

Original Article

Analysis of public grants and state aids given by the Spanish National Sports Council

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Abstract:

Problem Statement: Nowadays, sports is a phenomenon that has a great impact on today's society. In Spain, its main government institution is the National Sports Council (NSC), which concedes sports grants and aids. **Approach:** to analyze the available data of the different public calls made by the NSC. **Purpose:** to observe and evaluate the evolution of those public calls over time to define the current situation of grants and public aids in sports-related issues given by the Spanish government. **Results:** an investment of 136,796,793.05€ was made on sports federations between the years 2014 and 2017, in addition to 5.045.000€ on the Women and Sports program; 13,129.84€ have been used since 2015 in 66 social aids for sportswomen; 81,552.48€ have been allocated to grants for sports federation directors; national school and university tournaments have been subsidized between 2014 and 2017 with 1,071,741.84€ and 355,387.12€, respectively; autonomous communities have been granted 2.520.000€ since 2014 for sports technification centers; payments of 930,523.98€ have been made between 2011 and 2012 to foster researching activities, scientific actuations and periodical publications in the sports field; for acts against violence, racism, xenophobia and injustice 589,137€ were granted between 2009 and 2011; public universities and entities and nonprofit organizations received aids of 523,396.78€ and 81,421.99€, respectively, in 2010; 7,500,000€ have been allocated since 2014 to registered grants; and the P+S plan was funded in 2010 and 2011 with 91,000€. **Conclusions:** Public calls made by the NSC are focused on sports federations, setting research aside and supporting gender equality.

Key words: sports economy; sports federations; public investment; sports finances.

Introduction

Sports is one of the most impacting phenomena in today's society. Its greatest proponent in Spain is the National Sports Council (NSC), which is the organization in charge of conceding grants and aids in sports issues, such as funding sports federations or autonomous communities (AC). In the last 20 years, high-level sports stopped being the only relevant part of the Spanish sports structure due to an increase in the sports offer (Cabello, Rivera, Trigueros and Pérez, 2011).

Nowadays, sports is important in Spanish society, as it involves large amounts of money and it is stated by the government as an alternative for leisure time (Cabello, Camps and Puga, 2009; García Ferrando, 2006). The number of people who practice sports in different modalities is also large, in addition to the increase in the number of spectators that assist to the different sports events (García Ferrando, 1997, 2001); in fact, sports is considered as an activity that enhances social and economic development and conforms a relevant source of both market and employment (Pérez-Flores and Muñoz-Sánchez, 2018).

According to Cabello et al. (2011), in western societies, sports are funded and structured within two models: the Anglo-Saxon model, based on the predominance of private actuations, and the European-continental model, which implies a strong public investment that can be centralized (France) or decentralized (Spain).

García and Llopis-Goig (2014) showed that another characteristic of the Spanish model is state collaboration; that is, the state gives the resources to the different clubs and federations and these foster sports practice in society. They also mentioned the decrease of NSC grants since 2013, a decrement of 54.4% compared to 2008. In their work, they revealed an interview they had with a NSC representative, who assured that there was no option due to the austerity plan to get through the economic crisis of the last decade.

In this sense, the aim of this work was to analyze the available data from the different public access calls made by the NSC (excluding sports clubs calls) and observe their evolution to define the present situation of Spain's public grants and aids in the sports field.

Material & methods

Instruments

CSD's webpage (www.csd.gob.es), CSD's electronic office (<https://sede.csd.gob.es>) and the Spanish National Database of Grants (BDNS, Base de Datos Nacional de Subvenciones) (www.pap.minhafp.gob.es/bdnstrans/GE/es/index), in addition to telephonic calls, were the instruments used to collect the economic data available of the different calls for grants and aids, and the collected data was expressed into tables using Microsoft® Excel software.

Method

Data collection started on 5th March 2018 and ended on 8th March 2018. In the search, the available data of the acceptance resolutions for the public calls made by the NSC was extracted (excluding those offered for sports clubs).

Data analysis

A descriptive analysis of the data obtained was carried out using Microsoft® Excel software and its mathematical formulations function to obtain the totals and means of the pecuniary data collected in order to make the information more comprehensible.

Results

The NSC has given in the last years grants to Spanish sports federations (SSF), aids for the Women and Sports program, social aids to sportswomen, grants to SSF managers, grants for organizing national school and university championships, contributions to AC for sports technification centers, investments in research and development, in acts against violence, racism, xenophobia and injustice and in the P+S plan, besides the concessions of registered grants.

With respect to SSF, an investment of 136,796,793.05€ was made by the NSC between 2014 and 2017 (see Table I), with 2016 being the year with the largest investment and Athletics the most granted SSF. The relation between the number of sports licenses and the investment made (Table II) varies from the lowest (Hunting FDE) to the highest (Winter Sports).

