

Chapter 21

Sport Clubs in Spain

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21.1 Introduction

Spain is a decentralised state with an approximate population of 47.1 million. It is a European Union member state since 1986 and the 13th largest economy in the world. According to the latest survey of sporting habits conducted in Spain (2010), 19 % of people over the age of 15 engage in some kind of sport or physical activity through a sports club or association. The corresponding figures in previous surveys were 24 % in 2005 and 25 % in 2000. Although the number of sports clubs in Spain has increased over the last 10 years, there has been an even greater rise in the number of people taking up recreational sport or physical activity without being formally linked to any sports federation or organisation. This chapter presents an analysis of sports clubs in Spain, doing so on the basis of information gathered from secondary sources, previous research, and studies conducted by the authors of this chapter.

The chapter begins by analysing the historical development of sports clubs in Spain, from their creation during the last quarter of the nineteenth century through to the present day. This first section offers an interpretation of the defining characteristics of sports clubs in Spain and their relatively late emergence, and discusses the principal milestones in their social and organisational development. The analysis here focuses specifically on the place of sports clubs within the wider national system of sport, and examines how the relationships between sports clubs and the state has

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evolved into what can be described as a highly interventionist model. The next section provides a quantitative overview concerning the number of sports clubs and their membership within Spanish society. This section is organised into two parts. The first examines the main statistics available on the number of federated sports clubs in Spain, while the second analyses the role of sports clubs with respect to the practice of sport by the Spanish population, and examines how this relationship has evolved over the last 30 years. In addition, a broad socio-demographic description of the membership of sports clubs and associations is presented. The data source for this part of the chapter is the 5-yearly surveys of sporting habits that have been conducted in Spain over the last 30 years, with the socio-demographic analysis being based on the most recent survey.

Following this broad analysis the third section of the chapter focuses on the characteristics of sports clubs. Given the absence of research for the Spanish population as a whole, the analysis in this section is based on studies that have been carried out in two of Spain's autonomous regions (Catalonia and Galicia). The aspects addressed includes the organisational features of clubs, such as their size, age and number of sections, the number and profile of members, the executive and management bodies, voluntary work, financial resources, range of sporting activities on offer, equipment and facilities, and relationships with the local area and other institutions. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the results, integrating the various data, drawing key conclusions from the analysis and proposing suggestions for future research.

The initial expansion of sport in Western Europe was tightly bound up with the English model of sports clubs. In Spain, modern sporting practices began to develop in the second half of the nineteenth century in urban, dockland and industrial areas as well as areas characterised by the development of energy resources by professionals who were European in origin. The first sports clubs were set up later than in other European countries, specifically in the last quarter of the nineteenth century (García 1986). The creation of clubs in Spain was closely associated with foreign professionals and specialists who came to the country to work in the industries then being set up. One of the best-known examples is FC Barcelona, founded by Hans Gamper, a Swiss engineer. To a large extent, the creation of clubs was also connected to young people who went to other European countries for their studies or to learn languages and later came back with new habits, including sport. Together, these factors brought English sport into Spanish society and introduced the idea of a democratically run, volunteer-based sports club (Heinemann 1999). Initially, the process took place in the more highly industrialised areas of the country, namely, Catalonia, the Basque Country and Madrid, but also in mining areas and in small centres of industrial activity in other regions of Spain (Puig et al. 1999a, b).

The historians Xavier Pujadas and Carles Santacana have identified the features characteristic of the majority of sports clubs emerging in Spain in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (Pujadas and Santacana 2003). The first of these features is the adoption of a number of precepts followed by early British clubs: equality among their sportspeople, the social standing of their directors, and their members' competitive ethos. The second feature is related to the fact that, although they acted as platforms for sociability and they had a collective function, they were

private bodies. Thirdly, the earliest Spanish sports clubs fostered amateurism as a core value, such that the sportspeople themselves were the managers and organisers of the club. This feature entailed a strong commitment to the club and it worked as a membership selection mechanism that precluded the participation of individuals whose social class was more modest. A fourth feature of the early clubs was an internal structure built on strict regimentation that enjoyed a certain degree of democratisation over time and gradually drew a distinction between practising sportspeople and club directors.

When the Franco regime (1939–1975) took power at the end of the Spanish Civil War (1936–1939), radical change came to the structure of sport. This change occurred in the very conception of sport, which ceased being part of civil society and was assimilated into the structure of the state. The political authorities appropriated sport and the new Francoist state transferred its control to the single party Falange in line with a theory that predicated absolute one-party control over society. The new Francoist state understood that sports clubs and associations were not merely social groups devoid of ideological content (Llopis-Goig 2006). It had a clear notion of the cultural, social and political significance of the various traditions fostered by sports associations throughout the first third of the twentieth century (Pujadas and Santacana 2003). Indeed, until 1964, the sports clubs were almost the sole associations permitted beyond the network of bodies controlled by the Minister Secretary-General of the Movement, through which the Falange Española y de las JONS was to play a monolithic role during the first half of the dictatorship. As a result, sports clubs became the only place with a certain margin for freedom of association and, until the passage of the Law of Associations in 1964; they remained, to some extent, the last redoubt of opposition against the regime (Rodríguez 2008). Even so, the clubs' latitude of freedom was extremely limited. Sports organisations were forced under the control of a state body set up in 1938, the National Sports Council (later renamed the National Sports Delegation), which was overseen by the Falange Española y de las JONS. In this way, sports clubs and federations lost their private character, their autonomy and their democratic ethos. How they operated was turned completely on its head. The National Sports Delegation took over the appointment of key executive figures in the national federations and these figures, in turn, named regional delegates, who would later become the ones to endorse or block the appointment of club directors (Santacana 2011).

