Chile's strategic sports funding: a 18-year retrospective (2006-2024)

El financiamiento estratégico deportivo de Chile: una retrospectiva de 18 años (2006-2024)

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Abstract

Objective: To analyze the distribution and evolution of sports investment in Chile during the 2006-2024 period, focusing on how these resources have been allocated to different sports disciplines and regions of the country, and their impact on sports development.
Method: Quantitative and descriptive study based on data provided by the National Institute of Sports of Chile. The study analyzed funding requests, and the investment received by each sport and region, using descriptive statistical techniques to identify trends over time. Both traditional and emerging sports were included, and a comparative analysis between regions was conducted.
Results: The Metropolitan Region was the primary recipient of funds, concentrating a significant portion of the total investment. Soccer led the requests with a total of 2,078 applications and over 12 billion USD in investment, followed by tennis with 1,518 applications and over 11 billion USD. A notable increase in investment was observed in 2023, linked to the preparation for the Pan American Games in Santiago and the 2024 Olympics. However, other emerging disciplines showed lower participation in funding requests.
Conclusion: Sports investment in Chile has shown significant growth, particularly in popular sports and in the Metropolitan Region. However, there is a need for more equitable support for less traditional disciplines and regions with less access to resources, to promote more inclusive sports development across the country.

Keywords

Athlete development; community impact; funding equity; public policy; sports infrastructure.

Resumen

Objetivo: Analizar la distribución y evolución de la inversión deportiva en Chile durante el período 2006-2024, con un enfoque en cómo se han asignado estos recursos a diferentes disciplinas deportivas y regiones del país, y su impacto en el desarrollo deportivo.
Método: Estudio cuantitativo y descriptivo basado en datos proporcionados por el Instituto Nacional de Deportes de Chile. El estudio analizó las solicitudes de financiamiento y la inversión recibida por cada deporte y región, utilizando técnicas estadísticas descriptivas para identificar tendencias a lo largo del tiempo. Se incluyeron tanto deportes tradicionales como emergentes, y se realizó un análisis comparativo entre regiones.
Resultados: La Región Metropolitana fue la principal receptora de fondos, concentrando una parte significativa de la inversión total. El fútbol lideró las solicitudes con un total de 2,078 aplicaciones y más de 12 mil millones de USD en inversión, seguido por el tenis con 1,518 aplicaciones y más de 11 mil millones de USD. Se observó un aumento notable en la inversión en 2023, vinculado a la preparación de los Juegos Panamericanos en Santiago y los Juegos Olímpicos de 2024. Sin embargo, otras disciplinas emergentes mostraron una menor participación en las solicitudes de financiamiento.
Conclusión: La inversión deportiva en Chile ha mostrado un crecimiento significativo, particularmente en deportes populares y en la Región Metropolitana. Sin embargo, se identifica la necesidad de un apoyo más equitativo para disciplinas menos tradicionales y regiones con menor acceso a recursos, con el objetivo de promover un desarrollo deportivo más inclusivo en todo el país.

Palabras clave

Desarrollo de atletas; impacto comunitario; equidad en financiamiento; política pública; infraestructura deportiva.

Introduction

Investment in physical and sports practices is a crucial component for the social and economic development of a country, promoting health, well-being, social cohesion, and national pride (Acquah-Sam, 2021; Lawson, 2005). In Chile, during the period from 2006 to 2024, there has been a growing interest in promoting sports, as reflected in public policies and the allocation of financial resources (Gutiérrez Rosales, 2023). Considering that sport is not only a tool for public health promotion but also a vehicle for social inclusion and the improvement of quality of life (Masdeu Yelamos et al., 2019). Chilean context, the State has played a fundamental role in promoting sports through the implementation of policies aimed at creating and improving sports infrastructure, supporting training and talent development programs, and organizing large-scale sporting events (Bravo & Silva, 2014). These initiatives have been made possible thanks to sustained and growing investment, underscoring the importance of sports on the national public agenda.

In terms of sports policies, the creation of the Ministry of Sports marked a significant milestone in the Institutionalization of Sports in Chile (IND in its Spanish acronym) (IND, 2025). This entity has been fundamental in coordinating and directing sports policies at the national level, ensuring an equitable distribution of resources and promoting citizen participation in sports activities (Retamal et al., 2020). Furthermore, collaboration with other public state agencies and the organization of regional and national sporting events have positioned Chile on the global sports stage, significantly increasing both participation and interest in sports among Chileans (Muñoz Vicuña, 2013).