Table 1. SSF grants

| | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | Total |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Granted SSF | 56 | 64 | 63 | 64 | 64 |
| SSF with largest grant | Canoeing (402,010 €) | Athletics (3,394,303.37 €) | Swimming (4,181,450.30 €) | Athletics (3,959,380.81 €) | Athletics (11,796,131.63 €) |
| SSF with smallest grant | Powerboating (300 €) | Aeronautics (8,200 €) | Olympic shooting (7,000 €) | Greyhounds (17,346,64 €) | Hunting (39,256.85 €) |
| Total (€) | 3,713,279.00 € | 41,309,617.22 € | 48,330,458.07 € | 43,443,438.76 € | 136,796,793.05 € |

Table 2. Economic investment per license

| | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | Average |
|--------------------------------------|--------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------------|
| SSF with largest investment | Canoeing (55.46 €) | Modern pentathlon (342.65 €) | Winter sports (558.37 €) | Winter sports (351.43 €) |
| SSFF with smallest investment | Triathlon (0.02 €) | Hunting (0.05 €) | Olympic shooting (0.14 €) | Hunting (0.02 €) |

With respect to the Women and Sports program (Table III), since the year 2014, 5,045,000€ have been given to these SSF. In the social aids to sportswomen, 13,129.84€ have been invested from 2015 to 2017 with a total of 66 aids, as mentioned in Table IV.

Table 3. Women and Sports program

| | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | Total |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Number of granted SSF | 43 | 52 | 53 | 56 | 57 |
| SSF with largest grant | Handball (75,659.16 €) | Basketball (91,694.67 €) | Handball (89,150.54 €) | Swimming (81,864.56 €) | Handball (308,186.24 €) |
| SSF with smallest grant | Sports for cerebral palsy (700 €) | Billiards (800 €) | Surf (2.000 €) | Powerboating (920 €) | Billiards (800 €) |
| Total (€) | 1,000,000 € | 1,245,000 € | 1,400,000 € | 1,400,000 € | 5,045,000 € |

Table 4. Social aids to sportswomen

| Year | Total aids | Total quantity | Mean per sportswoman |
|--------------|------------|---------------------|----------------------|
| 2015 | 24 | 57,529.92 € | 2,397.08 € |
| 2016 | 18 | 33,800.00 € | 1,877.78 € |
| 2017 | 24 | 39,999.92 € | 1,666.66 € |
| Total | 66 | 131,329.84 € | 1,989.,85 € |

In grants for SSF managers, a total of 81,552.48€ were granted in 2016 to nine SSF, as shown in Table 5

Table 5. Managers grants

| SSF | 2016 |
|--------------|--------------------|
| Ice sports | 877.50 € |
| Archery | 941.72 € |
| Canoeing | 2,542.86 € |
| Badminton | 4,420.00 € |
| Basque ball | 6,123.60 € |
| Basketball | 8,305.00 € |
| Hockey | 9,764.66 € |
| Gymnastics | 15,784.50 € |
| Triathlon | 32,792.64 € |
| Total | 81,552.48 € |

Between 2014 and 2017, investments of 1,071,741.84 € and 355,387.12 € were made to organize national championships in schools (Table VI) and universities (Table VII), respectively.

Table 6. National school championships

| AC | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 | Total (€) |
|----------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| Murcia | 83,965.15 € | 57,582.00 € | 62,586.75 € | 204,133.90 € |
| Andalusia | 27,080.00 € | 167,308.00 € | 0.00 € | 194,388.00 € |
| Aragon | 104,055.14 € | 0.00 € | 0.00 € | 104,055.14 € |
| Baleares | 0.00 € | 0.00 € | 15,814.93 € | 15,814.93 € |
| Catalonia | 0.00 € | 0.00 € | 53,165.09 € | 53,165.09 € |
| Extremadura | 19,000.00 € | 67,878.00 € | 14,132.49 € | 101,010.49 € |
| Galicia | 0.00 € | 6,794.00 € | 15,586.54 € | 22,380.54 € |
| Castilla-La Mancha | 26,162.68 € | 0.00 € | 26,582.54 € | 52,745.22 € |
| Asturias | 0.00 € | 0.00 € | 18,170.35 € | 18,170.35 € |
| Comunidad Valenciana | 0.00 € | 0.00 € | 27,928.50 € | 27,928.50 € |
| Castilla y Leon | 84,604.87 € | 48,894.00 € | 88,832.81 € | 222,331.68 € |
| Madrid | 13,000.00 € | 42,618.00 € | 0.00 € | 55,618.00 € |
| Total | 357,867.84 € | 391,074.00 € | 322,800,00 € | 1,071,741.84 € |

Table 7. National university championships

| | 2014 | 2016 | Total |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|
| Number of granted universities | 51 | 9 | 52 |
| University with largest grant | Politécnica de Madrid (17,310 €) | Universidad de Sevilla (33,795.25 €) | Universidad de Sevilla (43,805.25 €) |
| University with smallest grant | Mondragón (213 €) | Centro de Enseñanza Universitaria SEK, S.A. (3,772.79 €) | Mondragón (213 €) |
| Total | 249,999.00 € | 105,387.12 € | 355,387.12 € |

Grants for AC aimed at sports technification centers have posed an investment of 2,520,000€ since 2014 (Table VIII).

