 16 | 9 |
| EU average | 12 | 7 |
| United Kingdom | 11 | 10 |
| Spain | 7 | 4 |
| Norway | 7 | 25 |
| Hungary | 7 | 6 |
| Poland | 3 | 3 |

Why differences across Europe?

History, welfare policies and level of equality are all influences - see report





Comparative sports policies

- From the 3 countries with highest participation levels
- Netherlands
- Switzerland
- Denmark
- Others – see project report on WP1.



The Netherlands

- Govt. funded ‘neighbourhood sports coaches’ - to stimulate cooperation between schools, sports clubs and other social organisations
- Legislation allows volunteers of sports clubs to receive a remuneration for time committed and expenses of €4.50 per hour – max. of €1,500 per year, without paying tax.
- Local governments provide facilities with reduced fees to sports clubs



Switzerland

- clubs supported through the national *Youth and Sport* programme - Federal Office of Sport distributes over 80 million Swiss Francs (CHF) per year (~£364m) to clubs engaged in the promotion of youth sports. Clubs receive a fee per young person (aged between five and 20 years) participating in their sports clubs.
- about two-thirds of the Swiss population aged between ten and 20 years take part



Switzerland

- National funding pays for the development of coaches
- currently over 120,000 licensed J+S coaches and managers in Switzerland. Specialised courses include how to recruit and motivate volunteers in a sports club and the integration of immigrants and disabled people.
- club receives free training of its coaches who deliver *Adults Sport Programme Switzerland (ESA)* for people over 20 years old



Switzerland

- Local government supports clubs by providing sports facilities at concessional rates [policy varies] – in 2010, about three-quarters of all sports clubs (73%) relied exclusively or partially on public sports facilities.
- Local govt. may pay a lump sum to clubs. about 5-20 CHF per member (~£4-£16) annually or a flat rate sum of 100 or 1,000 CHF.
- Clubs also receive financial support for special programmes that promote sport-related integration of immigrants.



Denmark

- ‘Leisure Act’ – obliges municipalities to give voluntary sports clubs access to facilities free of charge or against payment of a minor fee, for club members aged under 25 - and to receive reimbursement of two thirds of the cost of renting privately owned facilities
- Local government also gives clubs an amount for each member aged 25 or under - €3-15
- = 83% of the total public funding for sports in 2012



Denmark

- in most municipalities, all members of sports clubs can use the municipally owned facilities free of charge.
- Legislation permits people who do voluntary work to receive around €650 per year to cover expenses without being taxed



Policy - What could be lobbied for in England?

- What policies could be lobbied for in the present – or future political climate???
- Subsidy targeted at young people via clubs
- Subsidy of coaching qualifications
- Subsidised facility use
- Tax concessions for volunteers



Policy - What could be lobbied for in England?

- Why?
 - Contribution to participation and health
 - Contribution to social capital and volunteering



Comparing clubs across Europe

- English clubs are no worse or better a position than clubs across Europe in general –including recruiting members and vols. .
- **Biggest problem - access to facilities – threat to 9% of clubs** (bigger threat to clubs in Spain, Poland and Hungary, and almost as great in Norway.
- English clubs are second to least in use of public facilities



Other results....

- Comparing clubs across Europe by size, facility ownership / use, age, professional staff, single / multi-sport / programmes for target groups / level of government subsidy / gender balance of membership.
- Good practice in promoting volunteering and social inclusion
- See full English report, case study clubs, and project reports on web site.



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Questions?

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Thanks for listening.



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Club surveys - Best comparative data – provisos:

