



Next Generation EU: How can the sport sector benefit? -background paper-

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Sport

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Next Generation EU: how can the sport sector benefit?

The COVID-19 pandemic has burdened European citizens with health issues, the loss of lives, social unrest and economic uncertainty. The EU and its Member States have had to make unprecedented efforts to protect their citizens and overcome the immediate and long-term effects of the crisis. To this end, a major recovery plan was proposed by the European Commission to immediately address the socio-economic damage created by the pandemic and to start building a more resilient, sustainable and healthier society capable of better facing future global health and economic threats.

The recovery plan is to be implemented via a new temporary recovery instrument branded [Next Generation EU](#) (NGEU), on top of the long-term budget of the European Union for 2021-2027 (earmarked at €1100 billion - 2018 prices). In July 2020, the European Council agreed¹ to issue European sovereign bonds, allowing the European Commission to borrow € 750 billion (at 2018 prices) on the financial markets to fund the Next Generation EU package over the next 3 to 6 years.

As such, the Next Generation EU along with targeted reinforcements of the long-term EU budget for 2021-2027 will bring total EU financial expenditure to €1.85 trillion (at 2018 prices), making it the largest EU budget ever agreed.² NGEU is to be disbursed as grants (€390 billion) and loans (€360 billion).

The funding raised for Next Generation EU will be channelled both through existing EU programmes and brand-new instruments. As such, the NGEU budget will be invested across three pillars, via the following financing instruments:

1. Support to EU Member States (via nationally-managed investment programmes and funds)

- a. Recovery and Resilience Facility (€672.5 billion);
- b. Recovery Assistance for Cohesion and the Territories of Europe (REACT-EU) (€47.5 billion);
- c. The Just Transition Fund (additional € 10 billion for NGEU);
- d. The European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) (additional € 7.5 billion for NGEU).

2. Incentives to private investments

- a. InvestEU (additional € 5.6 billion for NGEU).

3. Support to research and innovation

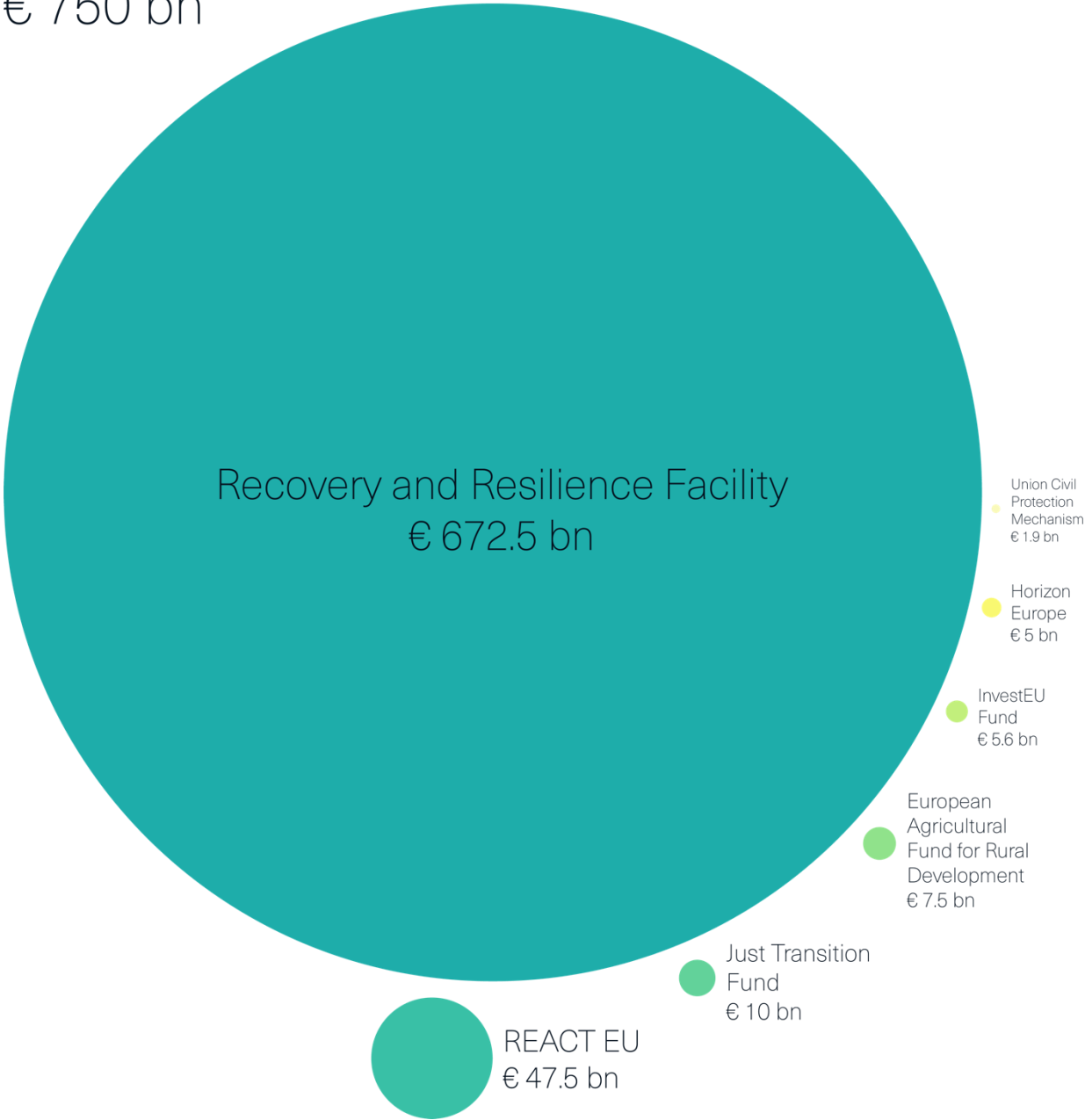
- a. Horizon Europe (additional € 5 billion for NGEU);
- b. Union Civil Protection Mechanism (rescEU) (additional €1.9 billion for NGEU).

