

## QUALITY MANAGEMENT IN SPORTS - A PRIORITY IN EUROPEAN INTERREGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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### **Abstract**

*Sports make no exception so we decided to reveal some specific management tools and measures which should be adapted and are very useful for European organizations in this field. In the same way, professional management implies an assessment of efficiency and continuous efforts for increasing it. The difficulty of determining the efficiency of sports activities results from their specificity as a mix between economic and socio-cultural activities, their effects and efforts being hard to quantify.*

**Key words:** *management, sport, social field, economic field, sport organization, efficiency.*

Like in every other field, sports management is a key element of high importance regarding the improvement of sports organizations as well as of their specific activities. This contributes to obtaining anticipated results using a good governance of financial resources and detecting, encouraging and stimulating human resources that prove special skills in sports, deploying the stages and ensuring a motivating psycho-social climate for those who constantly outrun themselves in obtaining high-end performances.

Sports management also has the role of dimensioning and prioritizing sports activities depending on how important they and the individuals involved in this process are, also ensuring the enlistment, deployment and promotion on professional criteria, generating consensus-oriented discussions and creating optimal conditions for achieving high performances with major effects on sport efficiency. Management in sports means adaptation of its basic structures to the environment in which they act and also to the effective way of employment of the material, human or financial resources involved in the process in order to obtain the anticipated results. Again like in any other field, the management ensures that the sport organization has an internal structure that matches the main mission regarding promoting sport activities, descriptors and approaches of the team-management concerning organisational processes, structures and relationships between compartments and employees, having the main role in achieving the objectives and being efficient on each level.

In order to achieve a professional management of the sports organisations it is necessary to assess the economic and social efficiency. Therefore, the development of some professional tools in management, like certain calculus and analytical methodologies, urgently implies on the European level. This represents a way of improving the consumption of the resources, reaching a goal and main objectives, the socio-economic aspect of the sport organisations, allowing to acknowledge the evolution of the sport domain and the potential each

sport entity has regarding it, also generating a proper decision in order to be successful. Implementing practices, calculus and analytical methodologies of the efficiency in organisational management, helps sport develop gradually and as planned, based on precision and coherency making sure that the social and economic entities on the sports field remain equal and unceasing. Improving the results in this area gives real perspectives on creating new work places through the influence pursued on different industries and domains like tourism, press, advertising, sports also representing a significant stimulus in the consumption of services and products, having a positive effect in production continuity and development of numerous sectors.

The European committee considers that sports is an ever-growing social and economic phenomenon, with a major contribution to the EU's strategic objectives regarding solidarity and prosperity, as long as the Olympic ideal of sports development regarding promoting peace and understanding between nations and cultures and the education of the youth born in Europe and sustained by the international Olympic Committee.

Sports activities generate and support important values like team spirit, solidarity, tolerance, and fair-play, contributing to development and self-fulfilment. On the European level, the European Committee sustains the fact that sports promote active citizenship and sustainable development of the European society.

Nevertheless, sports confronts itself with dangers and new challenges in the European society, like commercial pressure, young people exploitation, drug abuse, racism, violence, corruption and money laundering. In December 2000, through the declaration of the European committee regarding specific characteristics of sports and its social status, it has been brought up to attention and stated the importance of sports in the European society and its specificity.

Adding to that, European institutions have acknowledged the main role sports have in the European society framework, through structures

based on voluntary work, in fields like health, education, social and cultural activities. The European Parliament has shown interest in some challenges sports confronts at European level and on the last few years it has solved some issues regarding the sports field. All these initiatives, based on the social and economic role which sports has in the EU, have been structurally presented in the book "White book of sports". At the same time, the tendencies recorded in the past few years regarding the social corporative involvement show that the main orientation has switched from ecological projects or art-sustaining ones to sports projects.

Although the facts presented, included in a wide area of arguments, plead for manifesting the researchers' high interest regarding the influence of the professional management in sports, as well as this field's approach through an economic perspective, this is not an issue.

This unexploited area that combines social and economic aspects hasn't been carefully checked into, as the educational and cultural domains have. Scientific studies and publications that approach sports area are restricted and narrowed as the content goes taking into account the magnitude the phenomenon has on a European level.

This lack of economic research in sports is present in Romania and if it occurs it mainly focuses on physical education and sport. In the light of the research regarding this situation we have identified 118 sports research magazines in Europe and America, 10 of them having a main theme based on framing sports economic approaches. The elements described have helped us in deciding the importance of the theme chosen.

