

First draft of standard concept (Milestone 7)

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Abstract	This deliverable presents the first draft of the STANDOUT standard for outdoor sports in urban areas. It was developed over 18 months through collaborative research, co-creation meetings and workshops. The draft includes a structured set of categories, indicators, that represent practical tools to help cities plan and assess outdoor sport initiatives. Led by Silkeborg Kommune, with the help from ENOS, TUM, CABVN, CUP, and input from all project partners, this version reflects shared feedback and is now ready for pilot testing.



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A. Principals for the standard

- Inclusive and relevant

The standard shall be relevant to countries in the whole of the EU. The categories and indicators shall, therefore, be relevant to different countries as well as different types of areas – for example municipalities, cities, outdoor destinations and both urban and rural areas. Different types of areas should be able to identify relevant categories and indicators, but not every category and indicator is necessarily relevant.

- Easy to use

The standard should be relatively easy to use and the resources necessary to work with the standard should be reasonable. The standard should give areas the possibility to work with the standard on different levels of ambition – more ambitious areas should be able to get more value and a higher standard from more work with.

- Learning and evaluation

The standard is an evaluation of or scoring system for an outdoor city or area. But there should be a learning element in the standard and a possibility for progression over time. The standard should, therefore, motivate learning, working with developing the categories in the standard and doing the STANDOUT assessment again.

B. Categories and indicators

1. Natural conditions and nature protection

1.1 Existing nature areas

- Mapping of all existing nature areas, including:
 - Green areas (e.g., parks, forests, grasslands);
 - Blue areas (e.g., rivers, lakes, coastal zones);
 - Uncategorised open natural spaces (e.g., undeveloped peri-urban land, snowy terrain, uncultivated open fields).
- **Why:** Establishing a full inventory of natural land is a foundational step for planning outdoor recreation, conservation, and inclusive access.
- **What:** All land areas that are classified (or mappable) as natural or semi-natural and are publicly accessible, regardless of whether they are protected, used, or formally managed. This includes both well-known parks and overlooked or informal green and blue spaces.

1.2 Existing protected natural areas

- Mapping of formally protected natural areas within the city or municipality/region. These include:
 - National or regional nature reserves;
 - Natura 2000 sites;
 - Local conservation areas;
 - Other zones with formal ecological or biodiversity protections.

May also include protected peri-urban landscapes where applicable.

- **Why:** Protected areas are key indicators of ecological quality and resilience. Their inventory helps ensure that nature conservation goals are aligned with sport and recreation planning.
- **What:** All areas with legal, policy-based, or formally recognised protection status for nature, biodiversity, or landscape value (within city boundaries or nearby, including peri-urban zones where citizens interact with protected nature).

1.3 Existing nature areas with valued characteristics for outdoor sports and recreation

- Identification of existing natural areas that have specific environmental or physical qualities that make them particularly valuable for outdoor sports. Examples include:
 - Wind exposure (e.g., kitesurfing, sailing);

- Reliable snow cover (e.g., cross-country skiing);
 - Water quality for open swimming or paddling;
 - Elevation, slope or terrain quality (e.g., mountain biking, hiking, climbing);
 - Clean air or scenic quality supporting wellbeing-based activities.
- **Why:** These valued characteristics directly support participation, quality of experience, and sport-specific development.
 - **What:** Natural spaces within or near the urban area that possess conditions particularly suited for outdoor sport and recreation. Not because of protection or classification, but because of their physical/environmental characteristics.

1.4 Protection, Conservation, and Restoration of Nature

- This indicator assesses whether the city or municipality actively engages in the protection, conservation, and ecological restoration of natural areas. This includes:
 - Measures to maintain biodiversity and ecological integrity;
 - Restoration of degraded land or ecosystems;
 - Nature-based solutions for climate adaptation;
 - Management practices that balance access with protection
- **Why:** Outdoor sports depend on the long-term health of natural ecosystems. Active conservation and restoration support biodiversity, landscape quality, and sustainable recreational use.
- **What:** Any official or organised effort by the municipality to preserve existing nature (e.g. conservation zones), restore degraded areas, or manage ecological impact from recreation and infrastructure.

1.5 Transformation of land use to new natural areas for recreation and outdoor sports

- This indicator assesses whether the city or municipality has taken actions to transform previously built-up, underused, or non-natural land (e.g., industrial sites, vacant lots, degraded urban areas) into new natural or semi-natural spaces that support recreation and outdoor sports. Examples can include:
 - Conversion of brownfields into green corridors;
 - Creation of green/blue infrastructure from abandoned zones;
 - New public nature areas on former urban land;
 - River daylighting or ecological re-greening projects.
- **Why:** Many urban and peri-urban areas face land scarcity or environmental degradation. Transforming land use creates new opportunities for inclusive outdoor sport and contributes to climate adaptation, biodiversity, and urban wellbeing.

- **What:** Projects or policies that resulted in new natural areas for outdoor sport or recreation that did not previously exist as accessible nature. This may include municipal land, partnerships, or regeneration programs.

1.6 Climate considerations and climate adaptation measures

- This indicator assesses whether the municipality or city considers climate change risks and implements climate adaptation measures that affect outdoor sport infrastructure, nature access, or recreational areas. Examples might include:
 - Flood-resilient trails or green corridors;
 - Shading or cooling in outdoor recreation areas;
 - Water management in sport/nature zones;
 - Use of nature-based solutions to increase the resilience of outdoor spaces.
- **Why:** Outdoor sports depend on climate-sensitive environments. Integrating adaptation measures ensures long-term usability and safety of natural sport areas, supports public health, and aligns with EU sustainability goals.
- **What:** Any formal or informal measure that demonstrates planning for climate impacts (e.g. heat, flooding, drought) in areas used for outdoor sport or nature access.

2. Outdoor infrastructure, supporting infrastructure and management

2.1 Welcoming trailheads and gateways to nature areas for outdoor sports

- This indicator evaluates whether trailheads and gateways are welcoming, safe, and appropriately equipped, providing a reasonable level of infrastructure where contextually appropriate, without over-developing natural settings.
- **Why:** A clear, safe, and friendly entrance encourages broader use of outdoor sport spaces. It ensures accessibility, improves user orientation, and supports inclusivity, especially for newcomers.
- **What:** Any public access point to nature areas where outdoor sport begins (e.g., trailheads, lake entries, forest gateways).