Next Generation EU offers several possibilities for the sport sector to benefit from its various recovery mechanisms, not only as a hard-hit sector in need of reconstruction, but also as a strategic sector with a meaningful impact in Europe's wider economic, resilience and social recovery process. The sections below offer practical information on each funding mechanism available through NGEU and possible ways stakeholders could unlock these funds for sport initiatives.

¹ Conclusions adopted by the European Council at the special meeting 17, 18, 19, 20 and 21 July 2020, Brussels, 21 July 2020 EUCO 10/20 CO EUR 8 CONCL 4, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/45109/210720-euco-final-conclusions-en.pdf>

² The EU budget powering the recovery plan for Europe – fact sheet, May 2020 https://ec.europa.eu/info/sites/info/files/factsheet_1_en.pdf

Next Generation EU
€ 750 bn



Recovery and Resilience Facility

About

The Recovery and Resilience Facility (RRF) is the centrepiece of Next Generation EU. It will be disbursed as **loans (€ 360 bn)** and **grants (€ 312.5 bn)** to support reforms and investments undertaken by the EU Member States. Its main aim is to help achieve an economic and social recovery and resilience and convergence, especially against the background of **the green and digital transitions**.

To access the Facility, Member States need to prepare National Recovery and Resilience Plans (NRRPs) setting out their reform and public investment agendas to be implemented **between 2021 and 2026**. The plans will have to dedicate at least:

- **37% of expenditure to support green investment and reforms;**
- **20% of expenditure to support digital investment and reforms.**

National Recovery and Resilience Plans should prioritise the following seven European flagship areas for investments and reforms, identified in the [2021 Annual Sustainable Growth Strategy](#):

European flagship areas	Possible investment opportunities for the sport sector ³
Power Up: Clean technologies and renewables	Facilitate the use of renewable energy and waste heat in large sport facilities (i.e., network of sport infrastructures at national level).
Renovate: Energy efficiency of buildings	Renovate outdated sport infrastructure to increase the energy and resource efficiency.
Recharge and refuel: Sustainable transport and charging stations	Create alternative mobility frameworks (e.g., cycle highways) in cities and urban agglomerations.
Connect: Roll-out broadband services	
Modernise: Digitalisation of public administration and services	Build capacities for the development of novel tools such as AI or Internet of Things for sport and physical activity to encourage healthier lifestyles.
Scale-up: Increase in European data cloud capacities and sustainable processors	Support the development of cutting-edge European interconnected and energy efficient cloud-to-edge data centres for the public sector, including sport organisations.
Reskill and upskill: Education and training to support digital skills and climate transformation	Support the development of both direct and soft skills through sport training curricula in dedicated centres, using sport's wide engagement with social groups.

