

Promoting European values through sport at municipal level

- CREATING NETWORKS OF CITIES, TOWN AND COMMUNITIES
- BRINGING LOCAL AND EUROPEAN LEVELS TOGETHER
- PAN-EUROPEAN COOPERATION

New Members of the ACES Europe family
From Andorra to Ukraine

The European Vital Cities Challenge
Dust off your running shoes or bike!

Guadalajara, Mexico
World Capital of Sport 2020

Euro-Mediterranean City of Sport
Dakhla in Morocco

Co-funded by
the European Union



CONNECTING THROUGH SPORT

ACES AMONG THE MOST ACTIVE PARTNERS OF THE EU CAMPAIGN

#BEACTIVE



As a result of its online presence and its awarded cities' activities, ACES has been recognized among the most active partners of the European Commission's initiative, #BeActive.

The announcement was made during the Gala held in Budapest on October 18, with the presence of EU Commission Tibor Navracsics, as well as with the attendance of the partners of the European Week of Sport.

During the event, the European Commission awarded projects and individuals dedicated to the promotion of sport and physical activity across Europe.

Following his presentation of the European sport awards, the Secretary General of ACES Hugo Alonso highlighted the importance of this recognition, reassuring that ACES will be committed in promoting the value sport and physical at local level.



Foreword

ACES growing to be worldwide



2019 has been a year full of work, many proposals, candidatures, projects and inexhaustible development of the association worldwide. Our team has been expanded and professionalized and the European funding ACES was granted to foster its growth, has served to lay the foundation of ACES Europe as a better prepared association, with more cities awarded, new projects ahead and becoming an even stronger connector for our members.

Our brand has turned twenty years since Madrid was named the first European Capital of Sport for the year 2001 and we already have more than 500 cities in our network, we are present in almost 40 countries and our alliances are progressing with a well-defined strategy.

2019 has been the year of Budapest as European Capital of Sport, and the title is now passed to Malaga, which wants to become a benchmark in sports, not only in Europe but globally. The percentage of active citizens in Malaga has already increased from 20% to 50% in recent years and surely the title of European Capital of Sport will make these figures even better and strengthen the Costa del Sol capital's image in both sport and tourism.

In the pipeline, Lisbon is already preparing for holding the title in 2021, with The Hague, Glasgow and Genoa, which will follow in the years after, all ready to develop programs of events and physical activity that will serve as example for all other municipalities in the field of sports.

In 2019 we expanded our network in new countries, including municipalities in Estonia, Cyprus, Ukraine, Morocco and Mexico. We are expecting to have a Maltese candidate in 2020, meaning we will be present in all the member states of the European Union.

Our initiative does not cease to grow year after year. The interest in the awards is flourishing, and the challenges for the future are to continue consolidating a project that was born as a very humble endeavour. Today it encompasses many cities, countries, professionals, volunteers, delegates and brands who continually approach the European Capitals and Cities of Sport Federation, ACES Europe for acknowledgment of their good sports policies and practices. This interest has pushed us to expand the boundaries of our work, introducing ACES Worldwide. Abu Dhabi became the first World Capital of Sport in 2019 and in 2020 Guadalajara, in the heart of Mexico, will hold the award aiming to achieve our priority objective of employing sports practice and its benefits to build a better world.

If twenty years ago someone would have told me we were going to be in this privileged situation in 2019, I would not have believed it. I want to encourage our whole team and all the award-winning cities to continue their hard work, which has brought us where we are today. We are strong together and with a devoted team like the one we have, we are ready and eager to face all challenges that the future holds with confidence. ★

Gian Francesco Lupattelli
President and founder
ACES EUROPE

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"Through the Awards for European Capitals, Cities, Towns and Communities of Sport, as well as the World Capital of Sport, ACES Europe stimulates grassroots sports and physical activity for everyone", says Gian Francesco Lupattelli, president and founder of ACES Europe.

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Erasmus+: 70 million euros for sport in 2020.



The impressive and everlasting legacy of EU commissioner for Sport Tibor Navracsics.

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Tessa Wullaert
The Belgium and Manchester City football star on her past and present and on women's football striving for equality with their men's-colleagues.