Since its first participation in the Paris Olympic Games in 1896, Chile has maintained a consistent presence in most editions of the Summer Games, demonstrating a growing commitment to a variety of disciplines. Throughout its Olympic history, Chile has earned a total of 15 medals: 3 gold, 8 silver, and 4 bronze. These achievements include standout performances in sports such as tennis, shooting, boxing, and equestrian, highlighting the talent and dedication of Chilean athletes on the international stage. In the Tokyo 2020 Olympic Games, Chile continued this tradition, competing in numerous disciplines and reflecting the sustained progress of sports in the country. In the recent Paris 2024 Olympic Games, Chile reaffirmed its presence with outstanding achievements, including a gold medal in Shooting and a silver medal in Greco-Roman Wrestling, thereby solidifying its position in the global sports arena (COCH, 2025).

In the context of the 2024 Olympic Games, the Chilean delegation has brought 48 athletes who will compete in 19 different disciplines. This remarkable achievement highlights the importance of the impact of sports investment during the previous Olympic cycles. The presence of diverse and numerous delegations at such a significant event not only reflects the talent and dedication of the national athletes but also the result of a sustained strategy of funding and sports development. Public policies and resource allocation have enabled the creation of training programs and the improvement of infrastructure, thereby facilitating the growth and competitiveness of Chilean athletes on the international stage.

Several studies have analyzed how strategic investment in sports contributes to social and economic development in Latin America. In the case of Brazil, with an estimated annual budget of $842.4 million, public funding has significantly driven the construction of sports infrastructure and the organization of international events such as the 2014 FIFA World Cup and the 2016 Rio Olympics. These initiatives not only positioned the country as a sports powerhouse but also strengthened its global reputation and stimulated economic activity. Similarly, Mexico, with an investment of $233 million in 2015, has prioritized improving athletic performance and promoting sports among the population, despite budgetary adjustments in recent years (La República, 2015).

Along similar lines, Colombia demonstrates how targeted sports funding can foster both national pride and international success. In 2015, the country allocated $169.3 million to sports, with a particular focus on disciplines such as cycling and football, which have gained worldwide recognition. Ecuador, by contrast, has adopted a more targeted approach by directly supporting 246 high-performance athletes through exclusive training programs funded by the government. These policies have not only elevated the competitive level of athletes but have also promoted a culture of sports and physical activity within local communities (La República, 2015).

Considering the above, this study aims to analyze sports funding in Chile from 2006 to 2024, examining how these investments have been distributed across different regions and disciplines. Understanding the patterns and effects of this investment is essential to assess the development and future potential of Chilean sports, both nationally and internationally. Using data from official sources, such as reports from the Ministry of Sports and national budgets, the study seeks to identify priority areas for funding and evaluate the impact on sports performance.

Method

This study employs a quantitative approach to analyze sports investment in Chile between 2006 and 2024. The methodology involves collecting financial data from primary sources, including annual reports from the Chilean Ministry of Sports, national budgets, and documents from the National Sports Institute (IND). These documents provided detailed information on the allocation of resources to various sports disciplines and regions of the country, enabling a comprehensive analysis of how these investments have evolved over time.

The process began with identifying relevant data sources, including governmental reports, IND publications, and national budget records. After collection, the data were normalized to standardize formats and structures across datasets. The subsequent cleaning process removed duplicate entries to preserve the integrity of the database and addressed missing values through supplementary sources or exclusion from analysis. A key methodological step was tagging sports disciplines not explicitly mentioned in the data using cross-referencing techniques and manual validation through official documents and institutional websites. Consistency checks and triangulation methods were applied to ensure data accuracy and reliability.

Participants

The study included data from 48 sports disciplines and 16 administrative regions of Chile, covering both traditional and emerging sports. The analysis spanned 18 years (2006–2024), encompassing a total of 14,249 funding requests. These requests represent diverse applications, including large-scale sports events and community-driven recreational projects, ensuring a broad and representative dataset.

Procedure

The data collection process involved four steps: (1) identifying and obtaining data from official reports and budgets, (2) normalizing and cleaning data for consistency, (3) addressing incomplete or ambiguous records through cross-referencing and manual validation, and (4) ensuring data integrity through consistency checks and triangulation methods. Each step was rigorously documented to ensure transparency and replicability.

Instrument

Primary data sources included reports from the Chilean Ministry of Sports, IND publications, and national budgets. Data reliability and validity were ensured through cross-referencing with independent sources and adherence to standardized cleaning protocols. Statistical analyses were performed using Jamovi (version 2.2) for descriptive statistics, while Google Colab Research was employed to generate graphical representations.