2.2 Quantity, quality and variety of trails

- This indicator evaluates the extent, diversity, and quality of trails available for outdoor sports and recreation. It includes:
 - Number and length of trails;
 - Trail types (e.g., walking, MTB, trail running, skiing);
 - Surface condition and maintenance;

- Waymarking and signage along the route;
 - Use of national or regional signage systems (e.g., DGI for MTB in Denmark);
 - Supporting features: resting points, info boards, start/finish signs.
- **Why:** A well-developed, diverse trail system increases participation, safety, and inclusivity. Standardised signage and route clarity ensure a positive user experience and reduce environmental impact.
- **What:** All formal and semi-formal trail systems accessible to the public for sport and recreational use, including those maintained by public, private, or community actors.

2.3 Hotspots for outdoor activities

- This indicator assesses whether the municipality or city provides and maintains dedicated outdoor sport hotspots - highly used or uniquely suited sites for specific activities. Examples include:
- Climbing walls or natural rock faces;
 - Designated areas for open water swimming, kayaking, or sailing;
 - Simple camping sites in nature areas;
 - Natural or developed locations with consistent outdoor sport use and infrastructure support.
- **Why:** Hotspots are key sites for outdoor sport engagement, visibility, and tourism. Their presence shows a strategic investment in outdoor culture and can serve as entry points or hubs for community building.
- **What:** High-priority, visible outdoor sport areas with clear community or visitor relevance, supported by some level of access, safety, or maintenance infrastructure.

2.4 Infrastructure and facilities for all levels of experience

- This indicator evaluates whether outdoor sport areas offer infrastructure suited to different skill and confidence levels, ensuring broad access and inclusive participation. Examples might include:
- Short, accessible trails for beginners and children;
 - Gradual progression options (e.g., climbing boulders before full routes);
 - Training zones or safe practice areas;
 - Low-barrier water access for novice swimmers or paddlers;
 - Clear safety features and signage.
- **Why:** Outdoor sports should be inclusive and inviting, not only for skilled users but for beginners, youth, and underrepresented groups.

Providing options for different ability levels lowers barriers to participation and supports lifelong sport engagement.

- **What:** Outdoor sport infrastructure that includes features explicitly designed for entry-level, low-risk, or progressively challenging use, including age-friendly and beginner-friendly options

2.5 Visitor Monitoring

- This indicator evaluates whether the municipality systematically monitors the use of outdoor sport areas. Monitoring can include:
 - Number of users;
 - Popularity of specific trails or hotspots;
 - Time-based usage patterns (season, time of day);
 - Data on local population vs. visitors;
 - Tools may include counters, surveys, apps, or manual counts.
- **Why:** Knowing who is using outdoor spaces, how often, and where, helps manage pressure, protect nature, and guide planning and investment.

It also supports balanced infrastructure development and equity of access.
- **What:** Data about user presence and behavior in outdoor sport areas, including both residents and visitors. The scope should reflect the capacity to monitor relevant areas, not total coverage.

2.6 Management and organisation for the regular maintenance of outdoor sports infrastructure

- This indicator assesses whether there is an established system or process for ensuring the regular maintenance of outdoor sports infrastructure. This can include:
 - Trail surface upkeep, boardwalks, staircases;
 - Repairs to signage, barriers, and rest areas;
 - Maintenance of features like MTB tracks, climbing points, and water access areas;
 - Coordination with clubs, volunteers, or contractors.
- **Why:** Infrastructure degrades over time, especially in natural environments. Regular maintenance ensures safety, usability, and protects environmental integrity. It's a sign of strategic commitment and long-term planning.

It also supports balanced infrastructure development and equity of access.
- **What:** A formal or informal system ensuring outdoor sport facilities are maintained at appropriate intervals, responsive to use, climate, and monitoring data.

2.7 Management and organisation for the regular supporting of facilities

- This indicator assesses whether there is a system in place to ensure regular maintenance of supporting facilities related to outdoor sports, such as:
 - Toilets and sanitation;
 - Changing rooms and showers;
 - Parking areas;
 - Lighting, water points, waste management infrastructure.
- **Why:** Supporting facilities such as toilets, showers, and parking are essential for ensuring that outdoor sports are accessible, safe, and inclusive. When these facilities are well maintained, they improve user experience, encourage participation across all age groups, and support dignity, especially for families, women, elderly people, and newcomers. Poor maintenance can lead to health risks, social exclusion, and reduced usage, undermining the long-term sustainability of outdoor spaces
- **What:** Facilities that support outdoor sports activity but are not part of the core physical infrastructure (e.g., trails or climbing routes).

2.8 Promotion and regulation of sustainable land use and environmental practices in outdoor sports and recreation

- This indicator assesses whether the municipality or area has implemented measures to guide the sustainable use of land and minimise environmental impact from outdoor sports.
- **Why:** As outdoor sport grows in popularity, so does pressure on natural areas. Managing use through education, signage, or regulation protects ecosystems, prevents conflicts, and ensures long-term access. This also reflects core principles of responsible sport and nature protection.
- **What:** Land-use management principles and user guidance applied to outdoor sport zones, especially in areas at risk of overuse, conflict, or ecological harm.

2.9 Creating possibilities for sustainable outdoor sports and recreation in protected areas

- This indicator evaluates whether the municipality or area has taken steps to balance access and protection in protected or sensitive natural areas by planning or adapting outdoor sport opportunities in sustainable ways. Examples include:
 - Designing trails or zones to divert users from ecologically vulnerable spots;
 - Improving infrastructure to concentrate activity in resilient areas;
 - Offering education and guidance in protected zones;
- **Why:** Protected areas are often rich in natural value but fragile. Outdoor sport can coexist with conservation if managed carefully. This indicator promotes sustainable

access, user education, and pressure management, ensuring that protected areas are enjoyed responsibly.

- **What:** Measures within or near protected areas (e.g., nature reserves, Natura 2000 sites) that enable sport use while reducing environmental impact or redirecting use appropriately.