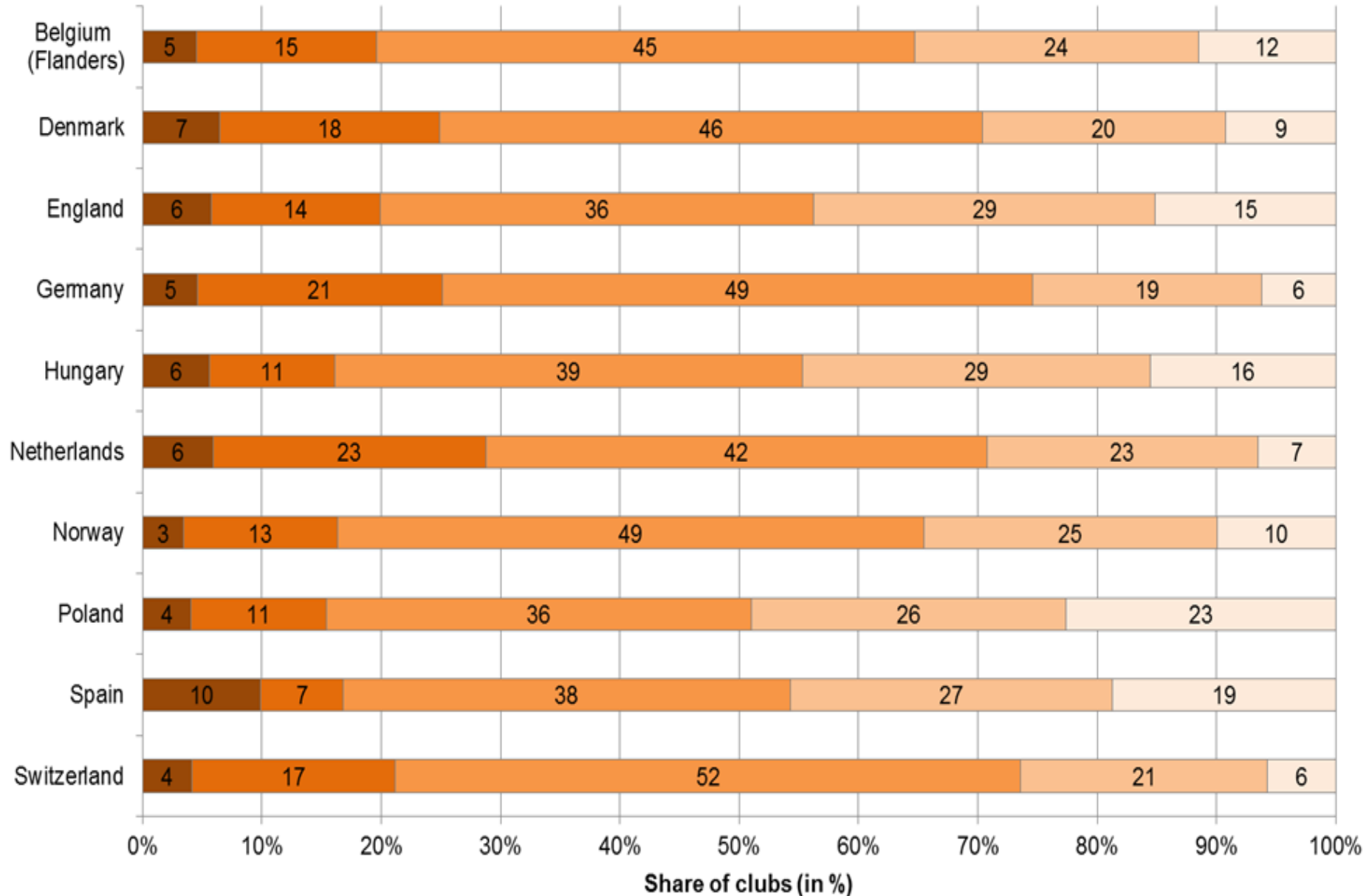
- Language interpreted differently?
- Some Qs hard to answer
- Responses may not be equally representative in each country
 - Report considers this.



Strengths of English clubs

- Stable numbers of volunteers and members
[in this sample]

Membership development



■ Large decrease (more than 25 %)

■ Moderate decrease (11-25 %)

■ Roughly unchanged (+/- 10 %)

■ Moderate increase (11-25 %)

■ Large increase (more than 25 %)