With the subordination of sports clubs to the state apparatus, their organisational autonomy and their management structures were dismantled. This had a decisive effect on their internal functioning and led to the demise of the original liberal democratic approach that had conceived of the clubs as peer-based associations. Members lost the power to select their clubs' top officials, because club officials were appointed by bodies ultimately responsible to the state. Although this panorama saw modest changes in the nineteen-fifties (for example, with the introduction of elections by delegates), the selections of the members' general assembly still had to be ratified by the pertinent sports federation, which reserved the right to appoint club officials directly if the initial slate proposed by members was rejected twice (Pujadas and Santacana 2003). As a result of restructuring, the clubs were no

longer run on the basis of democratic participation, but this was not the only change. The framework by which they had worked with the sports federations was also replaced. The federations, which had provided a space where clubs could reach agreement as free and equal agents, turned into bodies reporting to the National Sports Delegation and charged with overseeing clubs' activities. In their statutes, clubs had to acknowledge their subordination to the provisions and authority of the National Sports Delegation. If they failed to do so, they were refused legal recognition and denied authorization to take part in sporting competitions.

Club structures continued to adapt to the requirements of the regime during its nearly four decades of rule. With the advent of democracy, however, the clubs embarked on a process of modernisation that enabled them to regain their former status, although their organisational culture and operating procedures were still permeated with the regime's authoritarianism. The end of the Franco regime also witnessed broad-based growth in the number of sports clubs, which had to find their own space in a context in which, on one hand, sport was run mainly by the state and, on the other hand, a strong market dynamic began to take hold (Heinemann 1999).

During the transition to democracy, sport began to undergo democratisation. Sport was introduced into the Spanish constitution (adopted in 1978) and the General Law of Physical Culture and Sport was enacted in 1980. These years were crucial to the process of modernisation. They made it possible to include sport in the legal framework of the state. The first half of the nineteen-eighties saw a strong push in the construction of sports infrastructure, one of the most nagging shortcomings of the Spanish sports system at the time. Municipal governments woke up to the need to promote *sport for all* and this led to a booming sports movement in Spanish society that some have dubbed the *municipalisation of Spanish sport*.

In the nineties, Spanish sport experienced significant events that contributed to its development and legal regulation. Democracy found a firm footing; the country became a member of the European Union (in 1986) and the Spanish economy embarked a cycle of economic growth that would last over 10 years. At the beginning of the decade, in 1990, the enactment of a new Sports Law (Law 10/1990 of 15 October) once again regulated the responsibilities and functions of the state on the subject of sport, drawing a line between professional sport, top-class sport and sport for everyone. Associative bodies in sport were defined as private associations formed by natural or legal persons, whose purpose is to promote one or more sports, encourage members to engage in one or more sports and foster their participation in sporting activities and competitions. As the Sports Law stipulated, the associative bodies were classified as elementary clubs, basic clubs, professional sports clubs and limited companies operating in the field of sport. Thus, a new legal framework was created by which professional sports (the first and second divisions of Spanish football and the top-flight Liga ACB in basketball) were separated from non-professional sports. Professional clubs were turned into *Sociedades Anónimas Deportivas* (SADs), or sports-based public limited companies. This was a new legal form that brought with it a number of prerequisites and required the application of a series of controls by various state bodies (Llopis-Goig 2013). It was a matter of no small significance for Spanish sport that Barcelona hosted the Olympic Games of

1992. Indeed, the organisation and running of the event provided a major impetus to push Spanish sport out of its marginal position and finally make it a significant factor in the social and cultural life of the country. Since that time, sports clubs and associations have grown in importance and gained autonomy within the Spanish sports system, despite the unquestionable dominance that the state continues to exert as a supplier and financial supporter of numerous sporting activities.

The eighties had also witnessed the first steps toward the decentralisation of competencies in the area of sport. A number of autonomous communities were allowed to enact their own sports laws. Thus, while the body of legislation governing sports associations had been limited and weak in the Franco period, the new democracy saw a veritable barrage of sports legislation at the level of the autonomous communities. By the nineties, all seventeen of Spain's autonomous communities had adopted their own sports laws, with specific provisions on sports associations spelled out in decrees, ordinances, plans and programmes (Rodríguez 2008). Over time, these different legislative developments, as well as the historical and cultural differences among the various autonomous communities, have given rise to an essential feature of the Spanish sports system, namely, its territorial heterogeneity.

In addition to decentralisation, a second feature of the Spanish sports model relates to the position of the sports clubs. As the Spanish sports model is based on the state's collaboration with sports clubs, the state provides resources to the clubs in exchange for the clubs' promotion of the practice of sport by the public. Moreover, the state is not merely an ancillary promoter of the clubs' activities, but also involves itself in the provision of a wide range of opportunities for the practice of sport. Thus, the model can be viewed as interventionist, because their collaboration with the state makes the clubs reliant on the state's financial help (Burriel and Puig 1999; Rodríguez 2008). A stark consequence of this is that sports clubs in some regions play a weak role in the provision of sport, which is left very much in the hands of municipalities and other bodies to which the promotion and development of sporting activities is delegated.

Heinemann has put forward an interesting interpretation of the relationship between the state and organised sport in Spain. His idea is that the chief weakness of the Franco dictatorship was not that the state exercised a wide-ranging influence on sport, but rather that this influence was not articulated with sufficient efficiency (Heinemann 1999). Thus, with the advent of democracy, the challenge facing Spanish sport did not centre on the state's withdrawal from sport. Instead, it was a question of achieving a more effective realisation of its influence. This was because a widely held belief in Spanish society viewed the practice of sport to be not only an individual right, but also a service that the state is required to provide to its citizens. Obviously, state interventionism has historical roots and rests on a cultural ethos that took hold in Spanish society in the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries thanks to an enormous confidence in the capacity of the state to satisfy the needs of the population. Nor was the aristocracy's and the Catholic Church's stranglehold on civil society unrelated to this belief. Both institutions enjoyed a clear-cut hegemony in the society and they strongly resisted any change or proposal for modernisation that might undermine their position of power. The bourgeoisie only

emerged in a few regions and it did not have the strength or influence that it attained in other areas of Europe (Giner 2000). Consequently, there was a certain distrust of volunteer-based private organisations. They were suspected of being answerable largely to the Catholic Church and, therefore, of standing in the way of progress. In the same vein, the belief spread that any substantial change would have to be carried out by the state. Taken together, these factors elicited in the society a rather aloof view of private associations and clubs.

