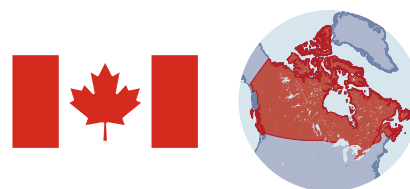


CANADA

Capital: **Ottawa** | Population: **38 million**
Lead body for sport development: **Sport Canada**



Government Support	B-
Elite Sport Rank	5
Elite Sport Rank Per Capita	11

Youth Sport Participation Grade **C+**

Canada's sport offerings, culture and system incentives are shaped in part by that of its neighbor, the United States, home to NCAA member universities that dispense financial aid and preferential admission to recruited athletes, as well as professional playing opportunities through the National Hockey League, National Basketball Association, and other leagues. At the same time, Canada draws sport governance ideas from its Commonwealth nations heritage – and has been a world leader in promoting developmentally appropriate training of athletes.

In Canada, sport below the professional level is guided by [Sport Canada](#) and all three levels of government – federal, provincial/territorial, and municipal. Overseen by a sports minister housed in the Federal Department of Canadian Heritage, Sport Canada is an “arms-length” agency designed to “enhance opportunities for all Canadians to participate and excel in sport.” Sport Canada directs and funds sport with a focus on development programs, policy, and the hosting of major competitions. The federal government, through Sport Canada, largely focuses on high-performance sport; provincial and municipal governments oversee the mass sport movement, largely through clubs, nonprofit organizations, and school partnerships. The Ministry of Education is deeply involved in the school and physical education portions of sport delivery, and local governments are largely responsible for membership-based community sport clubs (e.g. YMCA).

Sport Canada oversees the 58 National Sports Organizations (NSOs) that are recognized as the representatives of their respective sport in and for the country. NSOs are responsible for governance of the sport, high-performance programming, selecting and managing the national teams, implementing initiatives to promote the sport, sanctioning national-level tournaments, providing professional development for coaches and officials, and proposing and supporting bids for international competitions. Sport Canada also invests in special initiatives, including seven high-performance sport centers and an Own the Podium Program focused on high-performance sport. The [Canadian Olympic Committee](#) works with the NSOs to prepare Team Canada for the Olympic, Youth Olympic, and Pan American Games, offering education, counseling, and mental health support throughout the athlete journey.

The federal government is the largest single investor in the Canadian sport system, providing approximately 233.4M CAD (\$176.4M USD) per year to support three specific programs: (1) The Athlete Assistance Program (CA \$33m/year) which gives direct financial support to selected

