

# UNITED KINGDOM

Capital: **London** | Population: **67 million**

Lead bodies for sport development:

**Sport England, Sportscotland, Sport NI, Sport Wales**



Government Support B

Elite Sport Rank 4

Elite Sport Rank Per Capita 28

Youth Sport Participation Grade **D**

*The United Kingdom has been instrumental in building the Olympic Movement and played a significant role in the spread of sport culture globally through the introduction of games like soccer (football), tennis, rugby and cricket. In recent decades, government has begun to take proactive efforts to improve community sport and boost participation rates among disadvantaged youth.*

The [Department for Culture, Media, and Sport \(DCMS\)](#) is the government body responsible for designing sport policy across the United Kingdom, comprised of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The largest country is England, which like the others is guided by an entity, [Sport England](#), that provides oversight of the mass sport movement with financial support from DCMS. Established by Royal Charter in 1996, Sport England supports the development of community programs for youth. Playing a similar role in their countries are Sport Wales, Sportscotland, and Sport Northern Ireland. Concurrently, the government created the National Lottery, the key source of income for quasi-governmental organizations such as Sport England.

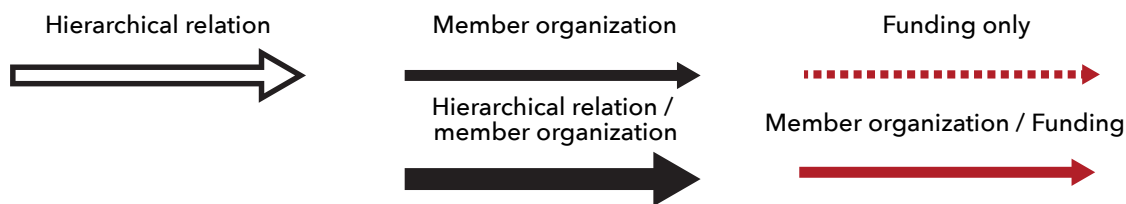
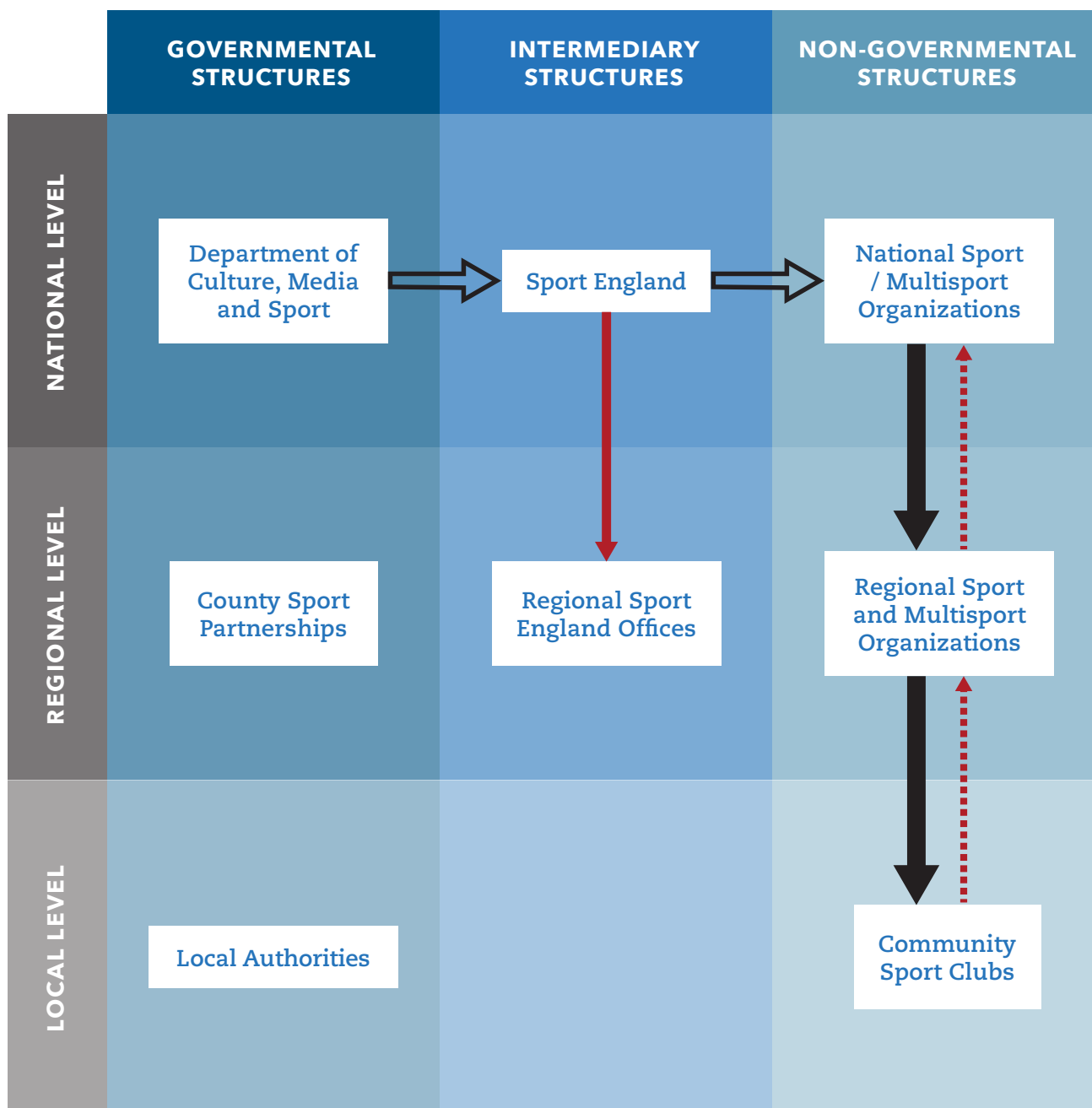
A separate governing body, [UK Sport](#), serves all the United Kingdom and focuses on the top end of athlete pathways, with no direct involvement in community or school sport. UK Sport funds every athlete considered to have a credible chance of winning a medal during a four-year Olympic or Paralympic cycle. Approximately 543m GBP (\$710m USD) is given to UK Sport annually through a mix of government and national lottery funding. Working