21.2 An Empirical Approach to the Study of Sports Clubs

This section offers an empirical approach to the study of sports clubs in Spanish society. As noted in the introduction, the section is broken into two parts. The first part examines the key statistical data available on the number of sports clubs in Spain, while the second part looks at the clubs' role in the practice of sport by Spaniards and takes a nuanced view of the characteristics of club members.

The data examined in the first part come from Spain's National Institute of Statistics (INE 2014) and the annual reports on sports statistics issued by the National Sports Council (CSD 2013, 2014). The data on sports clubs appearing in the CSD reports are compiled from figures submitted annually by each Spanish sports federation to the National Sports Council in order to facilitate its role of oversight and coordination as assigned under the Sports Law, Law 10/1990 of 15 October. While the CSD reports are an up-to-date and highly credible source of statistical information, they do not cover all of the sports clubs in Spain because not all clubs are members of a sports federation. As there is no national register of sports clubs, one possible solution would be to aggregate the information from the general association registers for each autonomous community. This alternative, however, seems unsuitable, given that the autonomous communities use different ways of classifying associations. We must also bear in mind that this type of register does not make use of an updating procedure and associations that cease to exist do not always delete their listing from the register. In future, it will be necessary to carry out empirical research to establish an in-depth sociological analysis of sports clubs across the whole of Spanish society.

The data examined in the first half of the section come specifically from the 5-yearly surveys on sporting habits conducted by the National Sports Council. Most of the information used in the analysis has been taken directly from the main publications in which the data have been explored (García-Ferrando 2006; García-Ferrando and Llopis-Goig 2011a, b).

21.2.1 Federated Sports Clubs

Figure 21.1 shows changes in the number of federated sports clubs over the past 14 years. Over the first decade of the twenty-first century, the number rose, reaching its highest point in 2010, when 94,511 sports clubs were registered in Spain. From this

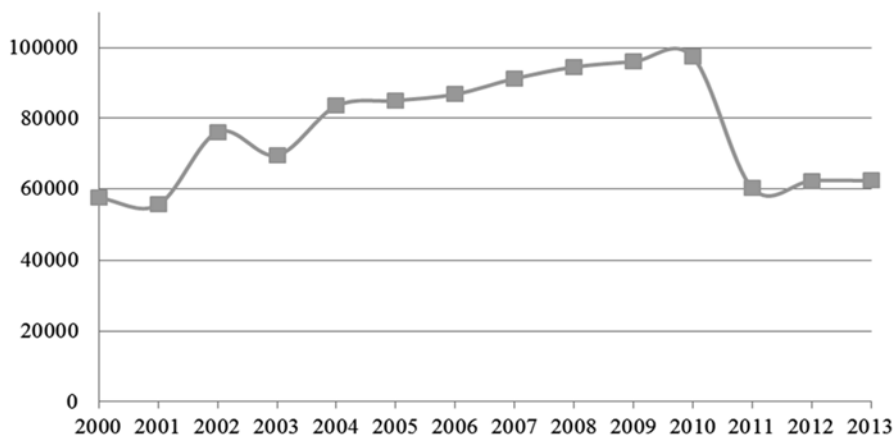


Fig. 21.1 Changes in the number of federated clubs in Spain since 2000 (INE 2014)

point, the trend-line shows a sharp fall in 2011, reflecting a loss of more than a third of the clubs. The economic crisis affecting Spanish society since 2008 and the cutbacks in the social expenditure that the Government began to implement in 2010 might be related to this sharp fall. In the subsequent 2 years, there was a weak recovery and the number of federated sports clubs registered in Spain in 2013 stood at 62,363.

Of the total number of federated sports clubs registered in 2013, over a third (34.6 %) were football clubs. There are 21,584 federated football clubs in Spain, making this one of the most typical features of the Spanish sports system (see Table 21.1). The football figure is far above the figure for the second-ranking sport in terms of club numbers—hunting (5,398)—and it is seven times higher than sports such as basketball and cycling, which have 3,968 and 3,177 clubs, respectively. Other sports with over a thousand federated clubs are climbing and mountaineering, karate, fishing, tennis, athletics and pigeon sports. Next comes a group of seven sports with overall figures slightly below a thousand: judo, underwater activities, skating, *petanca*, motorcycle sports, chess and triathlon. Lastly, there are six sports that have between 600 and 900 clubs: handball, *padel* tennis, equestrian sports, swimming, Olympic shooting and taekwondo. A further 45 sports account collectively for 14.1 % of all federated clubs registered in Spain, but their individual figures fall below 1 % of total clubs.