Data analysis

Descriptive statistical techniques were used to summarize and describe the data. Measures of central tendency, such as the mean, were calculated, and distributions were expressed as percentages to enhance interpretability. Trends over time were identified by analyzing annual investments, regional distributions, and discipline-specific allocations. Jamovi (version 2.2) was used for statistical analysis, and Google Colab Research facilitated the creation of clear, visually effective graphics to represent the findings (Bisong & Bisong, 2019; Şahin & Aybek, 2019).

Results

In the analysis of sports investment in Chile between 2006 and 2024, funding requests for various sports disciplines were identified and evaluated, as well as the average annual amount requested per sport. Table 1 presents a detailed summary of the number of funding requests and the average annual amount requested for each sport during the study period. The table includes 48 sports disciplines and their respective averages, measured in millions of USD, along with the 95% confidence intervals.

The discipline with the highest number of requests was the group categorized as "Others," which includes expenses related to the organization and participation in sporting events, with a total of 14,249 requests and an average annual amount requested of 45 million USD. Among specific sports, football and tennis stood out with 2,078 and 1,518 requests, respectively, and average amounts of 6.1 and 7.3 million USD. The sports with the fewest requests included less traditional disciplines such as paragliding, softball, and diving, each with only one request.

The average amounts requested varied widely among sports, with disciplines such as BMX and skateboarding showing notably high averages of 37.9 and 23.0 million USD, respectively, although accompanied by wide confidence intervals, indicating significant variability in the requests. The 95% confidence interval was calculated under the assumption that the sample means follow a t-distribution with N-1 degrees of freedom, providing a range of values within which the true mean for each sport is likely to be found.

Table 1. Number of funding requests and average annual amount requested by sport (2006-2024)

Sports	N	Average (Millions of USD)	Confidence Interval (95%)
Others	14249	45.0	23.3 – 66.7
Sports Activities	3067	2.8	2.5 – 3.2
Football	2078	6.1	5.1 – 7.2
Tennis	1518	7.3	6.6 – 8.0
Recreational Activities	1327	2.7	2.4 – 3.0
Formative Activities	1313	2.4	2.3 – 2.5
Basketball	1229	7.2	6.3 – 8.1
Physical Activity	1025	26.4	12.0 – 40.8
Gymnastics	966	4.2	3.6 – 4.8
Volleyball	695	10.6	9.1 – 12.1
Cycling	597	17.8	15.1 – 20.6
Taekwondo	463	8.0	6.7 – 9.3
Athletics	463	9.4	7.6 – 11.3
Swimming	419	6.4	5.3 – 7.5
Canoeing	419	15.6	13.2 – 18.1
Judo	396	5.9	4.9 – 6.9
Karate	350	10.0	8.5 – 11.4
Rowing	345	21.4	16.2 – 26.5
Hockey	315	21.2	18.0 – 24.5
Rugby	303	19.3	12.9 – 25.6
Rowing	285	16.8	14.1 – 19.6
Trap Shooting	253	15.8	14.0 – 17.6
Sailing	230	19.8	16.7 – 22.8
Boxing	220	14.2	11.0 – 17.5
Chess	218	4.0	3.4 – 4.6
Fencing	215	14.6	12.0 – 17.2
Physical Preparation	207	3.5	3.1 – 3.9
Skating	206	15.7	12.8 – 18.7
Triathlon	192	18.1	14.4 – 21.8
Archery	183	12.6	10.4 – 14.8
Bowling	161	9.7	8.4 – 11.0
Wrestling	158	31.3	23.4 – 39.2
Futsal	146	3.4	3.1 – 3.8
Golf	140	8.4	6.8 – 10.0
Bocce	139	5.5	4.8 – 6.2
Skiing	139	22.0	18.8 – 25.1
Basque Pelota	117	10.1	8.4 – 11.8
Martial Arts	112	2.8	2.1 – 3.5
Hunting and Fishing	111	5.5	4.5 – 6.5
Handball	110	13.5	10.0 – 16.9
Surfing	108	13.2	4.2 – 22.1
Polo	104	10.6	7.1 – 14.1
Squash	100	9.8	8.1 – 11.4
Baseball	87	8.1	6.2 – 10.0
Weightlifting	78	3.9	3.3 – 4.6
Yoga	68	2.2	1.8 – 2.6
Skydiving	64	5.3	3.6 – 7.1
Mountaineering	58	6.0	4.0 – 8.1
Climbing	50	7.8	4.9 – 10.7
Pentathlon	50	9.2	6.7 – 11.7
Automobilism	43	5.7	3.7 – 7.7
Goalball	30	3.6	2.2 – 5.0
Skateboarding	29	23.0	3.2 – 42.8