3. Safety Procedures and Risk Prevention

3.1 Safety and rescue plans

- This indicator assesses whether the city or municipality has basic procedures in place to promote user safety and respond to emergencies in outdoor sport areas. This includes:
 - Safety signage and warning systems;
 - Emergency contact info and first aid points;
 - Coordination with rescue services (where applicable);
 - Public communication of safe behavior in nature
 - Area-specific risk information (e.g. water conditions, cliff zones)
- **Why:** Safety is a prerequisite for participation in outdoor sports. Clear procedures and communication reduce risk and increase user trust, especially for beginners, families, or tourists unfamiliar with the area.
- **What:** Formal or informal systems for promoting safety, responding to incidents, and providing risk-relevant information at outdoor sport sites.

3.2 Incident reporting and safety feedback

- This indicator assesses whether the city or municipality has procedures for collecting and learning from safety-related incidents in outdoor sport areas. This includes:
 - Reporting of accidents and near misses;
 - Feedback systems from outdoor sport users about perceived safety;
 - Collaboration with emergency services or insurance for data;
 - Using data to improve infrastructure, signage, or planning
- **Why:** A learning culture around safety supports better infrastructure, planning, and user confidence. SO, its important to understand what goes wrong, even if occasionally, to prevent future harm.
- **What:** Any process for monitoring safety incidents and responding to user experience or feedback related to outdoor sports risks.

3.3 Routines for shutting down and correcting dysfunctional outdoor sports infrastructure

- This indicator evaluates whether there are clear procedures for temporarily closing, limiting access to, or repairing damaged or unsafe infrastructure. Examples include:
 - Physical barriers or warning signs for trail damage or collapsed bridges;
 - Temporary closures of climbing areas or water access due to safety risks;
 - Formal repair protocols or urgent maintenance escalation systems;
 - Emergency contact and communication in case of closure.
- **Why:** A quick and transparent response to dysfunctional infrastructure is critical to prevent accidents and preserve public trust. Even well-maintained facilities can become unsafe due to weather, wear, or vandalism.
- **What:** Any official or informal process to identify, restrict access to, and fix damaged or malfunctioning outdoor sport infrastructure.

3.4 Insurances when applicable and not regulated by law

- This indicator assesses whether the city or municipality has procedures for collecting and learning from safety-related incidents in outdoor sport areas. This indicator addresses whether the municipality or responsible actors ensure appropriate insurance coverage for outdoor sport infrastructure or events, in cases where it is not already regulated by national law. Examples include:
 - Liability insurance for municipal-managed trails or sport zones;
 - Insurance for volunteers or event participants;
 - Public disclaimers or signage where responsibility is limited.
- **Why:** While insurance obligations differ widely between countries, ensuring legal and financial clarity builds trust and reduces risk.

This also shows due diligence in safety and policy management.
- **What:** Legal or voluntary insurance policies relevant to the outdoor sport system — covering infrastructure use, events, public liability, or volunteers.

4. Access – Easy access to both nature and outdoor sports facilities

4.1 Distance to nature and outdoor sport facilities

- This indicator measures the proximity of outdoor sport and nature access points to where people live, study, or work. It focuses on:
 - Walking distance to trails, parks, or natural spaces;
 - Access to green or blue infrastructure near homes or schools;
 - Proximity of low-barrier outdoor sport facilities for daily use;

- Alignment with public health and equity goals.
- **Why:** Accessibility is key to participation. The closer outdoor areas are to everyday locations, the more likely people are to use them regularly. This is especially important for children, elderly people, and individuals without cars.
- **What:** The presence of natural or sport-friendly areas within 300 meters of homes, schools, or workplaces (ideally green spaces >0.5 hectares, as per WHO guidance).

4.2 Good regulations on access

- This indicator assesses whether local policies and regulations ensure access to natural areas for outdoor sports while minimising spatial conflicts and balancing competing land uses. Examples may include:
 - Public right of way across natural land;
 - Local support for national access traditions (e.g. Allemansrätten);
 - Clear zoning rules to protect outdoor access near urban zones;
 - Inclusion of access rights in development or conservation planning.
- **Why:** Ensuring equitable access to nature often requires active regulation or protection of routes, zones, and rights (especially where land ownership, conservation, or urban development pose barriers).
- **What:** Regulations or policies that support access to outdoor sport environments, manage land-use conflicts, or guarantee continued rights of entry.

4.3 Easy access to outdoor sports equipment for all

- This indicator assesses whether the city or municipality provides or supports low-barrier access to outdoor sports equipment, especially for those who may not own it. Examples include:
 - Equipment libraries (e.g. borrow-a-bike, kayak, snowshoes)
 - Community lending services or social sport initiatives
 - Equipment made available at schools, youth centers, or public hubs
 - Reduced-cost or free access to basic gear through NGOs or clubs
- **Why:** Access to nature is not just spatial, it depends on having the tools to participate. Many groups (youth, migrants, low-income households) may lack the gear needed to try outdoor sports.

Equipment sharing fosters inclusion and encourages first-time users.

- **What:** Systems or partnerships that provide non-commercial, inclusive access to outdoor sports equipment, especially for underserved groups.

4.4 Understanding and addressing other barriers to participation

- This indicator evaluates whether the city or municipality actively works to identify and reduce barriers to outdoor sport participation, both physical and psychological. Examples include:
 - Surveys or focus groups on barriers (fear, equipment, transport, cultural unfamiliarity);
 - Workshops with underrepresented groups (women, migrants, disabled users);
 - Co-creation of inclusive programs;
 - Addressing accessibility beyond infrastructure (e.g., feeling safe, welcome, or confident in nature).
- **Why:** Physical access alone does not ensure participation. Social, cultural, and psychological factors often prevent people from engaging with outdoor sport. Understanding these barriers is essential for building inclusive outdoor cultures and effective strategies.
- **What:** Any effort to identify and respond to barriers to participation, especially among marginalised or low-participation groups.

4.5 Good public Transportation to outdoor infrastructure (e.g. Access to green and blue spaces via public transport)

- This indicator evaluates whether there are public transportation options that allow access to green and blue spaces used for outdoor sports. Examples include:
 - Bus/train stops near trailheads, parks, and riversides;
 - Seasonal shuttles to popular natural areas;
 - Cycle+train schemes or last-mile mobility solutions;
 - Information on how to reach outdoor spots without a car.
- **Why:** Public transport increases equitable access to outdoor areas, especially for youth, elderly people, and low-income groups. It also reduces car dependency and contributes to climate-smart mobility.
- **What:** Availability of regular, affordable public transport to at least some significant outdoor recreation areas (not necessarily all).