It is also useful to examine the breakdown of federated sports clubs among the various autonomous communities into which the country is divided administratively. As Table 21.2 shows, Andalusia and Catalonia have the greatest number of sports clubs, together accounting for 30 % of all sports clubs in Spain. Behind them are Aragón and Valencia with slightly over 5,000 clubs each. Then come three autonomous communities in the vicinity of 4,000 clubs each: Castile and León, Galicia and Castile-La Mancha. Ranked seventh is the Community of Madrid, with 3,941 clubs, followed by a group of seven whose club numbers range from 1,000 to

Table 21.1 Federated sports clubs in 2013, by sport (INE 2014, p. 97)

	Federated sports clubs		Average number of registered members per club
	Total	%	
Football	21,584	34.6	39.7
Hunting	5,398	8.7	65.0
Basketball	3,968	6.4	100.8
Cycling	3,177	5.1	20.6
Climbing and mountaineering	2,083	3.3	81.2
Karate	1,376	2.2	44.6
Fishing and casting	1,354	2.2	42.0
Tennis	1,252	2.0	71.7
Athletics	1,203	1.9	51.8
Pigeon sports	1,033	1.7	22.2
Judo	996	1.6	106.9
Underwater activities	991	1.6	32.0
Skating	966	1.5	46.8
<i>Petanca</i>	950	1.5	24.4
Motorcycle sports	946	1.5	18.8
Chess	911	1.5	24.3
Triathlon	904	1.4	26.8
Handball	848	1.4	108.3
<i>Padel tennis</i>	788	1.3	55.0
Equestrian sports	766	1.2	62.4
Swimming	723	1.2	84.7
Olympic shooting	712	1.1	78.1
Taekwondo	627	1.0	54.7
Other sports	8,807	14.1	74.1
Total	62,363	100	54.4

3,000. The remainder have fewer than a thousand clubs each and they include Cantabria, La Rioja and the autonomous cities of Ceuta and Melilla. Clearly, in the case of federated sports clubs, there are deep-seated differences by region. This is underscored by the fact that the eight highest-ranking communities account for 74.7 % of the total.

Table 21.2 also provides information on the number of clubs for every 10,000 residents in each community. The inclusion of population numbers demonstrates that the regions with the highest per-capita number of clubs are Aragón, La Rioja, Extremadura, Castile-La Mancha and the autonomous city of Ceuta. Conversely, the regions with the lowest percentage of clubs for each 10,000 residents are the Basque Country, the Balearic Islands, Valencia, the Canary Islands, Catalonia and Madrid. In the absence of empirical research addressing this issue and bearing in mind the higher level of economic development and the greater population of these last autonomous communities, we might venture that this is related to the existence of alternative sports associations and other ways to engage in sport.

Table 21.2 Federated sports clubs in 2013, by autonomous community (INE 2014, p. 98)

Autonomous communities	Federated sports clubs		Population in 2013	Clubs per 10,000 residents
	Total	%		
Andalusia	11,023	17.7	8,393,159	13.1
Catalonia	7,666	12.3	7,480,921	10.2
Aragón	5,271	8.5	1,338,308	39.4
Valencia	5,220	8.4	4,987,017	10.5
Castile and León	4,807	7.7	2,518,528	19.1
Galicia	4,409	7.1	2,761,970	16.0
Castile-La Mancha	4,230	6.8	2,094,391	20.2
Madrid	3,941	6.3	6,414,709	6.1
Basque Country	2,673	4.3	2,177,006	12.3
Murcia	2,595	4.2	1,461,987	17.7
Extremadura	2,402	3.9	1,100,968	21.8
Canary Islands	2,166	3.5	2,105,232	10.3
Asturias	1,443	2.3	1,067,802	13.5
Balearic Islands	1,358	2.2	1,110,115	12.2
Navarre	1,133	1.8	638,949	17.7
Cantabria	958	1.5	590,037	16.2
La Rioja	699	1.1	318,639	21.9
Ceuta	259	0.4	84,534	30.6
Melilla	110	0.2	83,619	13.2
Total	62,363	100	46,727,890	13.3

21.2.2 Participation in Sports and Sports Clubs

From the data gathered through the surveys on sporting habits conducted in the past decade, it is apparent that the rise in sport and physical activity has occurred outside the associations with which they have been integrally connected in earlier periods. This trend is logical if we bear in mind that the gradual spread of sport and physical activity among the Spanish population is increasingly oriented to recreation, health and keeping in shape. This is why sports clubs—despite, as seen earlier, their continued growth over the past decade—have been losing their previous supremacy. Against this, studies conducted in recent years (García-Ferrando 2006; García-Ferrando and Llopis-Goig 2011a, b) have shown a gradual move toward more individualised and non-competitive forms of sport and physical activity. For example, 75 % of the people who engaged in some type of sport or physical activity in 2010 (García-Ferrando and Llopis-Goig 2011a) stated that they did so on their own, a rise of seven percentage points since 2005, nine percentage points since 2000 and twelve since 1990. In other words, the percentage of people doing sport on their own has climbed in the past two decades from 63 to 75 %. Consistent with this rise, there have also been fewer people doing sport as an activity organised by a sports club, association or organisation. At present, the figure stands at 19 %, a drop of five percentage points since 2005.

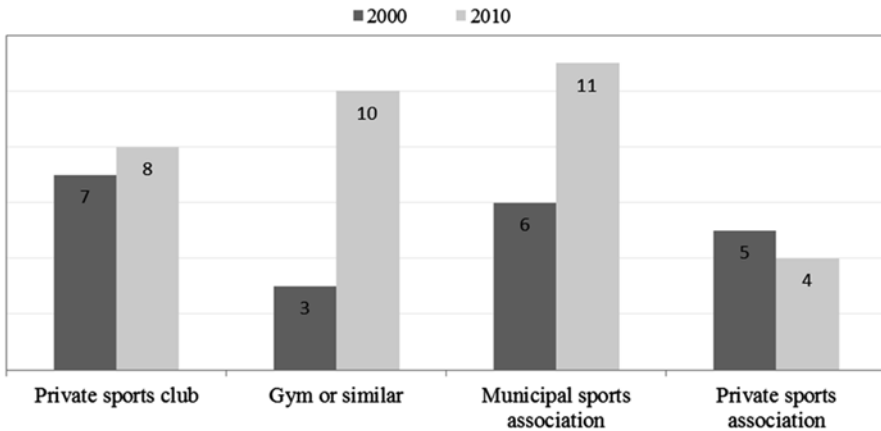


Fig. 21.2 Membership in sports clubs and other sports bodies (García-Ferrando and Llopis-Goig 2011a, b)