alongside UK Sport is the [British Olympic Association \(BOA\)](#), the national Olympic committee responsible for selecting teams for the summer, winter, and youth Olympic Games. Its members include the national governing bodies of sports represented in the Olympics. The BOA is independent and privately funded, relying solely on fund-raising and event revenues to cover its costs. The British Paralympic Association is separate and functions in a similar model to the BOA.

UK Sport and Sport England are responsible for the safeguarding and wellbeing of all participants. Due to a series of high profile issues, the government commissioned a Duty of Care in Sport Review in 2017, which set forth a new series of recommendations and compulsory changes. Additionally, [Sport Integrity](#) is a third-party service provider for elite athletes and staff with concerns for unacceptable behavior. Lastly, the British Elite Athletes Association, an independent representative for elite athletes, offers a confidential avenue to seek guidance and support regarding team culture, athlete representation, equality/diversity/inclusion, mental health, safeguarding, anti-doping, and national team selection.

## WHAT WE LIKE

Sport England exists to “give everyone in England the chance to benefit from sport and physical activity” and is guided by a 10-year strategic plan, “[Uniting the Movement](#).” The entity is funded by the DCMS and National Lottery and invests 250m GBP (\$317m USD) in community sport annually. Organizations that receive government support must abide by Sport England’s **Code for Sports Governance**, which requires the submission of action plans designed to promote diversity and inclusion within the organization. Reporting includes information on program beneficiaries as well as staffing and administration, including boards.

# Sport Governance in England



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.