Colophon

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“THE PURPOSE OF OUR AWARDS IS TO MOTIVATE CITIES TO INVEST MORE ON THEIR SPORT POLICY”

Interview with Gian Francesco Lupattelli, founder and president of ACES Europe

“Sport is a universal language everyone can understand”, Gian Francesco Lupattelli says. These words have been the driving force behind the founding of ACES Europe 20 years ago. Sport deserves priority in the policy of every city, town and region, Lupattelli adds, because of the long term benefits for citizens. “Investing 1 euro in sports can save 15 euros in health.”

BY ROMANOS ANTONOPOULOS



Mr Lupattelli, next year is 20 years since ACES Europe's journey started. How do you feel about the achievements of the federation you founded?

“It gives a great pleasure to know that through our sport awards we have added a piece to the wellbeing and health of Europeans. A network of more than 500 municipalities that prioritise their sport policies has been built through a lot of work and indeed, it has been a long and challenging journey for ACES. Nonetheless, the result we have achieved pays back all the effort. The

beginning was made in Madrid, European Capital of Sport 2001, thanks to the significant contribution of an outstanding mayor and great friend of mine, José María Álvarez del Manzano.”

“Since then, we have granted European Capitals until the year 2023. Not only that but we have been receiving every year dozens of candidatures for the titles of European city/town/community/island/region of Sport. Clearly, cities have been increasing their interest for sports and this is extremely positive for the lives of European citizens in the future.”

How can sports promote the European values?

“Europe means respect for diversity, respect for the fellow human beings. The purpose of the European project has been to bring together the peoples of Europe within a common European home. What better way to achieve these objectives than sports? As a former professor of physical education and having devoted my life to physical activity, I can certainly say that sport is a universal language everyone can understand. It can bring people together, no matter what their origin, background



or economic status. Moreover, sport must play an educative role since young ages, given that it can teach the values of equality, fairness, teambuilding, discipline and respect.”

According to the EU barometer, 46% of the European citizens never exercise.

What is the responsibility of local authorities for this?

“It is a fact we all should take into consideration, especially local authorities all around Europe; investing in sports means investing in humans and their well-being. Physical activity is related to many

“Cities have been increasing their interest for sports and this is extremely positive for the lives of European citizens in the future”

health benefits (e.g. reduction of heart attack risk), contributes positively to our mental condition and the improvement of our social lives. Let me refer to a study which found that investing 1 euro in sports can save 15 euros in health and even more according to other researches. These facts demonstrate that setting sports as priority has longterm benefits for citizens. In this regard, the purpose of our awards is to make cities understand the importance of physical activity and motivate them to invest more on their sport policy. For this reason, our main criteria for the evaluations are the



Founder and president of ACES Europe Gian Francesco Lupattelli.

quality of a city's sport facilities, the accessibility of population to sports infrastructure, the sport events organised and the promotion of health."

Why is it important for municipalities to earn the European sport awards?

What are the benefits of participating to ACES' network?

"Our awards are acknowledged by EC, and the European Capital of Sport title is recognized in the White Paper of the European Commission (Art. 50)

"Sport must play an educative role since young ages, given that it can teach the values of equality, fairness, teambuilding, discipline and respect"



and give international visibility to a local authority for its sport practices. Moreover, through our award, a local authority can have access to a large network of cities of sport, share its best practices with them, improve its sport policies and participate in common EU-funded projects.”

“Sport tourism is a sector that can also be benefited, as well as municipalities can gain Return of Investment (ROI), such as Logroño, European City of Sport which generated 44,5M euros ROI.”

“The recognition equals to 365 days of sport events, not a just day, a week or a month. As a consequence, the European sport awards have the potential to increase the number of people who practice sports regularly. For instance in Antwerp, European Capital of Sport 2013, the percentage of active people increased by 10%. In Sofia, European Capital of Sport 2018, the number

of participants from 150k participants per year in sport events increased to almost 1 million after the assignment of the title.”

How has been your collaboration with the EU institutions (European Commission, European Parliament) the last 5 years and what are your expectations from the new mandate?