4.6 Infrastructure for active commuting to OS facilities and nature areas

- This indicator evaluates whether there is infrastructure that supports walking or cycling access to outdoor sport and recreation areas. Examples include:
 - Dedicated bike lanes leading to trailheads or parks;
 - Walking paths from neighborhoods to nature areas;
 - Safe and continuous active travel corridors (e.g., greenways);

- Integration with public transport (e.g., bike-train connections).
- **Why:** Active commuting to outdoor sport areas enhances daily accessibility, supports low-carbon transport, and reduces dependence on private cars, particularly for residents without vehicle access.
- **What:** Formal infrastructure enabling walking or cycling access to nature areas, especially if it reduces transport barriers for residents.

4.7 Parking areas near outdoor sport facilities and nature areas

- This indicator assesses whether local policies and regulations ensure access to natural areas for outdoor sports while minimising spatial conflicts and balancing competing land uses. Examples may include:
 - Public right of way across natural land;
 - Local support for national access traditions (e.g. Allemansrätten);
 - Clear zoning rules to protect outdoor access near urban zones;
 - Inclusion of access rights in development or conservation planning.
- **Why:** Ensuring equitable access to nature often requires active regulation or protection of routes, zones, and rights (especially where land ownership, conservation, or urban development pose barriers).
- **What:** Regulations or policies that support access to outdoor sport environments, manage land-use conflicts, or guarantee continued rights of entry.

4.8 Possibility of equipment transportation on public buses, trains and trams

- This indicator evaluates whether public transportation systems allow for the carriage of outdoor sport equipment, especially for users who depend on public mobility. Examples include:
 - Buses or trains that allow bikes, skis, or kayaks;
 - Seasonal services with extra capacity for sport users;
 - Clear rules, signage, and infrastructure (bike racks, luggage space);
 - Integration of “bike+ride” or “paddle+transit” options.
- **Why:** Many people rely on public transport but need to carry gear. If equipment is allowed and supported, public mobility becomes a real alternative to private car use, enhancing accessibility and sustainability.
- **What:** Transit systems that enable users to bring recreational or sports equipment relevant to outdoor activities.

5. Policy, planning and strategy

5.1 Outdoor sports and recreation strategy and planning are decided in policies, strategies, masterplans or other relevant governing papers

- This indicator assesses whether outdoor sports and recreation are explicitly included in official municipal or regional policy frameworks, such as:
 - Masterplans or general development plans;
 - Green infrastructure or recreation strategies;
 - Mobility or land-use policies with outdoor sport components;
 - Dedicated outdoor sports strategies.
- **Why:** When outdoor sports are embedded in official planning, it signals political commitment, ensures funding opportunities, and helps integrate recreation into broader land-use, health, and sustainability goals.
- **What:** Any formal governing document that references, plans for, or supports outdoor sport infrastructure, participation, access, or sustainability.

5.2 Permanent employed and dedicated staff for outdoor sports and recreation

- This indicator assesses whether the municipality has permanently employed and dedicated staff responsible for coordinating outdoor sports and recreation. Their role includes:
 - Translating strategies and plans into actions;
 - Coordinating with departments, partners, and user groups;
 - Ensuring continuity, implementation, and accountability;
 - Monitoring activities and supporting project delivery.

- **Why:** Without dedicated staff, policies and strategies often remain on paper.

A responsible person or unit ensures continuity, alignment with goals, and active communication with stakeholders.

This is critical for real impact and long-term development.

- **What:** A named person or team with an official role in outdoor sports, whose job includes coordination, planning, implementation, or stakeholder engagement.

5.3 Integration of outdoor sports into spatial planning

- This indicator evaluates whether outdoor sports and recreation are explicitly integrated into spatial and urban planning processes, such as:
 - Legally binding zoning plans or land-use regulations;
 - Urban development frameworks (e.g., new residential or mixed-use areas);
 - Nature and green infrastructure plans;

- Environmental impact assessments or strategic planning documents.
- **Why:** Long-term opportunities for outdoor sport depend on planning decisions made today. Integration into spatial and territorial planning ensures access to land, protection of activity areas, and balanced development that reflects recreational and environmental needs.
- **What:** Legal or strategic planning tools that explicitly recognise outdoor sports as part of land use, development, or green space systems.

5.4 Permanent and dedicated inter-departmental stakeholder forum

- This indicator assesses whether there is a permanent, internal structure or forum that brings together relevant departments to coordinate and co-create policies, planning, and actions related to outdoor sports. This could include:
 - Parks and Recreation, Urban Planning, Environment, Health, Mobility;
 - Regular working group or steering team meetings;
 - Shared objectives, planning calendars, or integrated project delivery;
 - Coordination across decentralised institutions (e.g., schools, visitor centers).
- **Why:** Active stakeholder involvement strengthens legitimacy, ensures diverse needs are addressed, and increases community buy-in. It improves communication, co-ownership, and long-term commitment to outdoor sport development.
- **What:** A recognised, ongoing stakeholder platform that facilitates participation, dialogue, and coordination between the public sector and civil society or private actors related to outdoor sports.

5.5 Permanent organisation of stakeholders – Cities, municipalities, citizens, sport clubs, event organisers, tourism etc. to promote participation, development, communication, management etc.

- This indicator assesses whether outdoor sport stakeholders (e.g., clubs, user groups, NGOs) are actively involved in the design and implementation of specific initiatives, such as:
 - New outdoor sport facilities or infrastructure;
 - Development of new outdoor programs or clubs;
 - Co-design of strategies or pilot projects;
 - Local consultations for site planning or service improvements.
- **Why:** Stakeholder involvement in concrete projects increases ownership, relevance, and success. It ensures that investments reflect actual user needs and helps build stronger relationships between authorities and the outdoor sport community.
- **What:** Evidence of collaborative planning or development of outdoor sport initiatives involving community or stakeholder input.

5.6 Involvement of outdoor sport stakeholders in the development of specific projects, initiatives and programs – for example new facilities and strategies.

- This indicator assesses whether outdoor sport stakeholders (e.g., clubs, user groups, NGOs) are actively involved in the design and implementation of specific initiatives, such as:
 - New outdoor sport facilities or infrastructure;
 - Development of new outdoor programs or clubs;
 - Co-design of strategies or pilot projects;
 - Local consultations for site planning or service improvements.
- **Why:** Stakeholder involvement in concrete projects increases ownership, relevance, and success. It ensures that investments reflect actual user needs and helps build stronger relationships between authorities and the outdoor sport community.
- **What:** Evidence of collaborative planning or development of outdoor sport initiatives involving community or stakeholder input.