³ The examples given in this section concerning the sport sector are inspired from the European Commission's series of guidance documents to Member States on the Recovery and Resilience Plans. As part of this guidance, the Commission services have drafted examples of components of reforms and investments that are eligible for funding through the RRF, in line with the European flagship investment areas proposed in the Annual Sustainable Growth Strategy Communication. These examples are available here: https://ec.europa.eu/info/business-economy-euro/recovery-coronavirus/recovery-and-resilience-facility_en

RRF cross-country allocation method

Grants

An allocation key fixes a maximum amount possible for the grant component for each Member State. In order to disburse 70% of the total € 312.5 bn available as grants, the allocation key takes into account the following indicators for each Member State:

- **The 2019 population;**
- **The inverse of its GP per capita;**
- **The 2015-2019 average unemployment rate.**

For the remaining 30%, the allocation formula replaces the average unemployment rate by the observed loss in real GDP over 2020 and the observed cumulative loss in real GDP over 2020-2021.

The European Commission published the [RRF maximum grant allocations per Member State](#).

Loans

The maximum volume of loans for each Member State will not exceed 6.8% of its Gross National Income (GNI).

Timeline

- **10 February 2021:** The European Parliament approves the Regulation establishing the Recovery and Resilience Facility. The Regulation is awaiting Council's formal approval.
- **19 February 2021:** The Recovery and Resilience Facility enters into force.
- **By 30 April 2021:** Member States must submit the first draft of their recovery and resilience plan to the Commission.
- **By 30 June 2021:** The Commission assesses the plans against the Country-Specific Recommendations from [2019](#) and [2020](#) and determines the financial contribution the Member State will benefit from (grant and, if requested, loan).
- **Second half of 2021:** 70% of the grant value is frontloaded in this period.
- **2022:** The remaining 30% of the grant (committed to projects in 2023) is allocated.
- **By the end of 2023:** The NRRPs can be amended by Member States (new commitments added, new applications for loans submitted) at any time in this period.
- **2023-2026:** Disbursements can occur in this period but no more funds can be committed.

Guidelines for sport stakeholders

1. Aim to make sport visible for the reform and public investment agenda

The Regulation establishing the Recovery and Resilience Facility provides that the process of drafting the NRRPs should involve consultations with stakeholders from a wide range of economic sectors, including local and regional authorities. As a result, sport stakeholders should ensure their voice is heard in the public consultations in their countries and that the sport sector has a seat at the negotiating table.

2. Illustrate the need for reform and investment in the sport sector

NRRPs must propose credible narratives, with facts and figures explaining how the overarching RRF objectives will be attained through the proposed reforms and investments. Sport stakeholders have the clear opportunity to make the case for sport and physical activity as important contributors to the green transition through sustainable transport, active lifestyle, citizen resilience and soft skills development. The RRF 37% spending quota on climate transformation paves the way for strategic investment in the sport and wider physical activity sector.

3. Contact the local and regional authorities

The RRF Regulation acknowledges the indispensable role that local communities play in the successful implementation of the Facility, especially in the green and digital transitions. Local sport stakeholders should contact their local and regional authorities to ensure local support for their narrative around sport, and thus a better place in the public consultations for the NRRPs.

4. Extend at national level

Sport stakeholders active at national level are encouraged to extend the scope of the recovery plan for the sport sector as part of the Member State's national contribution to the Facility's objectives. National sport associations must reach out to their own national governments to propose a recovery strategy for sport at national level. The commitment of local and regional actors is an important advantage in this endeavour.

5. If the NRRP is already finalised in your country...

Sport stakeholders should analyse the content of the NRRP once public (or demand their national government to consult it), namely the general measures related to digitalisation of services and activities, greening the overall economy, reskilling and the creation of jobs. The sport sector can still benefit from these general measures, as sport and physical activity remain important contributors and strategic sectors to invest in, in order to fulfil the overarching EU policy objectives.

REACT-EU

About

REACT-EU (Recovery Assistance for Cohesion and the Territories of Europe) is a top-up to Cohesion Policy 2014-2020 and 2021-2027 funding programmes through Structural and Investment Funds, making the latter the highest single-policy grant instrument in the EU budget.

REACT-EU continues and extends the crisis response started with the [Coronavirus Response Investment Initiative \(CRII\)](#) and [Coronavirus Response Investment Initiative Plus \(CRII+\)](#), both launched by the European Commission in April 2020. It is therefore a bridge between the 2014-2020 funding programmes and the long-term recovery plan for Europe. REACT-EU will support initiatives that **foster COVID-19 crisis repair capacities**, as well as investments that contribute to the development of **a green, digital and resilient recovery of the economy**.

