

11 Sports facilities



► How to plan, (re)design and manage sports facilities at the local level integrating a gender dimension.



► Overcome some of the barriers to the participation of women and girls in sporting activities.

► Guarantee that all sports facilities are accessible, safe and adapted to all and offer sporting opportunities to all segments of the population



A gender-sensitive (re)design and management of sports facilities and their direct environment will make them more responsive to the needs of all potential users and enhance the participation of boys, girls, men and women in physical activities.

ON YOUR MARKS

Understand the issue

Look into how several aspects of the design and management of sports facilities can influence participation.

Key elements to consider

- Venues: what kind are they? (Indoor, outdoor, a swimming pool, football pitch or river, etc.).
- Location which links safety and accessibility: where are the venues located? What is the distance to the urban centre or urban area (for example, is the football pitch out of town or the skating ring in an industrial area)?
- Transport: is there public transport?
- Access for all: is the facility accessible to people with disabilities? Is the price affordable?
- Lighting: is there lightening in and around the venue?
- What are the activities practised? What are the schedules (distribution of slots)? What section of the public is being targeted?
- Users: who are they (sex- and age-disaggregated data)?
- What about changing rooms? Are they male, female, unisex?



CONSIDER AREAS WHERE SPONTANEOUS SPORTING ACTIVITIES ALSO TAKE PLACE, SUCH AS WALKING, RUNNING, CYCLING, SKATING, ETC.

TAKE ACTION

The aim is to guarantee equal access to safe, affordable and adapted sports facilities for all sections of the population.

(Re)Design

■ Location: it is essential to offer easy access, but also pay attention to perceptions of safety; for example, isolated areas far from city centres may feel insecure while busy urban or populated areas can reinforce a feeling of safety.

■ Lighting: well-lit areas and infrastructures reinforce a feeling of safety. For example, adequate lighting on the approach to and around the facilities is essential.

■ Ensure easy access for all, taking account of things such as the proximity of public transport, easy access for wheelchairs and prams and adequate parking areas.

■ Locate baby-changing stations in common areas or in both male and female changing rooms.

■ Make sure that all equipment fits all users' physical needs and features (height and weight); for example, unisex changing rooms that cater for the needs of both males and females, and showers and changing rooms for referees and officials.

■ Offer a wide choice of activity in public spaces to ensure that opportunities to participate are as attractive to women and girls as to men and boys (for example, not just basketball or football, but also badminton or volleyball).

Manage

■ Allocate facilities and pitch time equally between women's and men's sports and teams: make sure quality equipment and slots are fairly distributed between male and female sports and/or allocate sessions devoted exclusively to the under-represented sex (for example, football sessions supported by a trainer offered to girls only).

■ Transport: co-ordinate the schedule of activities or opening hours with public transport schedules as much as possible; use web-based resources to develop possible alternatives (for example, car-sharing).

■ Explore all possibilities to make pricing affordable to ensure access to all categories of income based on an assessment of the needs of different groups (for example, student discounts, family/group subscriptions, subsidies for activities favoured by under-represented segments of the population).

■ Organise the use of changing rooms to respond to the needs of various groups; for example, family changing room(s) on weekends.

■ Ensure all staff working at facilities are aware of the rules and objectives regarding gender equality and preventing gender-based violence, and that they are trained to work with people with disabilities.

■ Publicly display your protocols, guidelines and codes of conduct regarding gender-based violence.

■ Set up tools to quantify the use of facilities (for example, the systematic collection of sex- and age-disaggregated data on users), set quantitative objectives and monitor progress.

■ Be imaginative about the venues: for example, use schools after school hours, organise summer gym classes in parks.

■ Set up play areas and childcare services to facilitate the practice of sport for parents and carers.

■ Publish a catalogue (in print and online) detailing the available indoor and outdoor facilities, complete with scheduled activities and details about who the activities are aimed at.

EXAMPLES

CRÈCHE FACILITIES TO FOSTER WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN SPORT

Organisation responsible: Edinburgh Leisure
Country: UK

Edinburgh Leisure runs a number of women-only sessions for a variety of activities; sessions that have become much appreciated by women in the community. Several of the leisure centres also provide crèche facilities to enable women with children to take part in activities while their children are cared for and engaged in suitable activities. As a follow-on from this work, Edinburgh Leisure has also secured funding from the "Girls on the Move" participation programme to provide a service for young mothers. This initiative will target young mothers from socially excluded areas and will provide access to leisure opportunities as well as a crèche free of charge.

Available at:

<https://sportscotland.org.uk/documents/resources/makingwomenandgirlsmoreactive.pdf>

GENDER-SENSITIVE REDESIGN OF A SKATEPARK

Organisation responsible: North Ayrshire Skate Group
Country: UK

Evolution Skate Park, North Ayrshire Skate Group, wanted to encourage girls and young women to take up inline skating, skateboarding and BMX cycling when they had a skatepark built. As skateparks often become part of territorialism and very much a boys-only zone, they wanted to counteract this trend and provide a safe and non-intimidating park where girls felt welcome. The skatepark introduced two girls-only sessions per week. Girls can come and learn to skate under the watchful eye of a tutor, on hand to encourage and help them develop their skills. The skatepark has approximately 30 to 40 girls attending each session and many of the girls have gained enough confidence to use the park outside the girls-only sessions.

Available at:

<https://sportscotland.org.uk/documents/resources/makingwomenandgirlsmoreactive.pdf>



For more information on these examples and to find out about other practices and resources, take a look at the ALL IN online library¹.



Factsheet 6 – Funding
Factsheet 8 – Sporting opportunities

¹ <https://pjp-eu.coe.int/en/web/gender-equality-in-sport/online-library>