“We have been having an extraordinary collaboration with all the EU officials, who clearly recognise the importance of sport for the lives of Europeans. Mr Tibor Navracscics, the former Commissioner, embraced our values and supported our actions since the beginning. The fact that the sport budget is doubled in the next MFF 2021-2027 totally fulfills our expectations and is the demonstration that EU

“The European sport awards have the potential to increase the number of people who practice sports regularly”

prioritises what is important. With the same spirit, we are looking forward to collaborate with the new Commissioner, Mrs Mariya Gabriel.”

“When it comes to the European Parliament, we have been working closely with many MEP’s coming from different countries, representing different political parties with an increasing success year after year. In this regard, we believe that sport should bring consensus building

bridges between all the parties of the political spectrum.”

“As a final remark, I would like to thank MSP Italia (Movimento Sportivo Popolare) for their help and commitment. A great thanks for all these women and men, athletes and managers who have contributed in making ACES Europe a success story.” ★

ROMANOS ANTONOPOULOS IS COMMUNICATION MANAGER ACES EUROPE.

PROMOTING EUROPEAN VALUES THROUGH SPORTS INITIATIVES AT THE MUNICIPAL LEVEL

ACES Europe takes part in a project funded by the European Union

The year 2019 marked an important one in the history of ACES Europe. At the close of 2018, it was announced that ACES Europe was one of four beneficiaries to win the Erasmus+ Sport call for proposals under the title of 'Promotion of European values through sport initiatives at the municipal level'. ACES Europe's project was approved by the European Commission, and hence started an excited year for the organisation.

BY BILYANA MIRCHEVA

Until now, ACES Europe had a great track record, managing to involve some 500 municipalities of all sizes in the work that it does throughout Europe and beyond. Since the first European Capital of Sport, Madrid, in 2001, the organisation has managed to become a recognised brand in the European Union and has grown exponentially year after year. Its participation in this call for proposals aimed to build on the work which had already been accomplished and to take one step further in ACES Europe's aim – to promote European values through sport initiatives at the municipal level.

The project that ACES Europe presented aimed to make the thus-far volunteer-based non-profit organisation more professional through several avenues, which would in turn help ACES Europe be in a better position to spread its message and promote European values through sport at the municipal level.

PROFESSIONALISATION

In order to professionalise the organisation, the secretariat team was expanded with the addition of three new full-time staff members, namely a Communications Manager, an Assistant to the Secretary General and an International and Public Relations Expert. With these new additions, the work



Motocross event in Mantova, European City of Sport 2019.



The network we have built also helps to connect past and current winners in their pursuit of more active citizens

of the organisation spread across and out of the continent and the task of involving new actors in ACES Europe's work became better distributed within the team. While the team was expanding, ACES Europe also took another step and moved offices to the newly established European House of Sport at Rue Joseph II, just a stone's throw away from the European Commission's Directorate General for Education, Youth, Sport and Culture. In these new premises, ACES' new team members have been working hard on the project. In order to achieve the goal of the call for proposals, ACES Europe's team was engaged from the get-go with coming up with an efficient strategy in order to attract more and new municipalities to participate in its main line of work, which is to evaluate and award European municipalities for their achievements and engagement in sports. Our work brings local and European levels together, encouraging even the most remote places in the Union to put themselves forward for a European title and to gain visibility at the European level thanks to the best practices they employ in the field of sports. Furthermore, due to the fact that ACES awards multiple cities and towns of different sizes every year, the network we have built also helps to connect past and current winners in their pursuit of more active citizens, better

infrastructure and cooperation in sharing best practices, participating in events and projects and much more. Thus, we help realize the values of the European Union at the local level, through creating one more field of opportunity for pan-European action and cooperation among partners which are not physically connected but are part of the EU.