These additional resources will be distributed to Member States **between 2021 and 2022** from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the European Social Fund (ESF), the European Fund for Aid to the Most Deprived (FEAD) and the Youth Employment Initiative (YEI). For a rapid deployment of funds, the Commission recommends to Member States that they target the geographic areas whose **economy has been hit the hardest by the pandemic, and are the least resilient** and focus the investment programmes on the following objectives:

Thematic investment objectives	Possible investment opportunities for the sport sector ⁴
Healthcare: Products and services to reinforce capacities of the crisis response	Invest in physical activity programmes especially for vulnerable demographic categories to increase and mind physical recovery and resilience to future health threats.
SMEs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct support to SMEs • Short-time work schemes for SMEs 	Support to SMEs and other entities developing products and services for sport and physical activity.
Infrastructure: Infrastructure providing basic services to citizens, ensuring the transition towards the green and digital economy	Encourage citizens' outdoor physical activity through active spatial planning in cities and urban agglomerations; invest in smart spaces linking digital wearables with spatial planning.
Experience economy: Support to sectors most affected by the crisis (including culture, tourism, hospitality etc.)	Support active and outdoor tourism in dedicated geographic areas via direct support to small businesses and investment in social distancing measures.
Lives and jobs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct support for the self-employed • Skills development • Basic material assistance to those in most need and activities to support their social inclusion • Enhanced access to social services of general interest 	Invest in the development of sport and physical activity programmes for the most vulnerable social categories; Invest in both direct and soft skills development through sport training programmes.

REACT-EU cross-country allocation method

The allocation methodology for this funding package takes into account the economic and social impact of the coronavirus crisis according to the following indicators for each Member State:

- **The GDP contraction between 2020-2021 (for 67% of the total allocation package);**
- **The level of total and youth unemployment in January 2020 (for 25% of the total allocation package);**
- **Change in total and youth unemployment after January 2020 (for 8% of the total allocation package).**

The European Commission published the [allocations under REACT-EU for 2021 per Member State](#).

Maximum flexibility in implementation

To provide the maximum possible assistance to Member States, REACT-EU funds will be disbursed with a much higher degree of flexibility in comparison with normal Cohesion Policy implementation rules:

- **No national co-financing** is required. The EU will provide **100% funding support** to Member States;
- **High level of pre-financing (50%)** is available to prevent the lack of liquidity creating bottlenecks in the roll-out of the support;
- **No ex-ante conditionality** is required to access this funding;
- **The scope of support is broad**, with no breakdown per type of region, and transfers between ERDF and ESF are always possible;
- Resources can be allocated to **existing cross-border cooperation programmes** under the European Territorial Cooperation goal.

⁴ The examples given in this section concerning the sport sector are in line with the thematic investment objectives of REACT-EU according to its Regulation. They are merely ideas to support the social recovery and health resilience of EU citizens (in line with REACT-EU remit) and they should be advocated accordingly towards Member States governments and Managing Authorities of Structural Funds.

Timeline

- **1 January 2021:** REACT-EU enters into force.
- **First quarter of 2021:** Member States are expected to submit amendments to the operational programmes for 2014-2020 to include REACT-EU spending or to submit new dedicated programmes allocating the additional resources.
- **Within 15 working days after submission:** The Commission approves new programmes and programme amendments.
- **2021:** The Commission allocates €37.5 billion for expenditure in 2021 through EU Structural and Investment Funds.
- **2022:** The Commission allocates €10 billion for expenditure in 2022 through EU Structural and Investment Funds.
- **31 December 2023:** The end date for the eligibility of expenditure.

Guidelines for sport stakeholders

1. Look for local/regional partners to make the case for local support of the sport sector

REACT-EU resources will be allocated in accordance with a solid partnership principle, involving local and regional authorities and relevant bodies representing civil society and social partners. This bottom-up principle is crucial in identifying the real needs on the ground, according to regional specificities. Sport stakeholders should work collaboratively at a local/regional level to maximise the impact of contact with their local and regional authorities to ensure local support for the recovery of the sport sector and to secure local/regional partnership agreements which are crucial for unlocking REACT-EU funds.

2. Ensure national visibility for the local recovery of the sport sector

The REACT-EU funds are not geographically determined, like the normal Cohesion Policy resources. Therefore, it is up to Member States to target areas where recovery and transition to a low-carbon economy are needed most. Therefore, sport stakeholders together with the regional authority should actively argue at national level for sustainable regional recovery through sport and physical activity, especially in the case of lower income regions or regions lagging behind in climate transition.