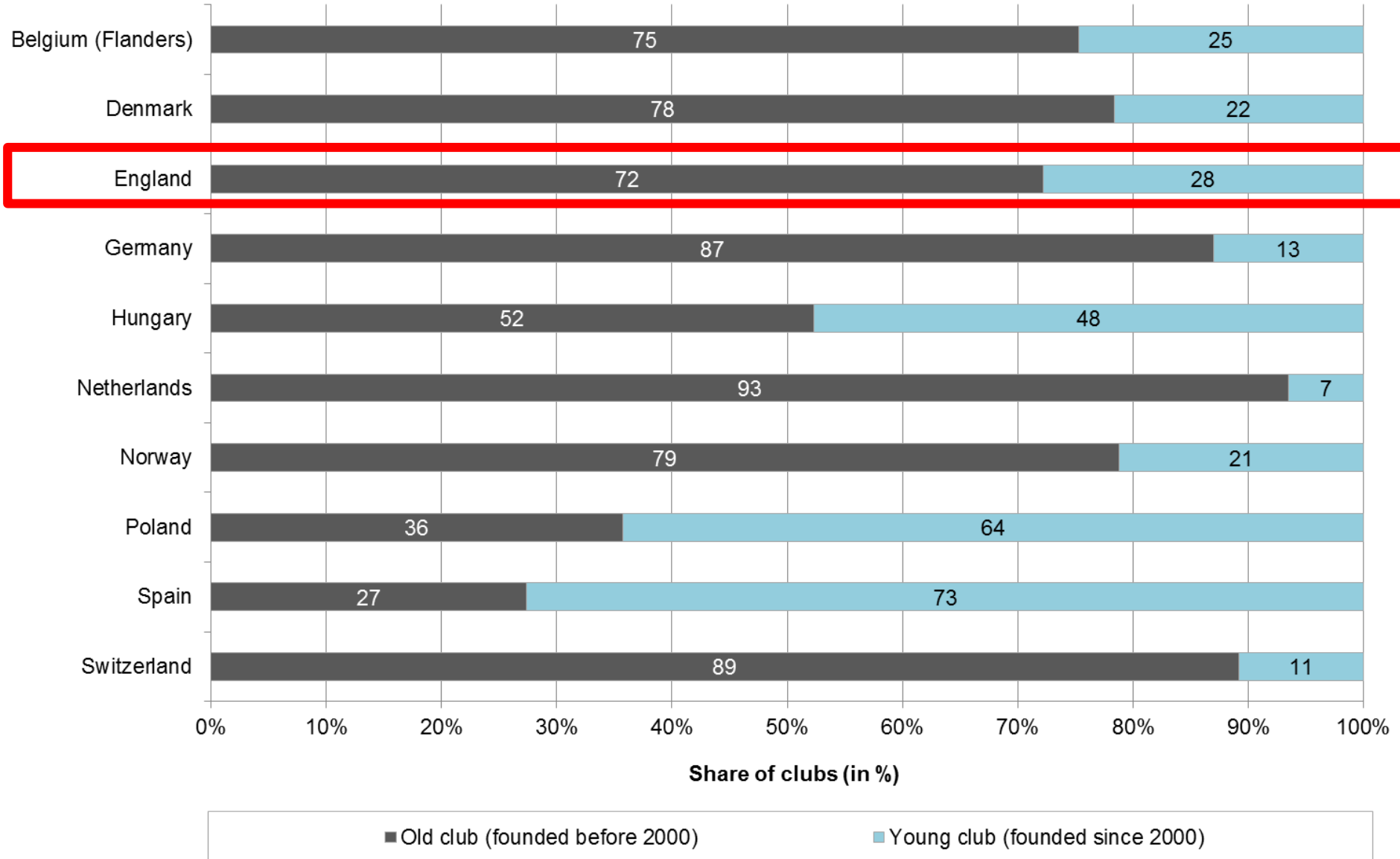


Strengths of English clubs

- Continuity – as a social institution
- In England 20% of clubs were founded before 1930 and 10% before 1900.
- 72% before 2000