However, the growth of sport and physical activity outside the clubs is not incompatible with the growth of membership in clubs and other types of sports bodies or associations. After all, the proportion of Spaniards engaged in some kind of sport or physical activity has risen from 37 % in 2000 to 43 % in 2010 (García-Ferrando and Llopis-Goig 2011a). In other words, the number of people who are members of a sports club or association has grown, although they have lost relative weight within the sports systems as a whole, because of the increase in activities pursued outside the club structure. This explains why, as Fig. 21.2 shows, there could nonetheless be an increase between 2000 and 2010 in the proportion of Spaniards who were members of a private sports club, a gym or similar, a private sports association or a municipal sports association.¹

The largest growth has occurred among members of gyms or similar: from 3 % in 2000 to 10 % in 2010. This is followed by increased membership in municipal sports associations, which has risen from 6 to 11 %. Private club membership has grown only minimally, climbing one percentage point from 7 to 8 %. Lastly, membership in private sports associations has declined by a percentage point, falling from 5 % in 2000 to 4 % in 2010. Aggregating the various percentages, we can see that the overall membership in some kind of sports body has gone up from 21 % in 2000 to 33 % in 2010. An additional piece of data to consider in relation to the information in Fig. 21.2 is that 18.4 % of the Spanish population belongs to some kind of sports body, 4.8 % belong to two and 1.4 % belongs to three or more.

Table 21.3 examines the relationship between membership in some kind of sports body and gender, age, education level, social class and size of place of resi-

¹ These are the categories adopted by the survey on sport participation in 2010 and before to measure the membership of Spaniards in sports bodies. A private sports club refers to a sport club in the strict sense of the term while a gym or similar corresponds to sports centres of a commercial nature. On the other hand, a sports association is any private association created to promote sports while a municipal sports association refers to those associations restricted to a municipal sphere.

Table 21.3 Characteristics of the population who are members of sports bodies (García-Ferrando and Llopis-Goig 2011a, p. 77)

Socio-demographic characteristics	Private sports club	Gym or similar	Municipal association	Private association
Sex				
Men	11	11	12	6
Women	5	9	10	2
Age				
15–17 Years	11	10	19	10
18–34 Years	10	18	14	6
35–64 Years	7	8	11	4
65 Years and over	4	2	8	1
Education level				
No studies	–	1	3	–
Primary	5	6	9	3
Secondary	11	12	12	5
Vocational training	8	14	16	6
University	13	18	16	6
Advanced	16	19	14	9
Social class				
Upper/upper-middle class alta/media-alta	15	17	16	8
New middle classes	9	14	11	5
Old middle classes	5	7	10	3
Skilled workers	6	7	10	3
Unskilled workers	3	4	8	2
Size of place of residence				
Less than 10,000	5	6	11	3
10,001–50,000	6	8	12	3
50,001–100,000	7	11	11	4
100,001–400,000	9	12	10	5
400,001 and higher	11	13	11	5
Total	8	10	11	4

dence. Private clubs and sports associations have a higher percentage of male members than female members: 11 % of men and 5 % of women belong to private clubs, while 6 and 2 %, respectively, belong to private associations. However, there is a much more balanced distribution by gender in gyms and municipal sports associations: 11 % of men and 9 % of women in gyms and 12 and 10 %, respectively, in municipal associations.

Sports bodies are visited more frequently by young people than by older people, and by people with university educations than by people with primary and secondary studies. The highest percentages of membership correspond to the population between 15 and 34 years of age, while the lowest percentages relate to people of 65

years and over. In the case of education level, private clubs and associations present the most differentiated profiles. Socioeconomic status is the most distinguishing feature among the members of private clubs (15 % of the upper/upper-middle class and 8 % of the new middle classes compared to 6 % of skilled workers and 2 % of unskilled workers). This is also the case with private associations (8 % of the upper/upper-middle class compared to 2 % of unskilled workers) and especially with gyms (17 % of the upper/upper-middle class and 14 % of the middle class compared to 7 % of skilled workers and 4 % of unskilled workers). Conversely, municipal sports associations offer the most inclusive profile (16 % of the upper/upper-middle class compared to 8 % of unskilled workers).

In cities with more than 100,000 inhabitants, the percentage of people belonging to some sports body is significantly greater than in smaller cities and, especially, than in smaller municipalities. The dividing line in the case of gyms is 50,000 inhabitants, with gym membership being much higher in cities above this size. Conversely, municipal sports associations show hardly any differences by population size. The various figures are only a point above or below the total average value. This appears to be the clearest and most rigorous demonstration of the fact that municipal sports services are evenly distributed among most of the towns and cities of Spain. As for private sports associations, their distribution does not present any notable differences, with percentages varying between 3 and 5 %.

In short, private clubs and associations coincide in more often having men, aged 15–34, with university studies, from the upper/upper-middle class and new middle classes, and living in cities with more than 50,000 inhabitants. Gyms and municipal associations have a greater balance between men and women, with gyms having a younger membership (15–34 years old) and municipal associations having a membership spread across all ages. Gyms are more classist and municipal associations are more inclusive. And gyms correspond to cities of more than 50,000 inhabitants, while municipal associations correspond to towns and cities of all sizes.

21.3 Characteristics of Sport Clubs

This section seeks to show the basic characteristics of sports clubs in Spain. Unfortunately, there is no comprehensive study on the situation of sports clubs for the country as a whole. As a result, we focus fundamentally on two recent studies carried out in Catalonia and Galicia. The Catalan study was done by the Catalan Sports Observatory for the Secretaria General de l'Esport in 2012, while the Galician study was prepared by Vicente Gambau in 2002. The two studies, which are based on the study carried out by Heinemann and Schubert in 1994, are the most thorough ones currently available in Spain (Heinemann and Schubert 1994). The aspects addressed will include the organisational features of clubs, such as year founded, size, range of sporting activities on offer, equipment and facilities, voluntary versus paid staff, financial resources and relationships with the local area and other institutions.