3. Privilege the relaunch of interrupted projects or think of new 'fast' ones

A specific feature of the REACT-EU resources is their orientation towards speedy implementation of projects and thus the quick absorption of funds. Sport stakeholders should thus think first and foremost of projects interrupted by the coronavirus pandemic which could be quickly relaunched with REACT-EU resources. Equally important is the short-term absorption of funds with long-term impact. New projects allowing quick execution and targeting the overarching objectives of REACT-EU represent another step forward in the recovery process of the sport sector.

The Just Transition Fund

Budget total: €17.5 bn

Budget NGEU: €10 bn

Budget MFF: €7.5 bn

About

The Just Transition Fund (JTF) is a key element of the European Green Deal and the first pillar of the **Just Transition Mechanism**, which aims to assist regions with a heavy dependency on energy production and the extractive industries (extraction of coal, lignite, peat, shale oil) to address the social consequences of transition to a greener economy.

The primary objective of the JTF is to enable these regions and people to address the social, employment, economic and environmental impacts of transition towards the Union’s 2030 target for climate and a climate neutral economy by 2050, based on the Paris Agreement.

In light of the coronavirus crisis, the Just Transition Fund was reinforced under Next Generation EU (with an additional budget of €10 bn), as part of the crisis response mechanism, to further support a green and sustainable recovery. The JTF under NGEU will thus provide **grants to alleviate the socio-economic impacts of the green transition in the regions most affected**, for the period **2021-2023**.

To unlock funding from the overall JTF, Member States have to submit their Territorial Just Transition Plans (TJTPs). These plans should outline the **specific intervention areas** based on the economic and social impacts of the transition and identify the **eligible territories** that are expected to be most negatively impacted by the green transition. The TJTPs should be consistent with the [regional smart specialisation strategies](#) (RIS3) and the [National Energy and Climate Plans](#). Member States have to commit **to match each EURO from the Just Transition Fund with money from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+)** and provide additional resources. The approval of the TJTPs enables access to all three pillars of the Just Transition Mechanism.

In a [preliminary analysis](#), the European Commission already proposed country-specific recommendations for eligible territories and the following key investment areas for eligibility under the JTF:

Key investment areas	Possible investment opportunities for the sport sector
Research and innovation. Foster the transfer of advanced technologies	Develop smart specialisation strategies around sport ⁵ ; Encourage developments in sport technology with spill-overs in healthcare, education etc.
Technology and infrastructures. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affordable clean energy • Greenhouse gas emission reduction • Energy efficiency and renewable energy 	Invest in sustainable sport infrastructure and facilities and improve the energy efficiency of existing buildings; Promote active travel and sustainable transport; Invest in innovative sport solutions that will produce a lower carbon impact; Invest in green infrastructure that improves biodiversity and air quality in urban settings while delivering increased opportunities for health-enhancing physical activity.
Upskilling and reskilling of workers	Increase skills development and employability through sport and physical activity; Upskill long-term unemployed to work in the sport sector; Develop citizens’ soft skills through sport.
SMEs (including start-ups). Economic diversification and redeployment	Invest in SMEs in the sport sector to facilitate their transition to the low-carbon economy; Diversify economic activities traditionally connected to rural/coastal areas through active tourism.
Regeneration and decontamination. of sites, land restoration and repurposing projects	Invest in repurposing areas (for instance abandoned fossil fuel-based land) towards a service economy through sustainable and green sport infrastructure and facilities and sustainable transport.
Creation of new firms. Business incubators/consulting services	Facilitate the development of regional innovation hubs, implement triple and quadruple-helix development models based on sport and physical activity.
Circular economy	Invest in improving the energy efficiency of existing sport infrastructure, including waste energy usage.

⁵ Inspired by the thematic area on sport (<https://s3platform.jrc.ec.europa.eu/sport>) under the Smart Specialisation Platform for Industrial Modernisation and by the Smart Specialisation Strategies around sport developed by regions across the EU as per the EYE@RIS3 database (<https://s3platform.jrc.ec.europa.eu/map>)

JTF allocation method

The distribution of the Just Transition Fund budget to Member States is based on five socio-economic criteria, each of which has a different weighing factor in the calculation. Half of the allocation is based on economic criteria (production of greenhouse gas emissions), while the other half is based on social criteria (employment data):

- 49% of allocation to regions (NUTS2) with a high-carbon intensity;
- 0.95% of allocation to production of peat;
- 0.05% of allocation to production of oil shale and oil sands;
- 25% of allocation for employment in carbon-intensive industry (2016 data);
- 25% of allocation for employment in mining of coal and lignite (2018 data).