5.7 Outdoor sports in self-organised communities outside sport clubs

- This indicator assesses whether the municipality or city maintains dialogue and engagement with informal or self-organised outdoor sport communities, such as:
 - Trail runners, swimmers, or climbers who are not club-affiliated;
 - Online-based outdoor groups or meetups;
 - Community initiatives that organise without a formal structure;
 - Peer-led activities or sport movements.
- **Why:** A large share of outdoor sport participation happens outside formal clubs. These groups contribute local knowledge, stewardship, and activation of space. Recognising and involving them improves responsiveness and inclusivity.
- **What:** Any ongoing or purposeful dialogue with non-institutionalised outdoor sport communities, especially those organising outside of clubs or associations.

5.8 Cooperation and networking across municipalities, regions, nations and within the European Union

- This indicator evaluates whether the municipality participates in inter-municipal, national, or international networks related to outdoor sports, policy exchange, or collaborative development. Examples include:
 - Membership in national or EU-level outdoor sport platforms;
 - Cross-regional projects or funding initiatives;
 - Exchange programs, study visits, or common strategy development;
 - Active participation in ENOS or other EU outdoor networks;
 - Buses or trains that allow bikes, skis, or kayaks;

- Seasonal services with extra capacity for sport users;
- Clear rules, signage, and infrastructure (bike racks, luggage space);
- Integration of “bike+ride” or “paddle+transit” options.
- **Why:** Cooperation beyond local borders helps cities learn, innovate, and advocate together. Networking enables access to knowledge, funding, policy alignment, and shared challenges, especially relevant for smaller municipalities or rural areas.
- **What:** Active membership or participation in formal or informal outdoor sport cooperation initiatives at the regional, national, or European level.

5.9 Funding is secured and allocated by budget to outdoor sports and recreation for maintenance, long-term strategic development, short-term projects or targeted initiatives, communication, tourism, nature, nature protection, welfare in nature etc.

- This indicator assesses whether there is dedicated budget allocation for outdoor sports and recreation. Funding may cover:
 - Infrastructure maintenance and upgrades;
 - New projects or facilities;
 - Strategic development and planning;
 - Communication, tourism, and promotion;
 - Nature protection or outdoor welfare initiatives;
 - Support for clubs, events, or community-led actions.
- **Why:** Long-term and inclusive development of outdoor sports requires reliable and strategic funding. A dedicated budget demonstrates political will, ensures project continuity, and enables quality management across infrastructure, programming, and communication.
- **What:** Financial resources specifically allocated to outdoor sport and recreation development, either in direct budget lines or integrated through related sectors.

5.10 Funding from different stakeholders (both public and private) for outdoor sports, for example tourist tax, lump sum contribution to infrastructure, event sponsors.

- This indicator assesses whether the city or municipality receives or coordinates additional funding from sources beyond its core municipal budget, such as:
 - Tourist tax allocations for outdoor sport infrastructure;
 - Private sponsorships of trails, events, or equipment;
 - Partnerships with regional, national, or EU funds;
 - In-kind or financial contributions from private businesses, NGOs, or community-led initiatives.

- **Why:** Diversified funding ensures a more resilient and long-term financing base for outdoor sports. It also demonstrates local commitment, supports innovation, and reduces reliance on limited public funds.
- **What:** Any active financial contribution or support (in-kind or direct) from outside the municipal core budget, including both public (e.g., regional/EU) and private stakeholders.

6. Knowledge, education and training

6.1 Decision makers are aware of the benefits of outdoor sports and recreation to society – health and wellbeing, learning, business, tourism etc.

- This indicator evaluates whether local or regional decision-makers (e.g. politicians, senior civil servants) are aware of and engaged with the societal value of outdoor sports and recreation. Key benefit areas include:
 - Physical and mental health;
 - Social inclusion and youth engagement;
 - Environmental stewardship and nature connection;
 - Local economic development (tourism, events, gear industries);
 - Education, life skills, and active citizenship.
- **Why:** Policy support depends on leadership awareness. When decision-makers understand outdoor sport's wider value, they are more likely to allocate resources, support infrastructure, and integrate it into policy.
- **What:** Political and administrative recognition of the cross-sectoral value of outdoor sport, demonstrated through communication, policy inclusion, or expressed support.

6.2 Raising awareness of benefits of outdoor sports to citizens

- This indicator assesses whether the city or municipality actively works to inform and educate the public about the benefits of outdoor sports. This includes:
 - Health and well-being;
 - Social inclusion and youth development;
 - Environmental values and sustainable use;
 - Economic, tourism, or local identity benefits;
 - Educational or lifelong learning outcomes.
- **Why:** Awareness drives participation. When citizens understand the value of outdoor sports, they are more likely to support, engage in, and advocate for its development, especially in underrepresented groups or new audiences.
- **What:** Outreach or education initiatives that raise public awareness of the multiple benefits of outdoor sports.

6.3 Evaluation of outdoor sports facilities, projects, initiatives etc.

- This indicator assesses whether the city or municipality evaluates its outdoor sport-related work in order to collect knowledge, reflect, and improve. Evaluation types may include:
 - Internal reviews of facility use, access, or impact;
 - External evaluations by consultants, universities, or stakeholders;
 - Citizen feedback or surveys;
 - Research collaboration or outcome monitoring.
- **Why:** Evaluation supports accountability, learning, and improvement. It allows cities to understand the effectiveness of their investments and adapt based on real usage, feedback, or emerging needs.
- **What:** Any organised process to reflect on outcomes or performance of outdoor sport infrastructure or programming.

6.4 Mapping of needs analysis of citizens and stakeholders

- This indicator assesses whether the municipality systematically identifies the needs, preferences, and priorities of citizens and stakeholders related to outdoor sports. This may be done through:
 - Local or regional mapping initiatives;
 - User surveys, interviews, or focus groups;
 - Stakeholder roundtables or forums;
 - Regular review cycles vs. ad hoc input.
- **Why:** Understanding actual needs supports more targeted, inclusive, and accepted interventions. It strengthens democratic planning and helps avoid mismatches between investment and user interest.
- **What:** Any structured process to gather and interpret needs for outdoor sport and recreation among residents and key actors.