LEGACY

The above being ACES' daily work, we also expanded our work on the promotion of European values at the municipal level through additional projects within the scope of the grant received by our organisation from the European Union. ACES agreed to sponsor some events in the award-winning cities to coincide with and promote further the European week of sport. The municipalities chosen to participate in this endeavour were Mantova in Italy, Paggiao in Greece, Varna in Bulgaria, Fuenlabrada in Spain, Torun in Poland, Dudelunge in Luxembourg, Sisak in Croatia, Drenthe in the Netherlands and Portimao in Portugal

ACES Europe also hosted its first event in its new premises – in June 2019, the organisation invited representatives from Sofia – European Capital of Sport 2018, Budapest – European Capital of Sport 2019, as well as from the competitors for the 2023 European Capital of Sport title, which at that

stage included Kriviy Rih in Ukraine, Glasgow in the United Kingdom and Genoa in Italy to either present their experiences of holding the title and the benefits it brought to their cities, or to present their bid file videos in the case of the 2023 contestants. The aim of the event was to popularise the project and to acquaint the audience with the positive aspects of municipal involvement in ACES Europe's projects – namely, more sports events, more citizen involvement, more investment opportunities and funds drawn to the sport sector, as well as a very positive legacy of continued work on the project of promoting sport 365 days per year.

MEETINGS AT NATIONAL LEVEL

Another new type of initiative we have started to promote European values at the municipal level and involve more municipalities in the ACES Europe project, are meetings with sport directors at a national level. Our Secretary General, Mr Hugo Alonso has visited Azerbaijan and explained at a meeting of all municipal sports directors in the country the ways ACES Europe and our awards work. Through such meetings, ACES Europe has been able to raise awareness about our work and its benefits directly to those who would experience the positives from being involved in it. Employing more staff members, moving to new premises, and working harder and on more projects in order to promote its work, ACES Europe has employed European funds to improve its work, thus directly contributing to the aim of promoting European values at the municipal level through the awarding of municipalities with high involvement in the field of sport. ★

ACES' work brings local and European levels together, encouraging even the most remote places in the Union to put themselves forward for a European title

MÁLAGA 2020

A great outdoor gym next to seaside and mountains

Malaga is ready for an exciting 2020. Illusion, investment, awareness, institutional commitment and a true outdoor gym that looks forward to the initial whistle of its most important match.

BY JESÚS HEREDIA

Culture and sports are two of the main axes of political action promoted by the City of Málaga. And the efforts have turned 2020 into a magical year because important events take place at the same time. "We are working to make the city shine and to involve everybody in this exciting challenge. We not only aspire to finish infrastructures and public facilities, but also promote sport as a healthy way of life. In fact, we want to get 50% of the population to play sports after 2020", says Noelia Losada, the city councilor of Sports and Culture. "There is no place like Málaga to lead a healthy lifestyle.

In fact, we are repeating history but this time we want to make it bigger: the city, a century ago, hosted winter sports games that attracted people from all over the country. Now, we want the whole world to know that

there is no place like Málaga to practice outdoors sports all year round, and, not less important, we want people from the city to acknowledge how lucky they are to have these advantages", insists Losada.



Málaga's city councilor of Sports and Culture, Noelia Losada.





Noelia Losada and her team, working hard to organize and bring competitions to Málaga for the whole year.

SELF-ESTEEM

2020 is the perfect year to give a definitive boost to the self-esteem of one of the Spanish cities that has almost completed the greatest urban transformation in the last decade and a half. Málaga is fashionable, trendy and cool right now and is increasingly the place chosen to hold important events like the huge Gala of the Goya Awards, the most important in Spanish movie scene with 3.000 people expected at the Martín Carpena Sports Hall. The event will take place at the end of January, just two months before the Cinema

Festival, a true reference in the country and Latin America after 22 successful editions. The Gala of Max Awards, the great party for the Spanish Drama scene, in June, is another golden date in this amazing schedule just when our public Theater, Cervantes, celebrates its 150 anniversary. A great occasion to remind the city of one of its most brilliant pages of its history, the XIX century, when businessmen like the Larios family made Málaga an exporting and industrious hub. "2020 must relaunch sports activity in our city from a multidisciplinary approach

"2020 must relaunch sports activity in our city from a multidisciplinary approach that brings together health, leisure, education or economy"

Noelia Losada, Málaga city councilor of Sports and Culture





that brings together health, leisure, education or economy. The first budgets in this new period incorporate 3,5 million

euros for sports activities and infrastructure and Sports Area is working in raising the amount for next year", explains Losada, who wants to take advantage of the environmental and weather conditions to promote healthy habits.