Regarding research, in order to foster researching activities, scientific acts and periodical publications in the sports field, a total of 460,609.05€ in 2011 and 469,914.93€ in 2012 were paid to public and private universities and public non-profit organizations (Table IX). In 2010, an investment in scientific support, sports promotion and dissemination posed 523,396.78€ to the NSC, as shown in Table X. There have been aids to non-profit organizations for studies, reports and dissemination of sports in 2009 (50,105.99€) and 2010 (31,316€) (Table XI).

For acts against violence, racism, xenophobia and injustice (Table XII), 199,660€, 189,577€ and 199,900€ were given in 2009, 2010 and 2011, respectively. Regarding registered grants, since 2014, the Sant Cugat's High Performance Center has received 2,500,000€, for a total amount of 7.500.000€.

Lastly, the P+S plan (Table XIII) was carried out in 2010 and 2011, with aids of 43,000€ and 48,000€, respectively.

Table 8. Grants for sports technification centers

| CCAA | 2014 | 2015 | 2017 | Total (€) |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|
| Murcia | 96,265.00 € | 93,266.00 € | 78,793.12 € | 268,324.12 € |
| Andalusia | 85,710.00 € | 75,028.00 € | 63,117.84 € | 223,855.84 € |
| Aragon | 40,769.00 € | 34,481.00 € | 28,890.32 € | 104,140.32 € |
| Baleares | 96,407.00 € | 95,595.00 € | 71,081.02 € | 263,083.02 € |
| Catalonia | 147,987.00 € | 155,920.00 € | 125,392.15 € | 429,299.15 € |
| Extremadura | 11,991.00 € | 15,275.00 € | 17,593.27 € | 44,859.27 € |
| Galicia | 80,593.00 € | 76,356.00 € | 63,936.27 € | 220,885.27 € |
| Asturias | 67,556.00 € | 70,146.00 € | 59,984.79 € | 197,686.79 € |
| Comunidad Valenciana | 36,435.00 € | 45,846.00 € | 35,271.90 € | 117,552.90 € |
| Castilla y Leon | 107,266.00 € | 109,012.00 € | 88,560.45 € | 304,838.45 € |
| Canary Islands | 28,778.00 € | 31,119.00 € | 0.00 € | 59,897.00 € |
| Ceuta | 28,778.00 € | 27,338.00 € | 22,734.67 € | 78,850.67 € |
| Madrid | 71,465.00 € | 70,618.00 € | 64,644.20 € | 206,727.20 € |
| Total | 900,000.00 € | 900,000.00 € | 720,000.00 € | 2,520,000.00 € |

Table 9. Grants for public and private universities and public non-profit organizations

| | | 2011 | 2012 | Total |
|---|-------------------------|--------------|--------------|---------------------|
| Scientific research studies and projects | Projects granted | 33 | 0 | 33 |
| | Budget (€) | 400,498.68 € | 0.00 € | 400,498.68 € |
| Grants for PhD programs | Projects granted | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| | Budget (€) | 11,963.60 € | 0.00 € | 11,963.60 € |
| Organization of scientific acts | Projects granted | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| | Budget (€) | 13,860.77 € | 0.00 € | 13,860.77 € |
| Actuations for scientific dissemination | Projects granted | 4 | 0 | 4 |
| | Budget (€) | 23,100.00 € | 0.00 € | 23,100.00 € |
| Periodical publications in sports research | Projects granted | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| | Budget (€) | 13,200.00 € | 0.00 € | 13,200.00 € |
| Budget application 322K 451 | Projects granted | 0 | 36 | 36 |
| | Budget (€) | 0.00 € | 383,928.93 € | 383,928.93 € |
| Budget application 322K 478 | Projects granted | 0 | 7 | 7 |
| | Budget (€) | 0.00 € | 44,000.00 € | 44,000.00 € |
| Budget application 336A 481 | Projects granted | 0 | 10 | 10 |
| | Budget (€) | 0.00 € | 44,000.00 € | 44,000.00 € |
| Total | Projects granted | 43 | 53 | 96 |
| | Budget (€) | 462,623.05 € | 471,928.93 € | 934,551.98 € |