BMX	19	37.9	-30.5 – 106.3
Sokol	11	1.2	0.9 – 1.6
Motocross	7	25.7	-11.8 – 63.2
Equestrian Sports	2	8.2	-20.4 – 36.9
Dodgeball	2	4.0	-8.7 – 16.7
Paragliding	1	8.0	-
Softball	1	5.0	-
Diving	1	6.1	-
Parapowerlifting	1	20.0	-

Note:
1. 'N' represents the number of times each sport requested funds between the years 2006 and 2024.
2. The annual average is in millions of USD.
3. The 95% confidence interval is calculated assuming that the sample means follow a t-distribution with N-1 degrees of freedom.
4. 'Others' include expenses related to the organization and participation in sports events.

In table 2, a detailed analysis of fund requests by region and year during the period 2006-2024 is presented. The table displays the number of requests made in each region in different years, as well as the percentage that these requests represent of the total for each year. This analysis allows observation of how the demand for resources has been distributed across different regions over time, highlighting regional trends in the request for funding for sports activities.

Table 2. Fund requests by region and year (2006-2024) continued...

Region	2006 n, %	2007 n, %	2009 n, %	2010 n, %	2011 n, %	2012 n, %	2013 n, %	2014 n, %	2015 n, %	2016 n, %	2017 n, %
I Region	230 (4.1)	102 (3.4)	155 (3.5)	112 (3.1)	26 (1.9)	20 (1.6)	22 (1.7)	35 (2.9)	50 (3.3)	36 (3.0)	47 (3.0)
II Region	187 (3.3)	154 (5.1)	143 (3.2)	125 (3.5)	35 (2.5)	27 (2.1)	26 (2.1)	20 (1.6)	43 (2.8)	34 (2.8)	45 (2.8)
III Region	283 (5.0)	100 (3.3)	214 (4.8)	175 (4.9)	19 (1.4)	25 (2.0)	28 (2.2)	37 (3.1)	32 (2.1)	34 (2.8)	51 (3.2)
IV Region	375 (6.7)	208 (6.9)	238 (5.4)	242 (6.7)	34 (2.5)	30 (2.4)	45 (3.5)	29 (2.4)	48 (3.2)	54 (4.4)	86 (5.4)
IX Region	394 (7.0)	223 (7.4)	255 (5.7)	269 (7.5)	76 (5.5)	77 (6.1)	57 (4.5)	62 (5.1)	67 (4.4)	59 (4.9)	100 (6.3)
M.R	1747 (31.1)	968 (32.1)	1621 (36.6)	930 (25.9)	807 (58.6)	681 (53.9)	722 (56.9)	656 (54.1)	681 (44.9)	527 (43.4)	627 (39.4)
V Region	343 (6.1)	247 (8.2)	194 (4.4)	273 (7.6)	65 (4.7)	60 (4.8)	52 (4.1)	53 (4.4)	83 (5.5)	83 (6.8)	126 (7.9)
VI Region	362 (6.5)	131 (4.3)	164 (3.7)	219 (6.1)	38 (2.8)	29 (2.3)	35 (2.8)	34 (2.8)	65 (4.3)	45 (3.7)	59 (3.7)
VII Region	507 (9.0)	349 (11.6)	304 (6.9)	296 (8.2)	49 (3.6)	49 (3.9)	50 (3.9)	50 (4.1)	67 (4.4)	56 (4.6)	93 (5.8)
VIII Region	376 (6.7)	133 (4.4)	268 (6.0)	227 (6.3)	60 (4.4)	81 (6.4)	75 (5.9)	68 (5.6)	88 (5.8)	76 (6.3)	88 (5.5)
X Region	357 (6.4)	220 (7.3)	202 (4.6)	209 (5.8)	37 (2.7)	50 (4.0)	46 (3.6)	62 (5.1)	69 (4.6)	55 (4.5)	78 (4.9)
XI Region	227 (4.0)	115 (3.8)	100 (2.3)	113 (3.1)	30 (2.2)	21 (1.7)	18 (1.4)	14 (1.2)	45 (3.0)	45 (3.7)	50 (3.1)
XII Region	223 (4.0)	70 (2.3)	243 (5.5)	155 (4.3)	29 (2.1)	54 (4.3)	37 (2.9)	29 (2.4)	64 (4.2)	33 (2.7)	48 (3.0)
XIV Region	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	189 (4.3)	114 (3.2)	37 (2.7)	36 (2.9)	30 (2.4)	40 (3.3)	65 (4.3)	41 (3.4)	50 (3.1)
XV Region	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	145 (3.3)	133 (3.7)	36 (2.6)	23 (1.8)	25 (2.0)	24 (2.0)	49 (3.2)	37 (3.0)	43 (2.7)
XVI Region	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)

Table 2. Fund requests by region and year (2006-2024) continuation.