Paths in parks and mountains that configure the ring of the city, open sea swimming spaces, great work-out areas (fixed bars, weights and other equipment) to practice crossfit and similar, running circuits and, of course, giving a serious impulse to bike lanes are some politics that the City has set as objectives in an early future. Malaga city has two of the greatest golf courses of the coast, Parador and Guadalhorce, and the city council also wants to make sure that golfers around Europe know about the pleasures of hitting the ball when courses at their countries are usually covered by snow.



SPORTS AND CULTURE

But Malaga is also preparing for 2020 by opening new gyms and public indoor pools, finishing pavilions for handball, basketball or rolling... At the same time, the team of Sports Area is working hard to organize and bring competitions for the whole year. They have already got the final rounds of The King's Cup of basketball; an important congress about sports and elder people; an open of open sea rowing;

matches of World Paddle Tour; the Spanish Championship amateur; karate competitions; boxing; swimming; orienteering; yachting; competitions for people with special needs... The list is never ending and it's not closed yet because the authorities want the final of the Queen's Cup of female football. All the menu and details will be known in a special Gala in the first week of December, where Losada wants to bring together important people from the sports and culture world. Just a few days later, the streets of Málaga will host the Zurich Marathon that has recently 'hunged' the bronze medal of the IAAF. The city council wants to consolidate the marathon date as the perfect way for athletes all over Europe to finish their year, hopefully under the sun and next to the sea, with one of the greatest gastronomy offers to enjoy after the running. Losada believes that practicing sports and having a thriving cultural life is a win win combination to attract tourists that can enjoy a city where distances are much more comfortable than their daily commutes at



Málaga's Day of the Bicycle.

the big cities in Europe. But the focus is on Málaga's neighbors, the people that more and more are enjoying sports like open sea rowing and sailing, thanks in part to clubs that are among the oldest in Spain.

LANDSCAPE

Besides the sea, Losada also wants people to be conscious about our great landscape with the mountains. Once full of vineyards, the 'Montes', as they are called, can be the perfect scenery for a trail running so close to the city. It's possible to go for a great run up there, enjoy beautiful views and be able, afterwards, to have lunch tasting typical country dishes or to go back downtown, just a 20 minutes car ride, to have fish on the seaside.

"We want to get 50% of the population to play sports after 2020"

Noelia Losada, Málaga city councilor of Sports and Culture

But Málaga wants to be more ambitious and go further. That is why Noelia Losada promoted an institutional statement to support Andalusia in its attempt to be a European Sports Region in 2021. The head of the sport in Andalusia, Javier Imbroda, had announced

during this summer his intention for Andalusia to go for the challenge. According to Imbroda: "We must take advantage of the context and synergies presented by the Málaga project as the European Capital of Sport in 2020." In this way, the Andalusian Government seeks to consolidate the national and international prestige of Andalusia as one of the epicenters of sport in Europe and the label 'Masters of Sports'. In addition, the impact on media would add approximately 1.5 million euros.

Institutional efforts are proof that Málaga and Andalusia consider sports as a priority in public policies. In fact, public schools and institutes increase the hours dedicated to physical education. It is a strategic and health question that wants to tackle the obesity epidemic that threatens more and more countries. According to Losada, each euro invested in sport saves 50 euros in health spending. ★

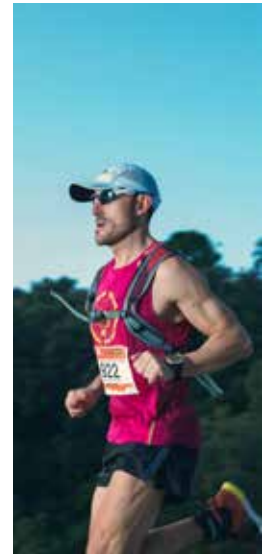
JESÚS HEREDIA IS PRESS OFFICER OF THE SPORTS COUNCILLOR MALAGA



The perfect outdoor gym.



Málaga, home of the Summer Female Basketball League



BUDAPEST 2019

Hungarian capital looks back on 7 highlights

Within the framework of the Budapest European Capital of Sport 2019 project, the Hungarian capital organized hundreds of sports programs. This report highlights 7 main events of the program series.