21.3.1 General Characteristics of Sports Clubs

Looking at the date of their founding, we do find older clubs, but as noted in the previous sections, a large proportion of sports clubs have been created since the end of the Franco regime. In Catalonia, 68 % of clubs have been set up since the advent of democracy (Catalan Sports Observatory 2010). In Galicia, 76.6 % of clubs have been set up since the year 1976 (Gambau 2002). Of the clubs with more than a thousand members, 28 % were founded before 1920. This percentage falls to 2.8 % for the smallest clubs. The oldest on record is the Cercle Sabadellès in Sabadell, founded in 1856 (Puig et al. 1999a, b). The first sports club in Spain is the R. C. Mediterranean nautical club, founded in Málaga in 1873 (García 1986).

In Spain, small sports clubs of less than 300 members predominate. In Catalonia, for example, the greater part of the network of associations is made up of small clubs, with 84.1 % of clubs having between 3 and 300 members. Medium-sized clubs, which have between 301 and 1,000 members, account for 10.6 % of the total, while the largest clubs, with over 1,000 members, account for only 5.3 % of the total (Catalan Sports Observatory 2010). The findings from the study of Galicia conducted by Gambau (2002) are similar. More specifically, 64.5 % of clubs have fewer than 300 members and only 3.1 % of clubs have over a thousand members. Although the number of large clubs is very small, they are of major importance, because they include a fourth of all members, have the most professional structures and can more readily attract public attention (Fig. 21.3).

Another factor that reveals the selective nature of clubs is the activities on offer. Most clubs focus on traditional competitive sports, such as football, basketball, indoor football, cycling and athletics (Catalan Sports Observatory 2010; Gambau 2002). In Catalonia, 88 % of all sports clubs entered in the register of sports clubs and associations overseen by the Secretaria General de l’Esport signed up as federated sports clubs, while the remaining 12 % did so as leisure clubs. If we analyse the range of sporting activities on offer, we find that a majority of clubs—77.3 % in

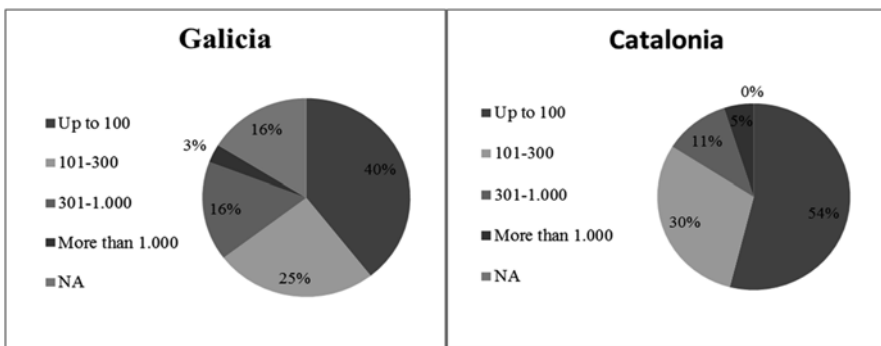


Fig. 21.3 Distribution of sport clubs in Catalonia and Galicia by size (Catalan Sports Observatory 2010; Gambau 2002, p. 21)

Table 21.4 Number of teams, by level of competition (%) (Catalan Sports Observatory 2010; Gambau 2002)

Level	Catalonia (2012)	Galicia (2002)
Local or district	48	32
Regional	^a	23
Autonomous community	42	28
Spain	8	3
International	2	2

^aNot collected

Catalonia and 67 % in Galicia—have only one section. The clubs with a greater number of sections are the large ones. Notably, this figure is lower than the number of clubs belonging to a single federation, which is 85.4 % in the case of Catalonia. This suggests, therefore, that not all of the sports sections of the clubs have competition as their purpose. If we look at competitive sport, we find that the predominant level of competition is local or district, which accounts for 48 % of the teams in Catalonia and 32 % of the teams in Galicia. As Table 21.4 shows, the number of sports teams decreases at higher levels of competition.

The largest clubs are also represented by the most sports people on the national teams. Over half of the large clubs with over 1,000 members have sportspeople on the Spanish and Catalan national squads. By contrast, the small clubs have only 19 % of the sportspeople on the Catalan squads and 8.7 % of those on the Spanish squads.

In addition, some sports clubs initially founded to engage in competitive sport have expanded their provision to include recreational sport. The data show that, aside from sections for competitive sport, 71 % of Catalan sports clubs have an additional offering that is made up of non-sporting activities in 72 % of cases. These include outings, dinners, parties and one-off sporting activities (tournaments, hikes, courses, ski trips, etc.). In 55.2 % of cases, they offer ongoing sporting activities such as, notably, sports campuses, recreational sports leagues and supervised activities. In addition, 20.8 % offer activities for specific groups (children, disabled people, people with difficulties reintegrating into society) (Catalan Sports Observatory 2010).

Ongoing sporting activities are the ones that provide regular income for clubs beyond membership fees. The provision of activities outside the sections for competitive sport enables clubs to reach a broader segment of the population who may potentially be interested in membership. Also, the entire family can engage in physical activity in the same sports organisation or facilities, because while children are engaged in a sporting activity, parents can pursue another activity within the club.

In the Galician study (Gambau 2002), 66 % of clubs offered a single sport, although 63 % also had additional sociocultural offerings. The additional offering is not as pronounced as in Catalonia, but we need to see what has happened in the intervening 12 years in order to better determine any trends in the provision of sporting activities.

Another fact that shows the range of non-competitive activities aimed at recreation and health is the prevalence of subscription members. People with day passes

are entitled to use a club's services, but they do not have the same rights as members. For example, they cannot vote. In this respect, more than 25 % of sports clubs in Catalonia have subscription members (Catalan Sports Observatory 2010) and these are the clubs that have facilities such as sports halls, swimming pools and racquet courts that the clubs own or lease.