Age of clubs

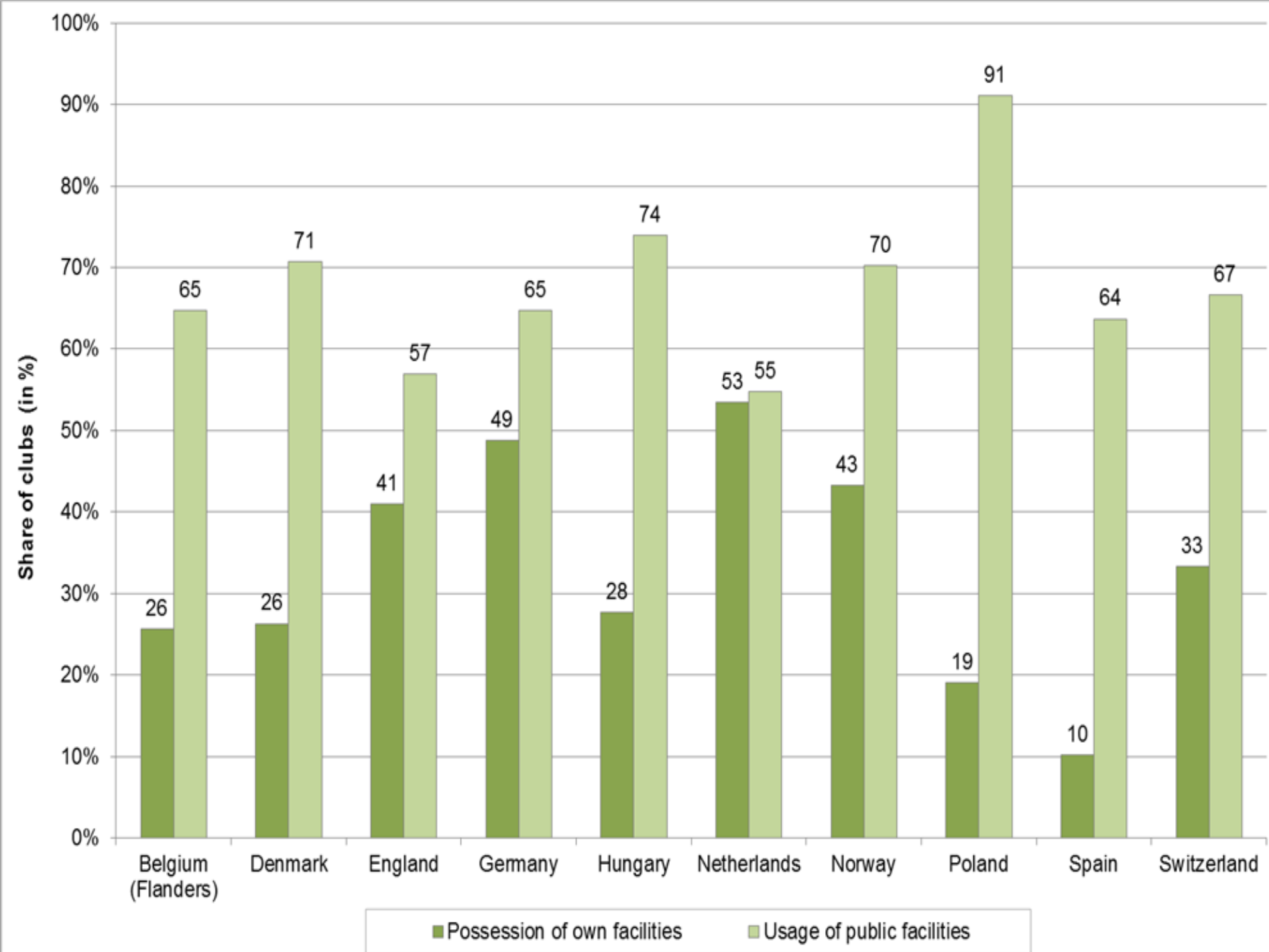
Old and young clubs





Strengths of English clubs

- 41% own their own facilities - source of revenue and a social hub.
- 57% use public facilities





Club weaknesses

- 9% threatened by access to facilities - probably reflects local govt. cuts
- Low level of public subsidy – but independence is also a strength
- Trends away from club sport

Public subsidy

| Country | Direct public subsidies (share of revenue in %) |
|--------------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| Poland | 41 |
| Hungary | 28 |
| Norway | 17 |
| Denmark | 15 |
| Switzerland | 14 |
| Belgium (Flanders) | 13 |
| Spain | 11 |
| Germany | 9 |
| England | 6 |
| Netherlands | 5 |