Region	2018 n, %	2019 n, %	2020 n, %	2021 n, %	2022 n, %	2023 n, %	2024 n, %	Total, n, %
I Region	104 (4.1)	57 (3.3)	18 (2.1)	19 (1.7)	26 (1.7)	37 (2.6)	25 (3.3)	1121 (3.1)
II Region	80 (3.2)	53 (3.1)	13 (1.5)	15 (1.3)	22 (1.5)	27 (1.9)	15 (2.0)	1064 (3.0)
III Region	98 (3.9)	55 (3.2)	17 (1.9)	22 (2.0)	35 (2.3)	32 (2.3)	22 (2.9)	1279 (3.6)
IV Region	151 (6.0)	83 (4.8)	22 (2.5)	28 (2.5)	56 (3.7)	59 (4.2)	30 (3.9)	1818 (5.1)
IX Region	178 (7.1)	81 (4.7)	21 (2.4)	30 (2.7)	53 (3.5)	56 (4.0)	32 (4.2)	2090 (5.8)
M.R	840 (33.3)	748 (43.6)	602 (68.9)	739 (66.3)	890 (59.3)	822 (58.6)	395 (51.6)	15003 (41.7)
V Region	234 (9.3)	89 (5.2)	20 (2.3)	40 (3.6)	63 (4.2)	63 (4.5)	40 (5.2)	2128 (5.9)
VI Region	106 (4.2)	65 (3.8)	20 (2.3)	21 (1.9)	38 (2.5)	43 (3.1)	18 (2.3)	1492 (4.1)
VII Region	181 (7.2)	88 (5.1)	26 (3.0)	37 (3.3)	65 (4.3)	54 (3.9)	35 (4.6)	2356 (6.5)
VIII Region	134 (5.3)	81 (4.7)	21 (2.4)	21 (1.9)	49 (3.3)	47 (3.4)	44 (5.7)	1937 (5.4)
X Region	125 (5.0)	66 (3.9)	24 (2.7)	25 (2.2)	45 (3.0)	45 (3.2)	30 (3.9)	1745 (4.8)
XI Region	85 (3.4)	40 (2.3)	13 (1.5)	23 (2.1)	30 (2.0)	17 (1.2)	13 (1.7)	999 (2.8)
XII Region	95 (3.8)	48 (2.8)	11 (1.3)	23 (2.1)	29 (1.9)	20 (1.4)	17 (2.2)	1228 (3.4)
XIV Region	48 (1.9)	49 (2.9)	20 (2.3)	20 (1.8)	35 (2.3)	31 (2.2)	11 (1.4)	816 (2.3)
XV Region	36 (1.4)	54 (3.2)	11 (1.3)	27 (2.4)	27 (1.8)	26 (1.9)	17 (2.2)	713 (2.0)
XVI Region	25 (1.0)	57 (3.3)	15 (1.7)	24 (2.2)	38 (2.5)	23 (1.6)	22 (2.9)	204 (0.6)

The Metropolitan Region (M.R) stands out significantly with the highest number of requests over the years, representing on average 41.7% of all requests throughout the period. This dominance reflects the concentration of sports activities and the high demand for resources in the region, likely due to its larger population and concentration of sports infrastructure.

On the other hand, the IX Region also shows a notable participation, with 5.8% of the total requests, especially in the years 2006 and 2007, when it reached 7.4%. This suggests a sustained interest in sports development in this region, possibly driven by specific regional policies or significant local sports events.

Other regions such as the V Region, the VIII Region, and the IV Region have also maintained a constant presence in requesting funds, with percentages ranging between 4% and 6% of the total. In contrast, regions like the XVI Region, which was more recently incorporated into the analysis, show much lower

participation, which is understandable given their shorter time in the record of requests. Article text. (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Distribution of the number of sports offered by region in Chile