6.5 Sharing knowledge, experiences and ideas

- This indicator assesses whether the municipality actively participates in sharing knowledge and learning with others in the field of outdoor sports. This may include:
 - Attending or hosting conferences and workshops;
 - Contributing to newsletters or case study platforms;
 - Participating in peer-to-peer learning exchanges;
 - Sharing project results or best practices with other cities or partners.
- **Why:** Sharing knowledge accelerates innovation, helps avoid mistakes, and builds a stronger professional community. It also contributes to the visibility and credibility of outdoor sport within policy and planning fields.

- **What:** Any form of active knowledge dissemination or exchange related to outdoor sport planning, delivery, or evaluation.

6.6 Trained Instructors and other professional providers

- This indicator assesses whether the city or local ecosystem includes or supports qualified professionals contributing to safe, inclusive, and sustainable outdoor sport. These may include:
 - Trained instructors or guides;
 - Safety/rescue personnel or technical staff;
 - Professionals introducing newcomers, migrants, or people with disabilities;
 - Accommodation providers trained in outdoor recreation and nature protection;
 - Providers with knowledge of sustainability and environmental stewardship
- **Why:** Professional actors enhance safety, quality, and access. They support newcomers, increase the capacity of the outdoor sector, and ensure alignment with sustainability and inclusion goals.
- **What:** The presence and/or support of trained professionals in outdoor sport services, especially where relevant to safety, accessibility, or environmental responsibility.

6.7 Formal education in civil society (for volunteers)

- This indicator assesses whether the local outdoor sports ecosystem includes or supports volunteer education and training programs, especially in clubs and associations. Examples include:
 - Certified or semi-formal training for ski instructors, mountain guides, or E-MTB coaches;
 - Courses delivered by clubs, national federations, or partner institutions;
 - Municipal or regional support for access to training;
 - Training for volunteers working with children, migrants, or people with special needs.
- **Why:** Volunteers are the backbone of many outdoor sport communities. Providing access to quality training helps ensure safety, inclusion, and sustainable practices — even where activity is informal or club-led.
- **What:** The existence or support of formal or semi-formal education opportunities for outdoor sport volunteers, especially in club-based settings.

7. Information and promotion

7.1 A communication strategy for promoting the city or area as an outdoor area to the public with different partners and stakeholders

- This indicator assesses whether the city or municipality has a formal communication strategy aimed at branding the city or area as an outdoor sports destination, developed in cooperation with public, private, and civil society partners. Examples include:
 - Multi-partner branding or destination campaigns;
 - Communication plans aligning outdoor sport with city identity;
 - Use of logos, narratives, or visual identities promoting outdoor recreation;
 - Cross-sector communication efforts are tied to tourism, health, or sustainability.
- **Why:** A clear and shared communication strategy strengthens public awareness, aligns stakeholders, and supports long-term commitment to outdoor sports. It enhances the visibility of opportunities and builds the area's identity as an “outdoor city.”.
- **What:** A formal or semi-formal strategy (written or coordinated) that actively promotes outdoor sport identity in the city/area, with a partnership-based approach.

7.2 Analog material, web and social media communication to promote the area, outdoor activities, services, conditions, regulations for appropriate behavior in nature etc.

- This indicator assesses whether the municipality uses a range of communication channels to promote outdoor sports, access, and behavior in natural areas. This includes:
 - Printed materials (flyers, posters, brochures);
 - Website content with maps, activities, or updates;
 - Social media platforms share real-time information;
 - Public information about appropriate behavior in natural (e.g., signage, codes of conduct);
 - Centralised or coordinated information systems.
- **Why:** Diverse communication channels ensure that all residents and visitors receive relevant information. This helps encourage participation, prevent conflict in nature areas, and support responsible and inclusive use of outdoor infrastructure.
- **What:** A combination of communication tools and platforms that promote outdoor activities, infrastructure, and sustainable use, supported by clear and accessible messaging.

7.3 Digital services online, maps and digital system for maintenance and status of outdoor sports infrastructure and facilities.

- Availability and accessibility of digital tools that support the visibility, condition monitoring, and user engagement related to outdoor sports infrastructure. This can include:
 - Use of online maps;
 - Real-time updates;
 - QR-code systems;
 - Digital dashboards that inform users about location, accessibility, current status (e.g. maintenance, safety), and conditions of trails, parks, or facilities.
- **Why:** Participatory monitoring of maintenance needs on outdoor sports infrastructure. Is it possible for users to report maintenance needs digitally?
- **What:** A system where users can report maintenance needs to a specific organisation responsible for maintaining the outdoor sports infrastructure.

7.4 Information accessible to all (Multilingual, Information services for people with special needs, Disability standard for web content, services for people with intellectual disabilities, easy language, audio guides, etc.)

- This indicator assesses whether the municipality ensures that communication about outdoor sports is accessible to all population groups, including people with disabilities, language barriers, or cognitive limitations. Examples include:
 - Multilingual content;
 - Disability-standard-compliant web pages (e.g., WCAG);
 - Audio guides or easy-to-read formats;
 - Materials for people with intellectual disabilities;
 - Services or signage adapted for visual or hearing impairments.
- **Why:** Equitable access to outdoor sports starts with equitable access to information. When communication is inclusive, more people can safely and confidently engage with outdoor opportunities.
- **What:** The presence of inclusive and accessible communication practices, supported by established standards

7.5 Outdoor Sports Events

- This indicator assesses whether the city or municipality hosts, supports, or facilitates outdoor sports events that promote participation, visibility, and investment. Events may include:
 - Competitive or recreational events in various disciplines (e.g., running, kayaking, mountain biking);

- Inclusive events for different ages and abilities;
 - Public challenges or campaigns encouraging activity (e.g., walking month, cycling challenge);
 - Spectator-friendly events that raise awareness or promote tourism;
 - Events that include sustainability principles (waste reduction, impact limits).
- **Why:** Outdoor sports events are a key driver for community engagement, economic activity, and public awareness. They help activate infrastructure, build pride, and encourage investment in outdoor initiatives.
 - **What:** Events that promote outdoor sports participation, visibility, and sustainability, including competitive and non-competitive formats.

8. Outdoor sports and recreation for all

8.1 Clearly formulated ambition or goals of promoting opportunities for all citizens (children, young people, old people, migrants, people with special needs etc.) to participate in outdoor sports and recreation in a strategy, masterplan or other policy paper.

