

## Grassroots Concept 2025

*This Grassroots Concept builds on current activities as reported in the Annual Activity Report and outlines the Federation's medium-term strategic direction.*

### 1. Plans and/or Initiatives for Sport Initiation, Physical Training, Matches, Exhibitions & Friendlies

The Dutch Dodgeball Federation hosts **competitions** for all registered clubs to participate in. Mixed competitions have been hosted since the Federations' foundation in 2017. Since the 2024/2025 season men's and women's leagues have been added as well as a second division to allow for a larger diversity in levels of adult players to participate in competitions. The locations for these competitions vary, since every club hosts at least one day. This allows spectators from around the country to get to know a sport in their area. Clubs provide training to prepare for these competitions, as well as regular training accessible to all registered players. Newcomers are encouraged to join the latter when interested.

The Federation has managed the **Dutch national team** for international tournaments in three categories; women, men and mixed such as the World, European and Western European Championships since 2018. To foster inter-club relations and improve a sense of community, the Federation also hosts member days where all players who are registered in one of the country's clubs can attend. Players of all levels are encouraged to attend these days. As of 2025, the federation is also encouraging clubs, and supporting where needed, to host additional friendly matches.

To promote the sport externally, clubs and the federation itself give multiple **dodgeball clinics** a year to schools and companies. The clinics are designed to promote the sport and introduce people to dodgeball in a fun and accessible manner. Experienced members of the Dutch Federation participate in large sporting events such as TeamNL Moves, an organisation that sets up dodgeball tournaments for students in secondary education. The Federation provides referees to assist with the matches at these events and makes use of the event to highlight the presence of the Federation and clubs across the country. Since 2021, **youth training** (ages 12+) has been organised in Hengelo. In addition, weekly youth training sessions have recently been launched in Amsterdam. These sessions are intended to be expanded to other clubs across the country. We also organise specific training for female players only and achieve **equal gender parity** on our national board. This shift in dynamics put gender-related issues higher on the board's agenda. Local marketing campaigns are being set up specifically designed to target women, and solidify a stronger **female player base**.

### 2. Plans and/or Initiatives for Coaching and Referee Initiation and Development

The Dutch Dodgeball Federation asks all teams competing in the national league to also supply referees for every league day. At the start of the 2025-2026 season a **referee training**, on the topic of EDF rules, was organised to allow interested players from all clubs to brush up on their knowledge of reffing. Clubs with a less experienced player base were highly encouraged to join, and present players were asked to pass on the information discussed to fellow club members.

These types of national referee training will be repeated as rule changes occur, or more frequently if requested by the player base.

While there is no standard national approach to training coaches, the Dutch Dodgeball Federation has **enlarged its team of coaches** for the WEC, taking on new people as assistant coaches with the goal of gaining hands-on experience at an international tournament.

In the future the Dutch Federation hopes to **collaborate with neighboring countries** such as Belgium, Luxembourg and France to increase coaching opportunities and provide tailored training material to increase the number of qualified coaches in the Netherlands.

### 3. Plans and/or Initiatives for Seminars, Courses, Development of Organisation & Training-Centres

As mentioned above, together with Belgium, Luxembourg and France we hope to take steps to **develop training material to form coaches for youth training**. This would involve setting up a two day workshop consisting of practical sessions, brainstorming sessions and program design sessions. The output of this workshop would then be incorporated into a training manual and assistance with setting up a national plan would be provided. This national plan would focus on **national workshops, management of resources and shaping training materials**. While initially being a multinational approach, the workshops provided will serve to set up and shape workshops in the Netherlands for trainers and coaches.

We are continuing the process to **develop our organisation** by updating bylaws, structuring and aligning processes and making/updating protocols, for instance to keep the safe environment with in the community.

Additionally, the Federation is committed to **supporting new clubs** when needed. While finding training centres is the responsibility of the clubs, the Federation is available to support finding appropriate locations and takes responsibility for all national events requiring a training-centre.

### 4. Plans and/or Initiatives for Club-Support (Equipment, grants, funds, training-possibilities)

Clubs are tasked with setting up training for their player base, but the **Federation assists** where needed. Material can be borrowed when needed, and the **Federation coordinates** with clubs hosting competition days or events to ensure sufficient quality material is available.

As of this year, the Federation has actively encouraged clubs to organise and host a larger number of **events** during periods where the national team prepares for international competitions, as this tends to lead to a lower number of national competition days in this same period. To simplify the responsibility of hosting such an event, the Federation assists with supplying materials, resources, and finding a suitable location if requested.

The previously mentioned collaboration with Belgium, Luxembourg and France is for the purpose of securing a grant through the **Erasmus+ programme for education, training, youth and sport**. This collaboration sent in a grant request late September 2025. Should the grant not be received, a new attempt at securing a grant in the next round of applications will be made. The Federation also receives funds from **sponsors** at a national level for the federation, as well as the national team.

At the moment we have a contract till 2028 with two big sponsors. *Hero* acts as the Federation's main sponsor and is prominently visible on the national team shirts. *De Selectie* is represented in a smaller capacity on the apparel and additionally receives an annual clinic and tournament, delivered by players from TeamNL. These **partnerships** strengthen the connection between elite sport and corporate engagement while increasing the visibility of dodgeball beyond the existing community. Clubs have their own sponsorship agreements at a local level for club needs.

## 5. Plans and/or Initiatives for Growth-Analysis (Data-collection, Data-tracking)

As part of the grant proposal and collaboration with Belgium, Luxembourg and France, **data will be gathered** from all countries involved as well as 4 additional EU countries to create an overview of enablers and barriers to girls' participation in sports and dodgeball, inspirational practices, existing coaching methods, structural support needs and frameworks, and attitudes towards gender inclusivity. The overview of this data will be shared with all countries as part of the process of forming a training and coaching manual for youth leagues, with a focus on female player retention.

A **Project Management Group** (PMG) will be established consisting of 2 members from coordinator Dodgeball Belgium and 1 member of each partner to oversee all project activities, monitor implementation, track progress towards objectives and manage resources effectively. Their oversight will be communicated to the countries involved, including the Netherlands, as the project progresses. This allows the Dutch Federation to contribute data about the progress of the project in the Netherlands, receiving feedback on the analysis of this data in return, and while gaining insight into progress in other countries to draw inspiration from.

Over the past year, the Dutch Dodgeball Federation has taken concrete steps to improve data collection and monitoring in support of grassroots development. The Federation has been actively monitoring **website traffic and user behaviour**, including visitor numbers, traffic sources (such as search engines, social media, and advertisements), page views, time spent on pages, and user interactions. These insights are used to better understand outreach performance, optimise content, and improve user engagement. In addition, the Federation monitors activity and engagement across its social media channels to assess reach and interaction with different target groups.

During the 2024–2025 season, the Federation improved its **player registration process** for the national competition. This has resulted in more accurate and reliable tracking of the number of participants across leagues and competition days, supporting better insight into participation levels and trends.

At present, the Federation is implementing an improved **membership administration system**. This system is designed to increase administrative efficiency while also strengthening data protection and privacy measures, ensuring responsible handling of member information. Together, these developments provide a stronger data foundation to support informed decision-making and future grassroots growth.

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Date: 16-12-2025