

# Challenges of Injury Risk Reduction Strategy Implementation in Belgian's Professional Male Football Team : A Qualitative Analysis

Authors: Manon Socheleau<sup>1,2</sup>, François Delvaux<sup>1,2</sup>, Yves Depluvrez<sup>3</sup>, Olivier Materne<sup>4</sup>, Aude Aguilaniu<sup>2</sup>

Affiliations:

- <sup>1</sup> University Hospital of Liège, Belgium
- <sup>2</sup> Department of Physical Activity and Rehabilitation Sciences, University of Liège, Belgium
- <sup>3</sup> Sport Science Department, Royal Standard Club Liège
- <sup>4</sup> Sports Medicine Department, K.A.S. Eupen Football Club



## Context

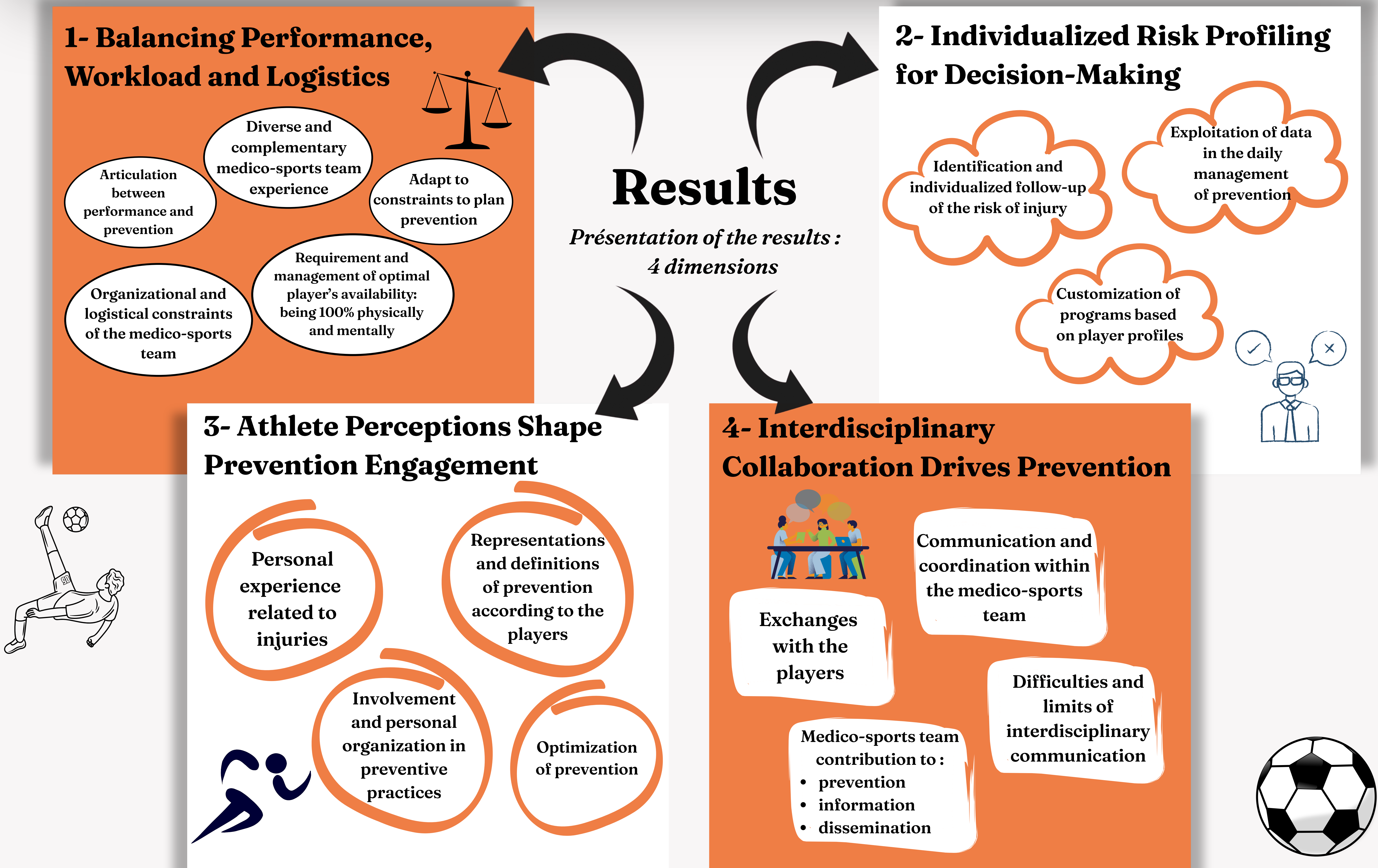
Professional football exposes players to a high risk of injury, impacting performance and sports availability. While many prevention strategies exist, their practical implementation remains challenging and depends on numerous organizational, human and contextual factors.

## Objective

To identify **barriers** and **facilitators** influencing the optimal implementation of injury risk reduction strategies in the context of a professional football team.

## Methods

1. Recruitment of 8 participants including : Athletes, coaches, physiotherapist and physical trainer
  2. Semi-structured interviews
- Interview were audio-recorded, transcribed verbatim
  - Analyzed inductively with the Grounded theory Approach (using Atlas.ti)
  - Extraction and combinaison of 1091 codes to obtain the major concepts
  - Axial coding, based on constant comparison across codes and categories, identified relationships
  - Selective coding integrated the most theoretically saturated categories into four main dimensions structuring the results



## Conclusion and Perspectives

Injury risk reduction strategies in professional football is **multifactorial** and **context-dependent**. This study identified that risk reduction effectiveness relies on an **integrated approach combining individualization, data use, player engagement, and clear interdisciplinary communication and collaboration**.

From these findings, a few perspectives have been identified: **extend the study to other clubs and women's football, develop a prevention model adapted to the club, and adopt a longitudinal approach** to better understand the implementation in high-level sport.