A clear relationship can be observed between the public administration and voluntary organisations in the use made by the clubs of sports facilities. Of the clubs, 74.3 % in Catalonia and 55.4 % in Galicia use publicly owned facilities, while only 18.7 % of Catalan clubs and roughly 19 % of Galician clubs have their own facilities (Catalan Sports Observatory 2010; Gambau 2002). The public administration clearly plays a vital role in leasing facilities to clubs so that they can carry out their activities.

According to data provided by the Catalan Sports Observatory, the most utilised facilities in Catalonia are indoor sports halls (41.1 %), where participants can engage in sports such as basketball, indoor football, handball, hockey, figure skating, etc. This group of facilities is immediately followed by outdoors sports facilities (29.1 %). Football pitches are used by 25 % of clubs. In addition, 25 % of clubs use the natural environment.

21.3.2 Professionalisation and Other Socioeconomic Factors

Sports clubs have two profiles of people working at them: volunteers (39.2 %) and paid staff (60.8 %), in the case of Catalonia. Volunteers perform a service within the club, but do not receive any kind of financial compensation for their contribution, while paid individuals do. The data show that, irrespective of whether the work is voluntary or paid, the people working in Catalan clubs are largely men (75.4 %).

Firstly, we find board members that are made up mostly of men whose contribution is entirely voluntary. Both in Catalonia and in Galicia, the typical profile of all board members (president, vice-president, secretary, treasurer) is male, devoting less than 10 h a week to the post, aged between 36 and 65, and of the upper or upper-middle class. No clear tendency is observed in terms of board members' education level, which can range from primary studies to higher education.

We can also see a vertical segregation by gender. The greater the power of a post, the fewer women there are in possession.

Table 21.5 shows a breakdown of paid and voluntary staff by club size. It includes paid management posts, specialist positions and operational jobs and shows that increasing club size is tied to a higher level of professionalisation.

Professionalisation is also evident in the types of posts, with 70 % of clubs with over 1,000 members have general managers and 61 % have technical directors. By contrast, only 5 % of clubs with fewer than 300 members have general managers and 35 % have technical directors. In Catalonia, with the exception of the post of team delegate, most posts reflect a predominance of paid staff over voluntary staff.

Table 21.5 Breakdown of staff by job profile and club size (%) (Catalan Sports Observatory 2010)

Size	Paid staff ^a	Voluntary staff
100 Members or less	51.4	48.6
101–300 Members	57.7	42.3
301–1,000 Members	59.8	40.2
More than 1,000 members	89.8	10.2
Total	60.8	39.2

^aPaid staff may carry out some voluntary work, but most of their work is remunerated

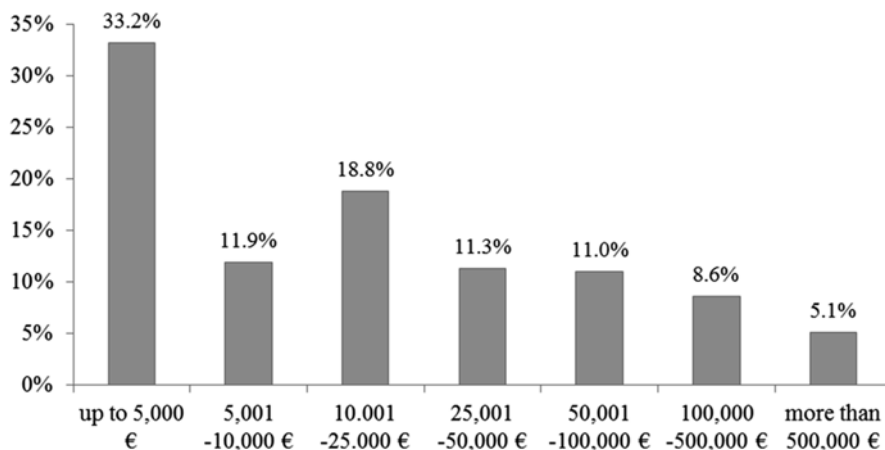


Fig. 21.4 Size of club budgets (Catalan Sports Observatory 2010, p. 34)

If we analyse club budgets, we can see significant differences among them. The amounts vary from less than 5,000 euros (33 % for Catalonia and 35 % for Galicia) to over 500,000 euros (5.1 % for Catalonia). Figure 21.4 shows the homogeneous distribution of clubs across the different budget sizes.

As Table 21.6 below shows, membership fees are the primary income source for clubs. As a result, the number of members and the size of fees are two significant factors. Unsurprisingly, the largest clubs boast the largest budgets.

However, 26.8 % of clubs with more than a thousand members have a budget lower than 5,000 euros. This is because some of the clubs have very low membership fees, reflecting low levels of activity and, in some cases, a focus on sports that do not necessarily require a licence, such as hiking. Additionally, 10 % of clubs with fewer than 100 people have budgets above 50,000 euros. This can be explained by the fact that, in these cases, the main revenues come from sponsors and not membership fees, such as clubs involved in motorsport. If we look at budgets as a function of membership size, we see that 40 % of clubs have annual budgets below 100 euros per member. At the other extreme, 26 % have budgets above 500 euros per member.

Table 21.6 Breakdown of income (%) (Catalan Sports Observatory 2010; Gambau 2002)

	Catalonia	Galicia
Membership fees	48.8	26.7
Entrance fees	1.9	^a
Donations	1.8	^a
Sports services	12.6	3.4
Subsidies	5.3	37.5
Rentals	2.5	^a
Tickets to events	1.6	^a
Advertising and sponsors	9.2	13
Management of assets	^a	2.9
Self-funding	^a	12.7
Other income	16.3	3.4

^aNot collected

Heinemann and Horch (1991) suggested that one of the main characteristics of sports clubs is their independence from third parties. A club can take decisions and manage its future autonomously if there is no influence from third parties. In this respect, if we analyse the breakdown of club revenues, we see that in Catalonia the main source is membership fees (48.8 %), while in Galicia grants and subsidies (37.5 %) are the main source. This reflects a major difference between the two regions. In the case of Galicia, we observe substantial public administration intervention in the network of associations as a result of the hegemonic social representation of the state described in the first section.