The European Commission published the [allocations per Member State under the Just Transition Fund](#).

Timeline

- **First months of 2021:** Finalisation of the draft Regulation on the JTF under the current Portuguese Presidency of the Council of the European Union.
- **First semester 2021:** Member States prepare TJTPs that cover the period up to 2030 and submit them to the Commission.
- **Second semester 2021:** The Commission assesses the TJTPs and adopts the JTF support programmes for the Member States.
- **2021-2023:** Distribution of JTF resources under Next Generation EU: €2 bn in 2021; €4 bn in 2021; €4 bn in 2023.
- **2021-2027:** Distribution of JTF complementary resources through the Multiannual Financial Framework.
- **2025:** The Commission reviews the implementation of the JTF.
- **2030:** Completion of the Just Transition process.

Guidelines for sport stakeholders

1. Aim to make sport visible for the transition agenda

The sport sector can only benefit from the Just Transition Fund if it is included in the TJTPs. The National Plans should be prepared together with relevant local/regional parties and in dialogue with the Commission. As such, regional sport stakeholders should contact their regional/local authority and ensure sport is taken into consideration into the overall transition strategy.

2. Understand how sport contributes to overcoming the challenges related to green transition in the eligible territories

Sport stakeholders should consult the Commission's [preliminary analysis](#) to understand which are the eligible territories for the JTF in their country and what are the challenges identified by the Commission in the just transition process. Based on this information, they can identify how the sport sector could contribute best to overcome these challenges, based on the regional specificities.

3. Support the inclusion of sport in regional smart specialisation strategies

The TJTPs have to be aligned with the regional smart specialisation strategies in the Member States. Based on a preliminary understanding of regional challenges (point 2), regional sport stakeholders are in a position to contact the regional authorities responsible for the development of RIS3 and launch a discussion on how sport could fit in the upcoming (or revised) strategies.

4. Advocate for sport as part of the national just transition strategy

Sport stakeholders active at national level should contact the Member State's Ministry of Health and/or Sport to coordinate with the other appropriate ministries (Ministry of Finance, Economic Affairs) and ensure that the sport sector is included in the TJTPs.

European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development

Budget total: €85.3 bn

Budget NGEU: €7.5 bn

Budget MFF: €77.8 bn

About

The European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) is the funding instrument of the second pillar of the EU's **Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)**. The EAFRD aims to strengthen the EU's agriculture, agro-food and forestry sectors, and rural areas in general.

Under Next Generation EU, the Commission reinforced the EAFRD budget by €7.5 billion **to support rural areas and farmers in making the structural changes necessary to implement the European Green Deal**. This additional budget under NGEU will be made available to Member States for **a transitional period (2021-2022)**, under which, most of CAP rules in place for 2014-2020 will be extended, but new elements will also be included in order to encourage stronger green ambitions and ensure a smooth transition to the future CAP framework.

Member States have to submit revised Rural Development Plans (RDPs) to the Commission for approval, to illustrate how they plan to spend these resources and to disburse these funds to beneficiaries. The investments planned under the RDP should use at least:

- **55%** of expenditure to **promote economic and social development in rural areas**

The European Commission published the [breakdown of EAFRD under Next Generation EU per Member State](#).

Timeline

- **01 January 2021:** Official starting date of the EAFRD under the CAP Transition Regulation.
- **Spring 2021:** Commission reaches a political agreement on the CAP strategic plans.
- **01 January 2022:** Deadline for Member States to submit their CAP strategic plans to the Commission.
- **2021-2022:** EAFRD resources disbursed under Next Generation EU during the transitional period.
- **01 January 2023:** Official approval of the CAP strategic plans by the Commission.
- **2023-2027:** EAFRD funding under the MFF functions under the reformed CAP.

How can the sport sector benefit?

The sport sector in general, and the active tourism sport sector in particular can both directly and indirectly benefit from the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development. The active tourism sport sector is relevant as it allows economic diversification and innovation in rural areas, by generating activity and services. Outdoor sports development programmes can be part of **economic and social development** projects funded through EAFRD which are key in the implementation of the programme. Outdoor sports and activity tourism contribute to the European Commission Long-Term Vision for rural areas addressing the current environmental challenges and proposing sustainable development patterns for rural territories.