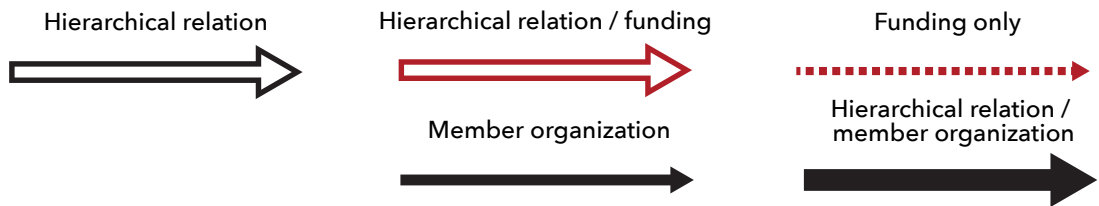
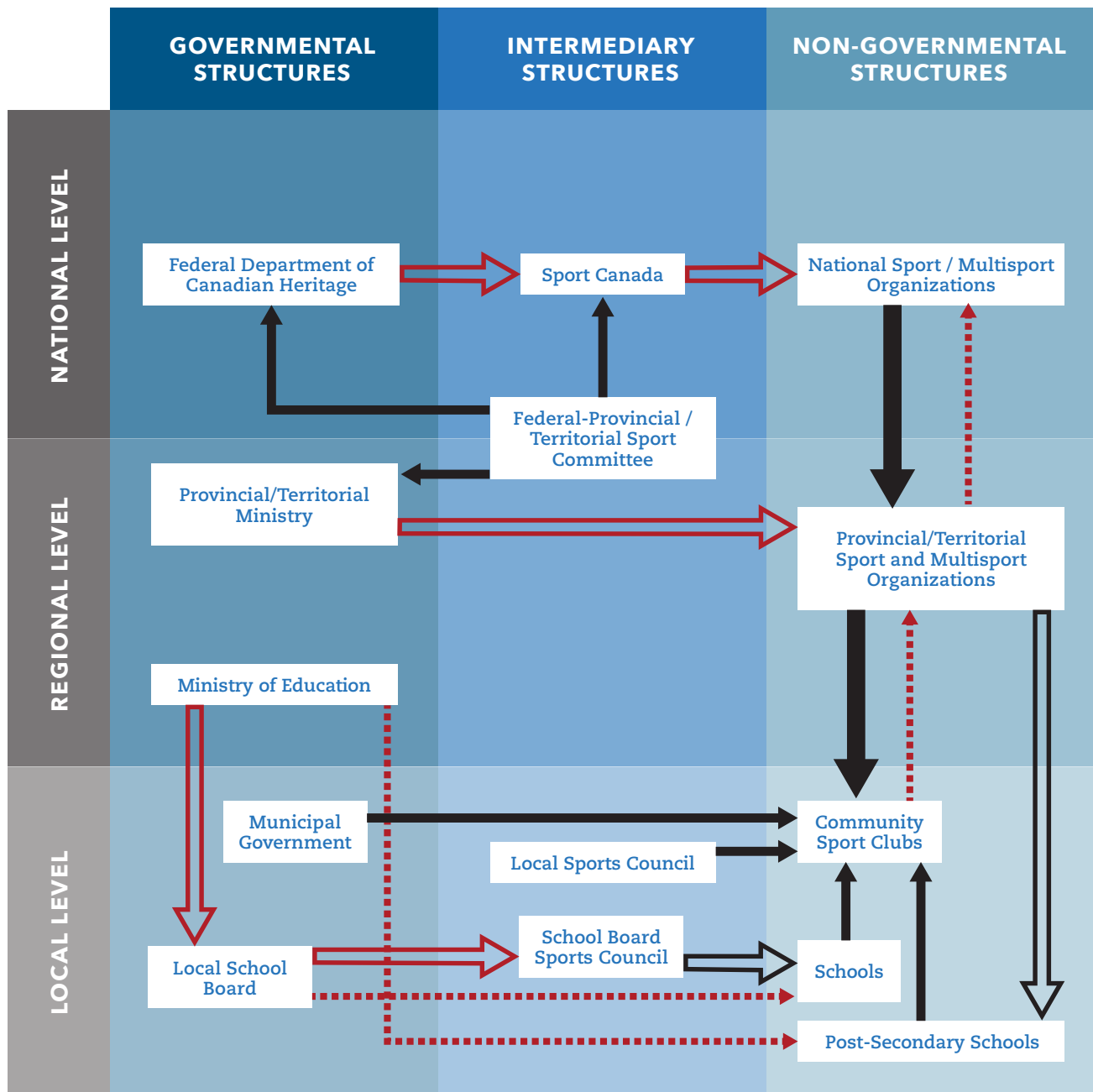
national team athletes, (2) the Sport Support Program (CA \$178.8m/year) which funds Canadian sports organizations, and (3) the Hosting Program (CA \$21.6m/year) to help sport organizations host the Canada Games and other international sports events.

The Office of the Sport Integrity Commissioner (OSIC) serves as the “central hub” of [Abuse-Free Sport](#). The Abuse-Free Sport website provides information to all Canadians about resources and tools to prevent maltreatment in sport, including legal services to file a complaint. NSOs risk losing federal funding if they do not sign the OSIC agreement or comply with the OSIC requirements for a safe, positive, and enriching experience. In 2022, the federal government suspended funding to Hockey Canada for its handling of sexual assault allegations.

WHAT WE LIKE

The sports ecosystem is guided by the [2012 Canadian Sports Policy](#), which embraces the Long-Term Athlete Development Model. Within this model, Canadians are introduced to a five-phase model that includes: (1) introduction to sport, when fundamental skills, knowledge, and attitudes to participation are developed; (2) recreational sport, when youth participate for fun, health, and social interaction; (3) competitive sport, where they can systematically improve their performance as measured against others in safe and ethical competition; and (4) high performance sport, where they achieve world-class results through ethical and fair means at the highest levels of competition; and (5) sport for development, where sport is a tool for economic and social development and the promotion of positive values at home and abroad. Canada is [expected](#) to soon release an updated sports policy to run through 2033.

Sport Governance in Canada



Most grades in Youth Sport Participation and Government Support categories are drawn from a 2022 report prepared by the [Active Healthy Kids Global Alliance](#), a not-for-profit comprised of researchers, health professionals and stakeholders who work together to advance physical activity in children and adolescents around the world. Report cards for the 57 countries evaluated are based on a harmonized framework and standardized grading rubric, as reflected in the [Global Matrix 4.0](#). A grade of C, for instance, means a country is "succeeding with about half (47-53%) of children." The Government Support grade is given by experts in that country based on "evidence of leadership and commitment" by government "in providing physical activity opportunities or participation of children and adolescents through policy, legislation or regulation." No grades were offered in the Global Matrix report for Government Support for Norway, Germany, the United Kingdom and the U.S., so the Aspen Institute consulted experts in each of those country to offer one, using the same criteria. In the U.S., the "D" grade was the weighted grade offered by 90 experts engaged with Project Play, including youth sport industry leaders at the NextUp Conference hosted by LeagueApps.

The Elite Sport Rank and Elite Sport Rank Per Capita categories are drawn from [Greatest Sporting Nation](#), a website that analyzes elite international competition results in Olympic and other sports, not including those that involve animals or cars. The first category is a measure of the total number of athletes and teams in 2022 who performed well in competition, while the latter calculates results relative to a nation's total population.