Sports is mainly a dynamic area, having a fast growth and a major macro-economic impact, still underestimated and the European Committee considers that sports can contribute to reaching the main goals founded in The Lisbon Agenda regarding economic development and creating new work-places. Sports can also be utilised as a regional and local development of urban regeneration or rural upsurge.

Sports benefits from this connectivity with the touristic area and can stimulate infrastructure modernisation, like settling financial partnerships of the recreative and sports finances.

Even though some precise and comparable data is missing, the importance of sports is given by the studies and essays regarding national accounts, economic aspects involved in major sports events, like costs involved in the lack of physical education for older people as well.

In 2010, on the EU level, sports has generated, in a wide area, an additional value of 1407 million Euros, representing 4.7% of the EU GDP and has created new work jobs for 25 million individuals, representing 6.4% of the EU's work force.

A big part of the economic value is connected to the intellectual property rights, copyrights,

commercial communications, trademarks, as well as image and spreading rights. On the other hand, even though sports usually has a major pith in economy, the majority of sports activities develops in non-profit environments, of which lots are based on the public support of ensuring citizen's access to sports.

The expansion of sports in the last few years and the influence on economy has not gone unnoticed by the EU, which in 2006 has founded the work-group "Sports and Economy", under Austrian leadership.

Expressing a new standardised definition of sports is among the most important achievements of this group. The definition of sports also includes an economic perspective so as the macro-economic impact is estimated.

The wide definition of sports encloses the whole sports industry and all activities related: tourism, health, insurance, advertising, agriculture, hunting, machine building, architecture, etc.

As far as sports management goes, it has to be taken into account the fact that national sports organizations act in a framework based on external and internal factors. The individuals involved in sports activities are dealing with external factors like economic, political, social and cultural circumstances and internal factors like working conditions and sports organizations administrative activities.

The success of the activities depends on level of knowledge managers have in the field and on the way they are managing internal factors like performing activities, abilities and skills of the employees, responsibilities and motivation regarding reaching the goals. In a similar manner, the external factors are as important as the internal ones like world economy, local economy, technology, politics, competition, necessities and tendencies of the young and the socio-cultural context.

If we analyse things in a different manner, the external factors also include public faces involved in the event who are important to its success and who are also influencing decisions, even though they do not have the authority as direct participants, such as the local community, local and national authorities in the legal, economic, health and security, cultural and social areas, politicians and mass-media have.

In an evolving society, every external factor is a challenge which can deeply affect sports organizations, hence the necessity of the managers learning to control these changing factors, if they wish to remain an important actor on the market. The main attributes a sports manager has to accomplish are: authority, delegating responsibility, decision making and designating leaders. The last attribute refers to strategic leaders in organization who can be either current employees or professionals with academic training and knowledge in the sports area.

The main issue regarding sports economic approach which is also present in this scientific research is the complexity of this domain related to the difficulty in developing a solid and comprehensive data base including statistical methods, information regarding the economic impact sports have in different sectors and domains. We have identified and analysed a few elements which determine the specificity of sports management like:

- different kinds of purposes and objectives of the decision making process;
- the diversity of stake-holders and the difficulty in identifying them;
- different levels of purposes and goals in relation with their importance;
- the difficult measurement of goals and objectives fulfilling due to the socio-cultural nature of sports.

There are numerous studies and analyses approaching sports from an economic point of view, as the present paper is, but these can only be tailor-made for a certain analysis. The complexity of this domain is not the only obstacle preventing wide research in sports. The lack of interest of the public institutions and their malfunctioning structure are also ultimate impediments in the attempt of trying to develop realistic and comprehensive researches in economical approach of sports.

In order to overcome this situation it is necessary to

develop a measurement method of the economic impact of sports in related areas, which will be the basis of a superior strategic planning. This planning will allow proper decisions making and compiling homogeneous complex economical studies in sports.

A different concern that should be taken into account especially in Romania is financing in sports. There are states in which sports are partially financed from taxes or fees on gambling or lottery. This is just an example which can be adopted by all national communities, but this is not enough, subsidizing being of major importance for beginners and amateurs in sports.

Concluding, we can state that the economic approach in sports is not only necessary but also vital. This goal cannot be fulfilled in a professional and long-lasting way, unless the local and national public administration involvement in this area is present together with a proper financing.

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