Guidelines for sport stakeholders

1. Engage with local & regional authorities

The activity tourism and sports sector should contact their regional/local authority and ensure sport and activity tourism is taken into consideration into EARDF funding plans. Engagement with LEADER/CLLD and Local Action Groups is also important for the sector.

InvestEU

Budget total: €9.4 bn

Budget NGEU: €5.6 bn

Budget MFF: €3.8 bn

About

InvestEU is Europe's flagship investment programme aiming to encourage public and private participation in financing and investment operations by providing guarantees from the EU budget. It brings together and further develops various funds that were previously available under separate EU initiatives and programmes.

InvestEU was enhanced via Next Generation EU to provide **crucial support to enterprises in the recovery phase** and support the EU in its **long-term green and digital transition**. The InvestEU programme is expected to mobilise around **€370 billion in investments**, contributing to the recovery, while ensuring a strong investor focus on the EU's medium- and long-term policy priorities. At least:

- **30%** of the investments under InvestEU will contribute to **EU climate objectives**.

The InvestEU budget guarantee will be deployed across 4 policy windows:

Policy Windows	Possible investment opportunities for the sport sector
Sustainable infrastructure	Invest in improving energy efficiency of existing sport infrastructure, including waste energy usage, and in new energy efficient sport centres combining sport, innovation and research to create growth and jobs in urban and rural territories.
Research, Innovation and Digitisation	Encourage developments in sport technology with spill-overs in healthcare, education etc.
SMEs	Invest in SMEs in the sport and related sectors to facilitate their transition to the low-carbon economy.
Social Investment and Skills	Invest in direct and soft skills development through sport training programmes.

InvestEU will provide a dedicated **Just Transition Scheme** as the second pillar of the Just Transition Mechanism to generate additional investment for the benefit of just transition regions within the approved Territorial Just Transition Plans (TJTJs). The scheme will be established **horizontally across all policy windows** of the InvestEU mechanism.

Implementation

- Member States are able to implement part of their Recovery and Resilience National Plans via the InvestEU programme and the [InvestEU Advisory Hub](#). The latter is envisioned as the central entry point for project promoters and intermediaries seeking advisory support and technical assistance related to centrally managed EU investment funds.

- The [InvestEU Portal](#) is an EU-wide platform which brings together project promoters (responsible for project applications) and investors. The Portal promotes the visibility of EU-based projects seeking financing and provides international investors with information about investment opportunities. The Portal provides a pipeline of investment projects to the Implementing Partners under the InvestEU programme.
- The InvestEU Fund will be implemented through financial partners who will invest in projects using the EU guarantee. The main partner will be the European Investment Bank (EIB) Group, which has successfully implemented and managed European Fund for Strategic Investments (EFSI) since its launch in 2015. In addition to the EIB Group, International Financial Institutions active in Europe – such as the European Bank for Reconstruction and Developments (EBRD) - and National Promotional Banks will have direct access to the EU guarantee. The EU guarantee is split 75%-25% between the EIB Group and all other implementing partners.

Timeline

- **Early 2021:** The European Parliament and the Council are due to officially adopt the Regulation on the InvestEU programme after legal-linguistic revision.
- **September 2024:** The Commission submits an independent interim evaluation report of the InvestEU programme to the European Parliament and the Council.
- **2021-2027:** Implementation of projects/investments under InvestEU.

Eligibility criteria

In order to benefit from InvestEU financing, potential projects must:

- Address market failures or investment gaps and be economically-viable;
- Need EU backing in order to get off the ground;
- Achieve a multiplier effect and where possible crowd-in private investment;
- Help meet EU policy objectives.

Guidelines for sport stakeholders

1. Reflect on investment gaps and economically-viable projects in the sport sector

InvestEU provides the opportunity for sport stakeholders, especially the sport industry, to finance their investment ideas and translate them into viable economic projects. The sport industry should therefore reflect at investment gaps in the sport sector and develop economically-viable plans in consultation with different stakeholders including academia and public authorities.

2. Check resources available in your country

The InvestEU Advisory Hub provides a list of resources (including local, regional and national financial intermediaries who support the implementation of InvestEU in the EU Member States). Sport stakeholders who wish to finance projects in the sport sector could check the resources available in their country to find tailored support for their application [here](#).