- This indicator assesses whether the city or municipality has explicitly stated goals or ambitions to promote inclusive access to outdoor sports for all population groups. These ambitions should be embedded in official documents such as:
 - Masterplans or general strategies;
 - Sector-specific plans (e.g. youth, sport, health, equity);
 - Inclusion or accessibility policies;
 - Outdoor sport or recreation development frameworks
- **Why:** Making inclusion a formal goal gives it institutional visibility and accountability. It ensures outdoor sport planning addresses barriers faced by groups such as children, older adults, migrants, and people with disabilities.
- **What:** A clear, formal ambition in policy or planning documents to enable participation for all citizens, especially those with fewer opportunities.

8.2 Provision of inclusive outdoor sports initiatives to support participation for all

- This indicator evaluates whether the city or municipality offers, supports, or facilitates specific initiatives aimed at increasing participation in outdoor sports among underrepresented or marginalised groups. Examples include:
 - Specialised instructors and anti-discrimination training for staff;
 - Programs incorporating culturally relevant activities (e.g., for migrants);
 - Adaptive equipment or aids for people with disabilities;
 - Free or low-cost access to activities;

- Taster courses or “try-it” programs;
 - Awareness campaigns to attract newcomers;
 - Lending systems for adaptive gear or public outdoor equipment;
 - Dedicated outdoor sport facilities are designed for special needs access.
- **Why:** A general strategy is not enough — targeted initiatives are needed to actively remove barriers and make outdoor sport accessible, safe, and attractive to all residents.
- **What:** Concrete, inclusive outdoor sport programs or actions addressing specific groups with lower participation or greater needs.

9. Professional services

9.1 Professional providers in a city or area

- This indicator assesses whether the city or area includes professional actors supporting the outdoor sports ecosystem. These providers are not always directly managed or influenced by the municipality, but contribute to:
 - Local outdoor sport economy;
 - Service accessibility;
 - Visibility and identity of the city as an outdoor destination.

Examples include:

- Rental services (all or selected outdoor sports);
 - Outdoor sports shops and gear providers;
 - Accommodation providers tailored to outdoor users (e.g. bike hotels, hiker hostels);
 - Outdoor brands or gear manufacturers;
 - Tourism agencies specialised in outdoor experiences.
- **Why:** The presence of a professional support ecosystem reflects the maturity and viability of outdoor sports in the area. It also supports visitors, newcomers, and economic development.
- **What:** A mapping of the professional outdoor sport service landscape in the area, regardless of direct city control.

9.2 Professional providers contribute to OS locally, for example infrastructure and local sports clubs

- This indicator assesses whether professional outdoor sport providers (private businesses, tour operators, schools, gear shops, etc.) actively contribute to the local outdoor sport community beyond commercial activity. Contributions may include:
 - Co-maintaining or sponsoring infrastructure (e.g., trail work, signage);

- Supporting or partnering with local outdoor clubs;
- Offering discounted or free services for schools or vulnerable groups;
- Collaborating in public campaigns, events, or strategic planning;
- Promoting shared use or community access alongside commercial services.
- **Why:** When professional providers integrate into the community, they add value beyond profit — strengthening local identity, extending reach, and promoting sustainability. Their role can complement municipal and non-profit efforts.
- **What:** The social and strategic engagement of private providers in advancing outdoor sport beyond commercial services.

10. Civil society, communities and voluntary sports clubs

10.1 Sport clubs providing different types of outdoor sports and recreation

- This indicator assesses whether local sport clubs or civil society associations provide structured outdoor sport opportunities. These groups are typically:
 - Democratically organised and membership-based;
 - Engaged in long-term activity;
 - Eligible for public support or funding;
 - Examples of relevant actors include;
 - Outdoor sport clubs (hiking, climbing, paddling, skiing, etc.);
 - Youth and scouting associations with outdoor activity programs;
 - Nature and environmental groups offering outdoor recreation;
- NGOs running programs for youth, families, or marginalised groups.
- **Why:** Clubs and associations are key for continuity, community, and access. They often provide low-cost, inclusive outdoor sport and strengthen local engagement and identity.
- **What:** The breadth and presence of outdoor sport-oriented clubs, including sport federations, youth groups, and NGOs with regular activities.

10.2 Outdoor sports in local clubs for all levels of experience and all parts of society

- This indicator assesses whether outdoor sport activities offered by local clubs or associations are accessible to a diverse range of people, considering:
 - Different skill levels (beginners to advanced);
 - Age diversity (children, youth, adults, seniors);
 - Social diversity (e.g., migrants, low-income groups, people with disabilities);
 - Recreational and non-competitive options;

- Clubs don't have to serve all groups at once, but collectively there should be broad coverage;
- **Why:** Clubs are central to outdoor sport culture. Ensuring that they reach all parts of society and support various experience levels is critical for accessibility, inclusion, and long-term engagement.
- **What:** Whether local outdoor sport clubs offer inclusive, non-elite, multilevel programming that supports broad access.

10.3 Outdoor sports in self-organised communities outside sport clubs

- This indicator assesses the presence and variety of informal or self-organised outdoor sport communities, which are not affiliated with formal clubs or institutions but regularly engage in outdoor activities. Examples include:
 - Informal trail running or cycling groups;
 - Online communities that arrange hikes, swims, or climbs;
 - Self-led walking, fitness, or open water groups;
 - Volunteer-based local stewardship collectives;
 - Independent outdoor challenges with recurring local participation.
- **Why:** Self-organised groups represent a large part of outdoor sport participation, especially in urban and peri-urban areas. Recognising them helps understand local culture and unstructured participation trends.
- **What:** Organised or semi-organised volunteer participation in the physical upkeep or enhancement of outdoor sport spaces or events.

10.4 Volunteers to help with creation and maintenance of outdoor sport infrastructure

- This indicator evaluates whether volunteers or community groups are involved in supporting outdoor sport infrastructure through creation, improvement, or maintenance. This can include:
 - Trail building or upkeep;
 - Installing or cleaning signage and facilities;
 - Maintaining climbing areas, pump tracks, or fitness zones;
 - Supporting outdoor event logistics (e.g., route marking, setup);
 - Community-driven stewardship of local natural areas with sport relevance.
- **Why:** Volunteer engagement promotes ownership, sustainability, and cost-effectiveness. It builds stronger ties between citizens and outdoor spaces, while also supporting high-quality infrastructure through shared responsibility.
- **What:** Organised or semi-organised volunteer participation in the physical upkeep or enhancement of outdoor sport spaces or events.