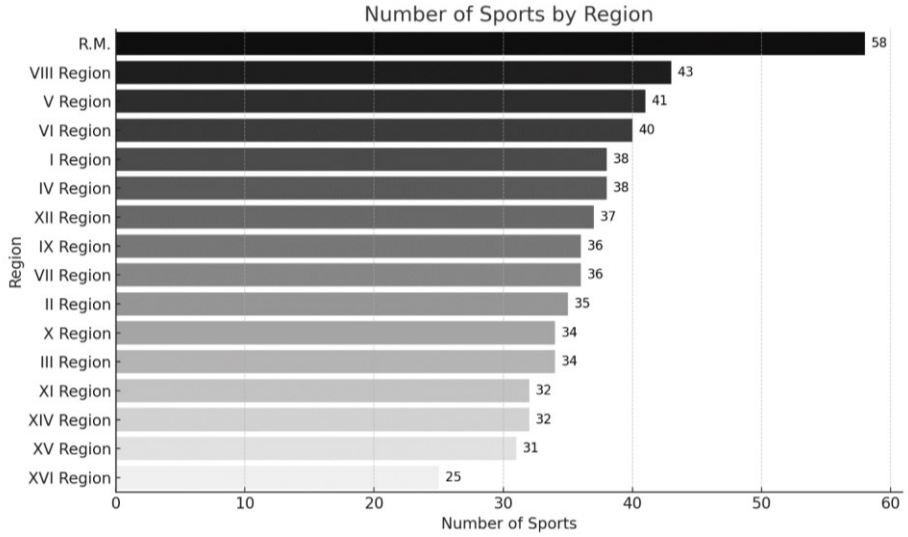
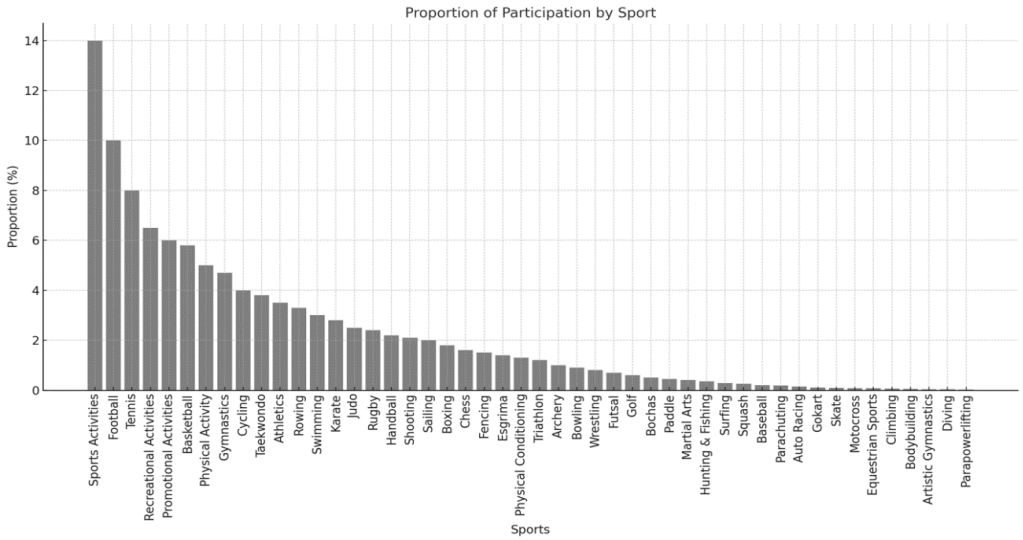


Figure 1 displays the number of sports per region in Chile during the analyzed period. This graph illustrates how sports disciplines are distributed across different regions of the country, providing a clear view of the diversity and concentration of sports at a regional level. As observed in the graph, the RM stands out significantly with the highest number of registered sports, reflecting its position as the main hub of sporting activities in the country. This aligns with the results from the fund requests, where the MR also dominated in terms of the number of requests, highlighting its importance in the development of sports in Chile.

Following the MR, the VIII Region and the V Region also show a high number of sports, indicating a strong presence and sports diversity in these areas. This suggests that these regions, like the RM, have well-established sports infrastructure and culture, enabling them to support a wide variety of disciplines. In contrast, regions like the XVI Region display fewer sports, which could reflect limitations in terms of sports infrastructure, or a lower diversification of sporting activities compared to other more developed regions.

Figure 2 shows the proportion of the frequency of each sport in relation to funding requests during the period 2006-2024. This provides a clear perspective on which sports have been most active in seeking financial resources over time, indicating areas of high demand and focus on sports development. It is observed that Sporting Activities lead in terms of frequency, representing the highest proportion of funding requests with a percentage over 14%. This suggests that this group, which likely includes a variety of disciplines and widespread activities, has had a constant need for financing, reflecting its popularity or perceived importance within the framework of sports development in Chile.