3. Add your project in the InvestEU Portal

Sport stakeholders could [send](#) their applications (including the economic plan for their sport-based project) to the InvestEU Portal where it will be screened and quality-checked by EU experts. Once admitted, the application would gain visibility to a large network of international investors, including the implementing partners under the InvestEU programme, thus boosting the chances to attract interest and finances for the project.

Horizon Europe

Budget total: €84.9 bn

Budget NGEU: €5 bn

Budget MFF: €79.9 bn

About

Horizon Europe is the largest transnational programme ever supporting research and innovation. The new EU research and innovation programme has a budget of €84.9 billion for 2021-2027, **including €5 billion from Next Generation EU**.

The objective of Horizon Europe is to provide valuable support to top researchers and innovators to drive the systemic changes needed to ensure a **green, healthy and resilient Europe**. The programme will increase its impact by working closely together with other EU programmes and policies, such as **InvestEU, EU Cohesion Policy, Digital Europe, and the Recovery and Resilience Facility**.

For the first time in the history of the framework programme, **regions can (voluntarily) transfer part of their regional funds to Horizon Europe** to be used in research and innovation activities in their region.

Five specific missions will be launched under Horizon Europe in 2021:

- **adaptation to climate change including societal transformation;**
- **cancer;**
- **climate-neutral and smart cities;**
- **healthy oceans, seas, coastal and inland waters;**
- **soil health and food.**

Horizon Europe will be implemented according to **three pillars**:

- excellent science;
- global challenges and European industrial competitiveness;
- innovative Europe.

The second pillar supports collaborative research through **thematic clusters** that address a wide range of global challenges: **health; culture, creativity and inclusive society; civil security for society; digital, industry and space; climate, energy and mobility; and food, bioeconomy, natural resources, agriculture and environment**. The accompanying **work programmes** will identify the specific research and innovation areas that will be funded. Subsequent calls for proposals will be accessible through a one-stop-shop Funding and Tenders Portal.

Timeline

- **February 2021:** First Horizon Europe Strategic Plan (2021-2024) adopted.
- **April 2021:** The Commission publishes first work programmes.
- **April 2021:** First Horizon Europe calls are open.

How can the sport sector benefit?

The sport sector can benefit from various components of Horizon Europe **by showcasing their potential contribution to the objectives of the programme**. The sport sector could contribute to the overarching priorities of the Commission: **the transitions to a green and digital economy**, which are key in the implementation of Horizon Europe. The sport sector is relevant for several of the specific missions identified for Horizon Europe related to: **health, climate change, societal transformations and smart cities**. Finally, the thematic research clusters which will function under the second pillar of Horizon Europe provide opportunities for **sport stakeholders to get involved and contribute** to various research programmes and projects, in particular related to health through physical activity and sport-based innovation. The accompanying work programmes and subsequent calls for proposals may, as such, contain interesting opportunities for the sport sector.

Union Civil Protection Mechanism

Budget total: €3 bn

Budget NGEU: €1.9 bn

Budget MFF: €1.1 bn

About

A clear lesson from the pandemic is that Europe must be able to react more quickly and flexibly when a serious cross-border emergency strikes, affecting several Member States at the same time. The reinforced rescEU – part of the European Union’s Civil Protection Mechanism – will ensure that the Union is well equipped to support Member States and citizens when national capacities are overwhelmed. As such, it will **enhance both the protection of citizens from disasters and the management of emerging risks**. RescEU has a total budget of **€3 billion** for the period 2021-2027, including **€1.9 billion from Next Generation EU**.

Implementation

Under the upgraded programme, the EU will be able to directly acquire crisis response assets for different types of emergencies, including those related to an infectious disease, that will be positioned strategically across the EU to enable swift deployment whenever and wherever they may be needed. In particular, the EU will develop reserves of:

- Medical equipment;
- Vaccines and therapeutics to counter COVID-19;
- Medical expertise (doctors, nurses, epidemiologists).

The rescEU reserve is hosted by Belgium, Denmark, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Romania, Slovenia, Sweden and the Netherlands who are responsible for procurement. The European Commission finances 100% of the assets including storage and transport. The reserve can be mobilised quickly in case of health emergencies, forest fire outbreaks, chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear incidents or other major emergencies.

How can the sport sector benefit?

The sport sector can make significant contributions to health-related programmes. In the case of rescEU, funds could be used to add valuable equipment and skilled staff from the sport sector to the rescEU reserve and to mobilise expertise from sport stakeholders.

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