If we look at income by club size, we find in Catalonia that an important source of revenues for large clubs is sports services (12.4 %), while the smallest clubs rely not only on sports services as a key source of revenue, but also on subsidies.

The highest expenditure in Catalonia relates to staff costs (44.4 %). We can also see that clubs with more members have a lower proportion of expenditure that is directly related to the practice of sport. In the case of Galicia, the highest expenditure relates to material resources needed for the practice of sport (40.2 %). This may stem from the fact that sports clubs in Galicia are less professionalised than Catalan sports clubs and also from the fact that the data from the Galician survey date back to 2002. It would be necessary see whether a process of professionalisation can be observed in Galicia's clubs during the intervening 10 years (Table 21.7).

21.3.2.1 Bottlenecks and Challenges Facing Sports Clubs

In the view of board members running Catalan and Galician sports clubs, the biggest problem confronting sports clubs is the economic situation (e.g. covering budget shortfalls and achieving more secure revenues). Their second problem concerns club membership. There is a need in their view to reduce the fluctuations in membership numbers and even out the participation of men and women. The third

Table 21.7 Breakdown of club expenditure (%) (Catalan Sports Observatory 2010; Gambau 2002)

	Catalonia	Galicia
Staff	44.4	19.2
Sports-related expenditure	23.5	40.2
Taxes and fees	6.0	11.7
General expenditure	18.2	23.2
Capital expenditure	8.0	6.5

issue is a question of the offering, which they believe needs to be made more appealing and expanded with new activities and services. Lastly, they are concerned about voluntarism; it is becoming increasingly difficult to find people who will give their time and get involved in club-related tasks. In some cases, board members believe that when they leave the club it will collapse, because it is unlikely that anyone will take their place and carry on.

When board members consider their club's success, the first thing they mention is that it is a product of the financial support received from institutions—a belief that reflects “the syndrome of dependence on subsidies” (Gambau 2004, p. 78) and the major dependence of clubs on third parties. The second most important success factor is the active participation of members. Third in Catalonia is the initiative shown by the board members, while the third ranked item in Galicia is viewed as the financial support provided by the federations.

In this respect, Gambau (2004, p. 78) suggests that there is a “discrepancy between the beliefs of current sports managers and the theoretical notions of sports management, suggesting the value of investing more resources in training sports managers and in changing their mind-set.”

21.4 Conclusions

In the first section of this chapter, we look at the emergence of sports clubs in Spain, a development closely linked to the English model and the arrival of European professionals and workers, and we examine the main features of the earliest clubs, which appeared in civil society as platforms for sociability and were private in nature and operated in an increasingly democratic manner. When the Franco regime took power, however, a radical change came to the structure of sport, making sport subordinate to the state apparatus and stripping clubs of their organisational autonomy and management system. With the restoration of democracy, clubs regained their previous status. However, their organisational culture and operating precepts were still permeated with the authoritarianism of the Franco regime. During the eighties and nineties, Spanish sport underwent modernisation, a process heavily indebted to legal reforms that were conducive to decentralised competencies in the area of sport and a municipalisation of the public provision of sports services.

At this point, an interventionist model took shape, based on state collaboration with clubs. This was a model rooted in the confidence that Spanish society has historically placed in the state's ability to solve problems and meet the needs of the population, going as far back as the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

The second section sets out an overview of sports clubs in Spanish society, drawing on quantitative data. A first level of analysis looked at federated sports clubs, which rose in number in the first decade of the twenty-first century from roughly 60,000 to over 94,000. However, since 2011, their numbers have fallen back to their levels at the beginning of the century, obviously as a consequence of the enormous impact of the economic crisis that has affected the country for some years. The analysis of census data for federated sports clubs in Spain has also shown that more than a third (34.6 %) are football clubs. Together with football, eight other sports (basketball, cycling, hunting, climbing, karate, fishing, tennis and athletics) account for 66.4 % of all federated clubs in Spain.

According to data provided through Spain's survey on sporting habits, the last decade has witnessed only a slight growth in the proportion of people belonging to a sports club (from 7 % in 2000 to 8 % in 2010). Greater growth has been seen in gyms or similar (from 3 to 10 % over the same period) and in sports associations (from 6 to 11 %). However, a much steeper rise has occurred in the proportion of people engaging in sport on their own, increasing from 63 % in 2000 to 75 % in 2010. These trends are compatible if we bear in mind that the period involved has also seen a significant growth in sports participation in Spain, rising from 37 % in 2000 to 43 % in 2010. According to the survey, the profile of members of sports clubs and associations is comprised of men, aged 15–34, with university studies, in the upper/upper-middle class, living in cities of more than 50,000 inhabitants.

The third section examines the general characteristics of clubs in greater detail, specifically turning to the autonomous communities of Catalonia and Galicia. The data clearly show that a large number of clubs have been created since the end of the Franco regime. There is a predominance of small clubs with between 3 and 300 members. Also, clubs are not merely competitive in nature, but have expanded their provision to include recreational sport. In addition, the data show the clubs' dependence on the public sector economically and in terms of sports facilities. This reflects the interventionist model described in the first section. However, it must be noted that differences exist between Catalonia and Galicia, particularly in relation to the financial dependence of Galician clubs on the public sector and on their lower level of professionalisation in comparison to Catalan clubs, attesting to the historical and cultural differences that exist among the various autonomous communities. Future research will be needed to address the characteristics of sports clubs across the whole of Spain.

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