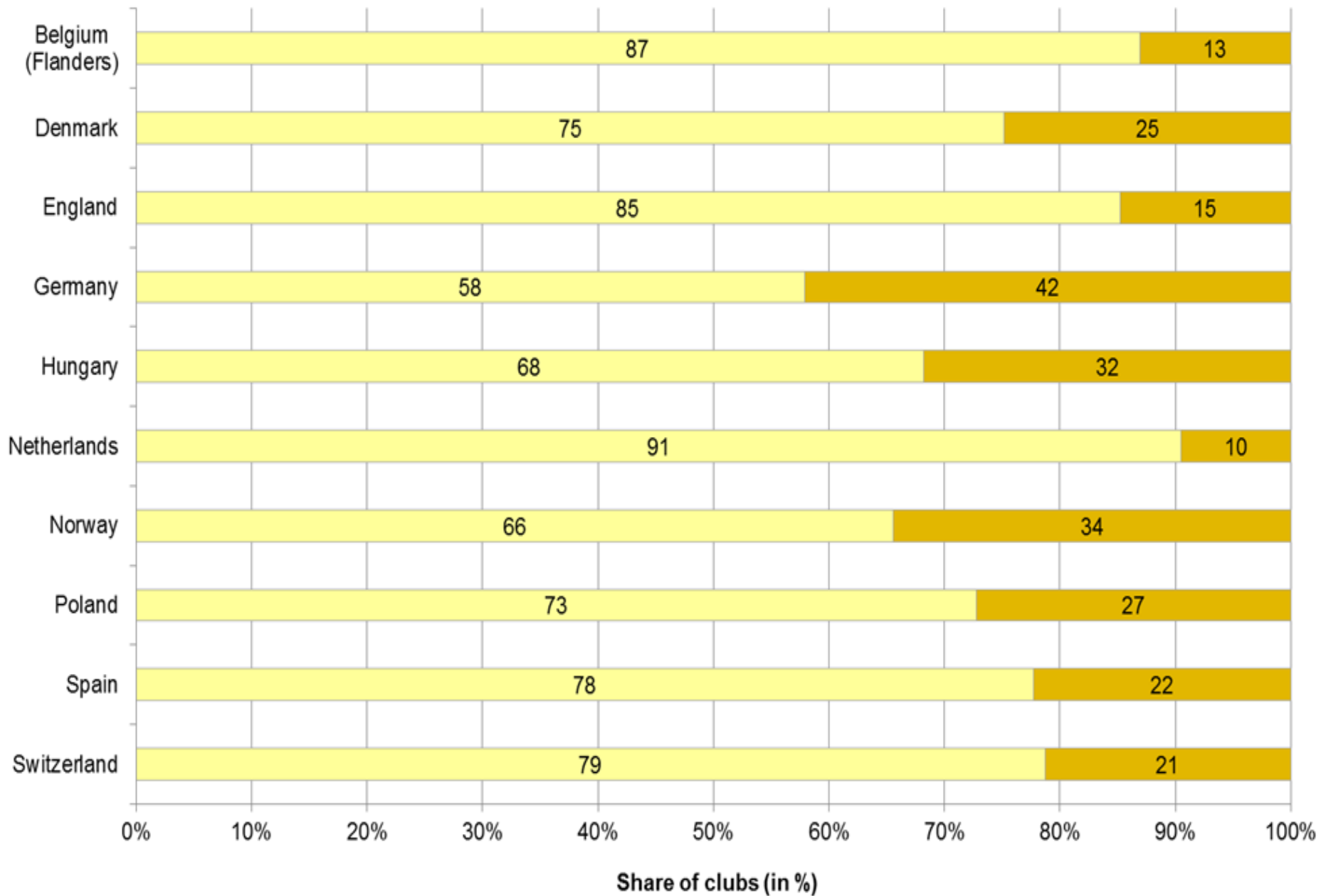
Other comparisons

- Size English clubs - average
- But note gender imbalance



| Country | | | |
|--------------------|------------------|-------|---------|
| | Median club size | Male% | Female% |
| Belgium (Flanders) | 76.0 | 66.6 | 33.4 |
| Denmark | 112.0 | 60.6 | 39.4 |
| England | 112.0 | 65.9 | 34.1 |
| Germany | 163.0 | 62.5 | 37.5 |
| Hungary | 50.0 | 68.5 | 31.5 |
| Netherlands | 270.0 | 62.0 | 38.0 |
| Norway | 199.0 | 60.2 | 39.8 |
| Poland | 60.0 | 72.4 | 27.6 |
| Spain | 45.0 | 70.0 | 30.0 |
| Switzerland | 58.0 | 63.6 | 36.4 |

Type of sport club (single vs. multisport club)



single sport club

multisport club



Paid staff, relative to members, in %

- Poland 5
- Spain 3
- Hungary 2
- Germany 2
- England, Denmark, Belgium (Flanders),
Netherlands, Norway, Switzerland 1



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Explaining country policy differences