Table 10. Investment in scientific support, sports promotion and dissemination

| | Projects | Project with largest grant | Project with smallest grant | Total (€) |
|---|-----------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| Scientific support, technological development and knowledge generation applied to high performance | 22 | 30,800.00 € | 2,365.00 € | 274,353.38 € |
| Studies and reports | 17 | 14,410.00 € | 3,641.00 € | 169,114.00 € |
| Grants for PhD programs | 3 | 9,916.50 € | 4,957.70 € | 24,774.20 € |
| Grants to participate in research projects | 3 | 9,916.50 € | 4,950.00 € | 19,816.50 € |
| Postgraduate studies | 2 | 6,600.00 € | 3,300.00 € | 9,900.00 € |
| Acts for scientific dissemination | 6 | 6,057.70 € | 2,750.00 € | 27,452.70 € |
| Total | 53 | 77,700.70 € | 21,963.70 € | 525,410.78 € |

Table 11. Aids to non-profit organizations

| | | 2009 | 2010 | Total |
|---|------------|-------------|-------------|--------------------|
| Organization of scientific meetings, congresses and seminars | Projects | 2 | 3 | 5 |
| | Budget (€) | 9,204.06 € | 7,480.00 € | 16,684.06 € |
| Periodical scientific publications | Projects | 6 | 3 | 9 |
| | Budget (€) | 30,982.32 € | 9,900.00 € | 40,882.32 € |
| Studies and works in priority areas of interest | Projects | 2 | 4 | 6 |
| | Budget (€) | 11,933.61 € | 15,950.00 € | 27,883.61 € |
| Total | Projects | 10 | 10 | 20 |
| | Budget (€) | 52,119.99 € | 33,330.00 € | 85,449.99 € |

Table 12. Acts against violence, racism, xenophobia and injustice

| | 2009 | 2010 | 2011 | Total |
|------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| Number of projects | 11 | 8 | 6 | 25 |
| Project with smallest grant | 2,700.00 € | 4,577.00 € | 12,000.00 € | 19,277.00 € |
| Project with largest grant | 40,400.00 € | 47,000.00 € | 70,900.00 € | 158,300.00 € |
| Total | 199,660.00 € | 189,577.00 € | 199,900.00 € | 589,137.00 € |

Table 13. P+S plan

| | | 2010 | 2011 | Total |
|---------------------------|------------|-------------|-------------|--------------------|
| Project bank | Projects | 3 | 3 | 6 |
| | Budget (€) | 3,000.00 € | 3,000.00 € | 6,000.00 € |
| Project laboratory | Projects | 5 | 5 | 10 |
| | Budget (€) | 40,000.00 € | 45,000.00 € | 85,000.00 € |
| Total | Projects | 8 | 8 | 16 |
| | Budget (€) | 43,000.00 € | 48,000.00 € | 91,000.00 € |

Discussion

At a federative level, the results obtained show that from 2014 to 2016 there was an increment of conceded grants and aids, which decreased in 2017. This subject has already been tackled by García and Llopis-Goig (2014), who described the reductions of grants in 2013. This could be related to the rejection of Madrid in 2017 for the 2020 Olympic Games, which could have had as a consequence the decrease in sports investment shown in the present work. There is also inequality between SSF in terms of investment, especially in the investment-sportspeople relation.

Regarding the topic of women and sports, which is mentioned by Ortega Toro, Valdivia-Moral, Hernán-Villarejo and Olmedilla Zafra (2014), since 2014 the endowments have remained stable both in the Women and Sports program and in the social aids for sportswomen, with a slight decrease in 2016 and 2017 for the latter. This reveals the importance of gender equality for the NSC, although this equality is still not real in terms of licenses, since only in four sports there is a higher or equal number of women with a license.

At a research level, and following the work of Ortega Toro et al. (2014), it has been observed that, until 2012, public calls for grants and aids have been stable, and from 2012 to present there has not been any other call, abandoning R&D within the sports field. Since 2012, no P+S plan call has been carried out, which was meant to be applied from 2010 to 2020.

In 2017, the funding to AC for sports technification centers also decreased. However, registered grants to the High Performance Center of Sant Cugat have remained the same from 2015 to 2017.

Conclusions

Nowadays, public calls from NSC are focused on SSF, setting aside R&D and supporting gender equality. However, more data are needed to make more decisive conclusions. NSC should also publish all the information of each public call, as the law states, since there were some calls with missing or incomplete data. This work could serve as a starting point for future more extensive research about government calls or to observe differences between the different SSF, licenses or the relation between genders in federative sports.

Conflicts of interest – None.

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