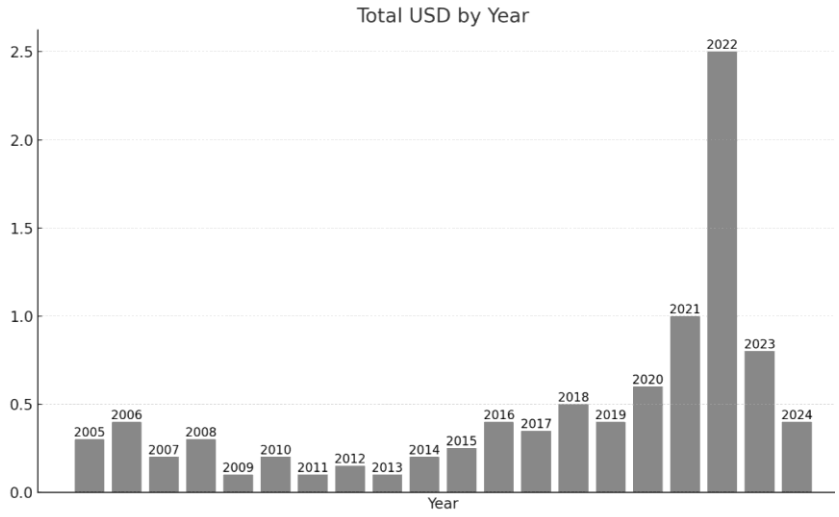
Figure 2. Proportion of sports practiced in Chile (2006-2024)



Soccer ranks second in frequency of requests, accounting for more than 10% of the total, which is unsurprising given its status as the most popular sport in the country. This is followed by disciplines such as Tennis and Recreational Activities, each with a significant representation in the distribution of funding requests, indicating sustained interest in these areas at both amateur and professional levels. On the other end, less traditional sports such as Parapowerlifting, Diving, and Paragliding show the lowest frequency of requests, which could reflect both a lower participation or development in these sports, as well as more limited infrastructure and financial support.

Figure 3 displays the total investment in sports by year in Chile during the period 2006-2024, expressed in USD. This graph allows observation of investment trends over time, highlighting the years with the highest and lowest levels of funding in the sports field.

Figure 3. Evolution of total investment in sports in Chile by year (2006-2024).



One of the most notable observations is the significant increase in investment in the most recent years, especially in 2023, where the total amount invested reaches its highest point, exceeding 2.5 trillion USD. This increase may be associated with the organization and massive participation of Chilean athletes at the Pan American Games held in Santiago that year, as well as preparation for and participation in international sports events, such as the Paris 2024 Olympic Games, or with government policies aimed

at strengthening sports in the country. Another relevant point is the increase observed in 2018, followed by a slight decrease in the subsequent years, suggesting a cyclical pattern of investment that could be related to the long-term planning of sports events or the implementation of specific sports development programs.

The years prior to 2018 show a more constant but relatively low investment, which could reflect a more conservative approach or less prioritization of sports in public policies during those periods.

One of the most notable observations is the significant increase in investment during the most recent years, especially in 2023, where the total amount invested reaches its highest point, exceeding 2.5 trillion USD. This increase may be associated with preparation for and participation in international sports events, such as the Olympic Games, or with government policies aimed at strengthening sports in the country.

Discussion

The primary objective of this study was to analyze sports investment in Chile from 2006 to 2024, with a focus on the distribution of funding across different disciplines and regions, and its implications for sports development. This research not only quantified investment levels but also examined their impact, highlighting areas of greater and lesser financial support, which are critical for shaping sports policy and strategy.

The results revealed that the MR was the primary recipient of funds, accounting for a significant share of the total investment. This trend reflects its role as Chile's central sports hub, supported by its infrastructure, including 148 sports facilities (IND, 2025). The RM's economic and cultural importance, combined with its population density, positions it as a strategic area for national and international sports events. This pattern aligns with global studies on sports investments, which highlight urban centers as focal points for infrastructure development due to their capacity to host large-scale events and their centrality in national sports systems (Preuss, 2018; Taylor & Gratton, 2002).

The marked increase in investment in recent years, particularly in 2023, coincided with Chile's preparation for the Pan American Games in Santiago 2023. The total annual investment rose from 1.1 trillion USD in 2022 to over 2.5 trillion USD in 2023. This aligns with international experiences, where hosting major sports events acts as a catalyst for infrastructure and resource allocation, improving both facilities and athletic performance (Matheson, 2012; Toohey, 2007). The development of the National Stadium Sports Park in Santiago illustrates this phenomenon, serving not only as a venue for competition but also as a legacy project aimed at enhancing community access to high-quality sports facilities (Organizing Committee of the Santiago 2023 Pan American and Parapan American Games, 2023).