- History
- Welfare state typology
- Level of inequality

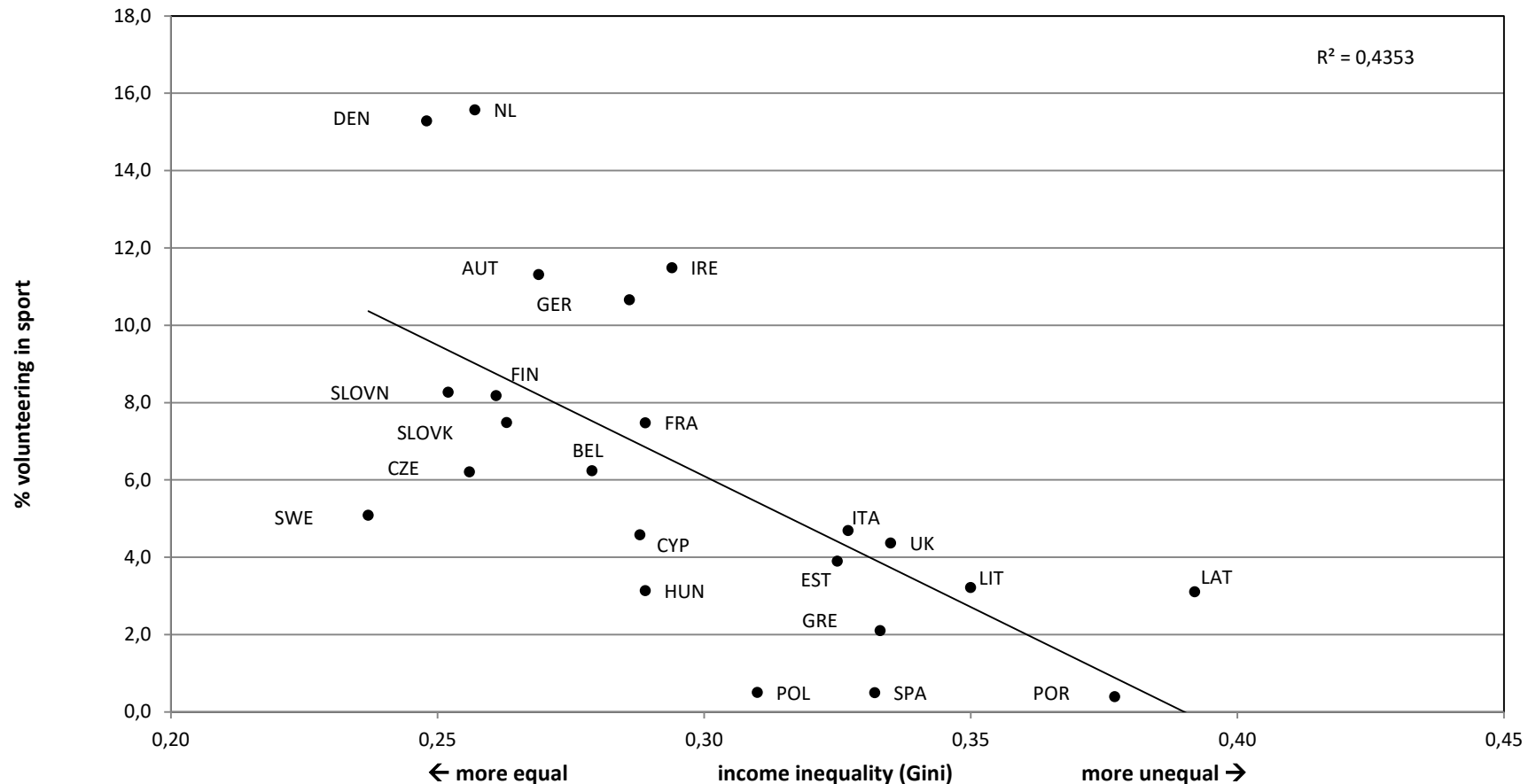


Welfare state typology

| Type of welfare state | Description | Countries in our study [and Equality rankings] |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| Liberal | USA as the most typical – a low level of redistribution and welfare rights | England (8) |
| The Conservative / Corporatist | A medium level of redistribution and welfare rights – Germany is typical | Germany (4), Flanders (3), Netherlands (2), (Switzerland) |
| Social Democratic / Universal | Sweden as the most typical – a high level of redistribution and welfare rights | Norway, Denmark (1) |
| Latin | | Spain (7) |
| Post-Communist | | Poland (6), Hungary (5) |



Income inequality by sports-related volunteering



Veal, A. J.& Nichols, G. (2017) Volunteering and income inequality: cross-national relationships. *Voluntas* 28(1), 379–399. P.395.

Parkrun – epitome of a growth activity

- **Eg Sheffield Hallam parkrun?**
- 5km run - Every Saturday at 9:00am. Endcliffe Park (Hunters Bar), Sheffield. - it's free! but please [register](#) before your first run. It is entirely organised by volunteers - email SheffieldHallamhelpers@parkrun.com to help.
- **We're friendly!** parkrun coffee at Endcliffe Park Café - please come and join us.

Parkrun – why?

- Flexible participation – in a growth sport you can do individually
- But – as a big group – social buzz
- For any level
- free