11. Public sector providers

11.1 Learning in nature and nature pedagogy in kindergartens (app. 3 to 5 years)

- This indicator evaluates whether kindergartens (approx. ages 3–5) in the city or area incorporate outdoor learning and nature-based pedagogy as part of their curriculum or regular activities. Examples of relevant practices include:
 - Weekly or daily outdoor sessions in parks or forests;
 - Nature-based learning themes (seasons, animals, plants);
 - Guided exploration to foster early outdoor play and nature bonding;
 - Local partnerships with environmental educators.
- **Why:** Early experiences in nature lay the foundation for lifelong connection to outdoor activities, health, and sustainability. Nature pedagogy also enhances curiosity, attention, and emotional well-being in young children.
- **What:** The integration of nature-based learning in kindergartens, as a structured or regular practice, not just occasional outdoor play.

11.2 Learning in nature and nature pedagogy in schools (app. 6 to 15 years)

- This indicator assesses whether primary and lower secondary schools in the city or region integrate outdoor and nature-based learning into their teaching. Examples may include:
 - Regular outdoor science, geography, or physical education classes;
 - Outdoor days, camps, or project-based nature learning;
 - Use of natural areas as “extended classrooms”;
 - Activities linked to the local environment, sustainability, or place-based education.
- **Why:** Nature-based learning enhances cognitive, emotional, and social development, and promotes active lifestyles and environmental literacy. It also fosters a stronger connection to local nature and prepares young people for lifelong outdoor engagement.
- **What:** The systematic or regular use of nature and outdoor spaces as a learning environment in schools.

11.3 Learning in nature and nature pedagogy in high schools (app. 15 to 19 years)

- This indicator assesses whether upper secondary schools integrate nature-based learning or outdoor pedagogy in a meaningful way. This might include:
 - Field-based science or environmental studies;
 - Outdoor physical education or sport modules;
 - Multiday nature excursions or place-based education;

- Outdoor leadership or sustainability learning;
- Cross-disciplinary projects involving outdoor methods.
- **Why:** Adolescents benefit from real-world, experience-based learning, especially during a period of increasing screen time and academic pressure. Outdoor education at this level supports health, agency, and environmental awareness.
- **What:** Outdoor learning opportunities integrated into high school curricula, not just occasional trips.

11.4 Use of nature and outdoor activities in elderly care in retirement homes or centers.

- This indicator assesses whether elderly care institutions, retirement homes, or day centers in the city or area actively integrate outdoor activities or nature-based programming. Examples include:
 - Regular walks or movement sessions in nearby green spaces;
 - Gardening, sensory nature interaction, or animal-assisted activities;
 - Use of outdoor courtyards for physical or social engagement;
 - Nature-based reminiscence or therapy programs.
- **Why:** Interaction with nature supports physical, cognitive, and emotional well-being in older adults. Outdoor activities can reduce isolation, maintain mobility, and improve mood, especially when integrated into care settings.
- **What:** The intentional use of outdoor spaces and activities in elderly care to promote health, engagement, and quality of life.

11.5 Use of nature and outdoor activities in public health care.

- This indicator assesses whether public health programs or services in the city or region include nature-based approaches for prevention, rehabilitation, or health promotion. Examples include:
 - Walking programs prescribed by doctors or health services;
 - Outdoor group activities for stress reduction, chronic pain, or mental health;
 - Green rehabilitation (gardening, forest therapy, nature-based physiotherapy);
 - Partnerships between healthcare providers and outdoor organisations.
- **Why:** Evidence shows that exposure to nature improves physical and mental health, reduces stress, and can lower health system costs. While not always a municipal responsibility, promoting and facilitating such programs strengthens the public health system.
- **What:** Health-related programs using outdoor spaces or nature interaction as part of treatment, recovery, or prevention.

11.6 Continuous capacity building, education and knowledge to support public welfare in nature

- This indicator evaluates whether there are ongoing efforts to train and support professionals who bring people into nature for health, education, or physical activity. Examples include:
 - Courses for teachers or instructors on outdoor methods;
 - Local or national certifications for leading groups outdoors;
 - Toolkits or guidelines for integrating nature into welfare, education, or sport settings;
 - Municipal facilitation of access to such resources.
- **Why:** Long-term impact depends not only on infrastructure but also on knowledge and capacity. Equipping staff with the skills to confidently use nature settings supports both quality and sustainability of outdoor programming across sectors.
- **What:** The presence of ongoing or structured training programs that build local capacity to support nature-based welfare and learning.

11.7 Facilities to support public welfare in nature

- This indicator evaluates whether the city or area has dedicated facilities or infrastructure designed to support the use of nature and outdoor environments for health, inclusion, or education purposes. Examples include:
 - Nature therapy gardens;
 - Outdoor classrooms or learning shelters;
 - Accessible nature zones for elderly or disabled users;
 - Facilities in parks or natural areas designed for physical or social rehabilitation;
 - Multi-use spaces adapted for both public and welfare-related programs.
- **Why:** Public welfare through nature requires more than programs. It also depends on the availability of suitable spaces.

Facilities designed with welfare integration in mind improve access, safety, and usability for vulnerable or priority groups.
- **What:** Purpose-built or adapted outdoor or semi-outdoor facilities that help integrate welfare, education, or inclusion into nature-based settings

12. Other support

12.1 Any other support given by the city, municipality or area to stakeholders in regard to outdoor sports

- This indicator provides an open space for cities or municipalities to highlight additional initiatives, programs, or forms of support for outdoor sports that are not already covered in previous indicators. Examples include:
 - Unique outdoor sports programs or festivals;
 - Experimental planning or zoning tools;
 - Innovative inclusion projects;
 - Community co-design of outdoor infrastructure;
 - Digital tools, policy pilots, or nature-based economic development projects.
- **Why:** Not all valuable practices fit neatly into indicator frameworks. This entry ensures flexibility and enables municipalities to share creative solutions, contributing to a growing library of good practices across Europe.
- **What:** Documented good practices or unique support actions demonstrating local innovation or leadership in outdoor sports.