Sports disciplines showed distinct patterns in funding requests and allocations. Soccer led with 2,078 funding requests and over 12 billion CLP allocated during the period. This is consistent with soccer's global dominance as a cultural and economic powerhouse (Giulianotti & Robertson, 2012). Chilean soccer's robust organizational framework, including institutions such as FIFA, CONMEBOL, ANFP, and ANFA, ensures efficient resource management and highlights the sport's cultural significance (Camus Camus & Borlando Marconi, 2021). This mirrors trends in other countries where soccer dominates sports funding due to its widespread participation and economic impact (Dolles & Söderman, 2013).

Tennis, the second most funded sport in Chile, received a total of 1,518 funding requests and over 11 billion USD during the study period, reflecting its pivotal role in the national sports landscape. Chile's rich tennis heritage, shaped by legendary players such as Jaime Fillol, Nicolás Massú, and Fernando González, has elevated the sport's cultural significance and justified this substantial investment. These icons have not only achieved international recognition but have also inspired a younger generation of athletes, fueling a continuous demand for resources to sustain the sport's momentum.

Despite this robust tradition, tennis in Chile faces persistent challenges. The modernization of existing facilities and the expansion of youth development programs remain critical areas for improvement. Currently, Chile boasts over 400 tennis courts across the country, providing the infrastructure necessary to host high-profile events such as the ATP 250 in Santiago and the Davis Cup (Dustin, 1996). These

tournaments not only underscore the sport's importance but also position Chile as a key player in the international tennis circuit. However, addressing infrastructural deficits and ensuring equitable access, especially in underserved regions, will be crucial to sustaining and amplifying the sport's growth. Continued strategic investment is essential to maintain Chile's legacy in tennis and to nurture future generations of talent, fostering both national pride and international competitiveness (Retamal et al., 2020; Sandoval Gómez, 2019).

A high volume of requests was observed for Sporting Activities, with 3,067 funding applications. This reflects the widespread participation of Chileans in recreational sports. A meta-analysis of sports habits in Chile between 2006 and 2018 revealed that approximately 38% of the adult population regularly engages in physical activity, demonstrating a societal shift towards healthier lifestyles (Salinas, 2020). Investment in this category is critical for community well-being and aligns with global findings on the social benefits of recreational sports (Bauman et al., 2012; Coalter, 2013).

However, less traditional sports such as Paragliding and Parapowerlifting received minimal financial support, revealing a significant gap in the equitable distribution of resources. These sports often face challenges in securing adequate funding despite their growing popularity and potential to foster broader societal benefits, such as inclusion and accessibility. Similar trends have been observed globally, where emerging sports struggle to compete for resources within systems that prioritize more established or commercially viable disciplines (Chalip et al., 2017; Hoye et al., 2015, 2018). For instance, marginalized groups and athletes in niche sports frequently encounter barriers in accessing training facilities, sponsorships, and competitive opportunities. This underscores the urgent need for targeted policies aimed at diversifying funding streams and addressing disparities. By adopting inclusive approaches, such as proportional funding frameworks and specialized grants, policymakers can promote a more balanced development of sports ecosystems, ensuring that emerging and adaptive sports are also empowered to thrive and contribute to societal well-being.

The concentration of resources in the MR and traditional sports like soccer raises questions about equity in funding distribution. Emerging disciplines and regions with lower investment require additional support to foster talent development and community participation. Studies have shown that equitable investment strategies contribute to broader social and economic benefits, reducing disparities in access to sports opportunities (Chalip, 2006; Silk & Andrews, 2012). Future research should evaluate the long-term effects of this concentration and propose policies that balance investment to maximize national sports development.

Conclusions

This study has systematically analyzed the trends and distribution of sports funding in Chile over an 18-year period, from 2006 to 2024. The findings reveal a clear prioritization of popular sports, such as soccer and tennis, alongside significant investments in the Metropolitan Region, which serves as the nation's sports epicenter. While this strategic focus has bolstered Chile's capability to host international events and nurture high-profile athletes, it has also highlighted disparities in resource allocation across emerging disciplines and less developed regions.

The substantial increase in investment observed in 2023, linked to major events like the Pan American Games and the preparation for the 2024 Olympic Games, underscores the critical role of mega-sporting events in driving national funding policies. Nevertheless, this concentration of funds raises important questions about equity, as less traditional sports and underserved regions often struggle to access resources despite their potential to enhance inclusivity and community engagement.

To maximize the social, economic, and athletic impact of public sports investments, future policies should aim for a more balanced allocation of resources. Emphasizing equitable funding strategies can foster development across a broader spectrum of disciplines and regions, ensuring sustainable growth and inclusivity in Chile's sports ecosystem. Additionally, longitudinal studies evaluating the outcomes of such investments can provide valuable insights to refine national sports funding strategies.

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