BY THE EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF SPORT – BUDAPEST PROJECT TEAM/FRANS OOSTERWIJK

1

NEW YEAR ICE SKATING CITY PARK ICE RINK

January 1, 2019



On the first day of the year, the Budapest – 2019 European Capital of Sport program series was officially opened/started. The success of the event is not proved better than the fact that the tickets have reached a record number: 3.886, which is an overwhelming amount in the history of the City Park Ice Rink. Thanks to the Union of Sports Associations of Budapest, the first thousand children under the age of 10 were free to attend the event. National ice hockey players also participated in the event and promoted the sport among young people.

2

SENIOR LIFESTYLE CHANGE EVENT

March 2, 2019



The main objective of the event was to promote the change of lifestyle of the elderly population with an adequate professional background. Thanks to the event, the seniors had the opportunity to find, select and learn the best sport, form of movement. The event was free for the target group. Within the framework of the event, they were able to participate in various free health assessments, dietetic and sport advisory services. Participants could choose from the following sports: yoga, senior gymnastics, senior zumba, dancing lessons, table tennis, bootball, lightweight badminton, swimming, nordic walking, chess, poker, bingo, etc.

3

WORKOUT COUNSELING

April 13 – June 8, 2019,
districts of Budapest



A free training series with eighteen stations and personalized training advices was launched in the framework of the Budapest European Sport Capital season. Until June 8th, every Saturday, at the same time, in two outdoor parks of two different districts of Budapest, organizers were waiting for people who were interested in the own weight training sessions. Participants were taught how to use the equipments found in the parks and had the opportunity to master this whole body exercising sport with the help of professional coaches.

4

OUTDOOR SPINNING
RECORD SETTING
EXPERIMENT

May 11, 2019, Várkert Bazaar



A new Hungarian summit was born. The spinning record of the Budapest 2019 European Capital of Sport program series was successfully concluded on May 11 at the event held in front of the Castle Garden Bazaar. Thanks to more than a 1000 active cyclists, with whom they have set up the domestic record of the most spinning workouts at the same time in the same place. This performance was certified by the Hungarian Record Association and added to the Hungarian records. For the record attempt, the organizers set up 200 Spinner® bikes, where they held 50-minute training sessions with 200 participants five times in a row. The record experiment was accompanied by spectacular charity action and followed by about 1000 people.

5

FAMILY
SPORTS DAYMay 25, 2019, Margareth
Island

Nearly thirty thousand people were active on the Family Sports Day of Budapest European Capital of Sport, Saturday - May 25th. At this event, more than one hundred of their own athletes from fifteen metropolitan federations/associations helped those who were interested to take the first steps and get to know the most diverse forms of movements/sport. The focus of the event was on families, and the programs also inspired visitors to try out different sports together in mixed generations. More than fifty kind of sporting opportunities were awaiting visitors to the Margaret Island, where any form of movement was free to choose from rowing, climbing, martial arts, ball games, yoga or fencing.

6

YOGA AT CITADEL
FROM DUSK
TILL DAWN

August 10, 2019, Citadel



The August rush did not stop yoga lovers from enjoying their favorite sport outdoors in one of the most beautiful locations in the capital. Nearly 1,500 people attended and actively participated in the Yoga at the Citadel from Dusk till Dawn, organized as part of the Budapest 2019 European Capital of Sport program series, where everyone could get a closer look at the myriad trends in this exercise method. The free programs on Saturday afternoon began with a welcome speech by Ankita Sood, Indian Ambassador to Yoga, who highlighted in her speech that yoga is such a special form of movement (sport) which, due to its religious and philosophical background, develops man not only physically but also mentally. As part of the event, eighty people could practice yoga together at the same time, in hourly shifts at the venue, with workshops held by prominent practitioners of yoga.

7

GET IN SHAPE! - OUTDOOR
TRAININGS IN FITNESS PARKSSeptember 11 - October 2,
2019, districts of Budapest

In the framework of the Budapest 2019 European Capital of Sport season, between September 11 and October 2, the Metropolitan Municipality hosted joint training sessions for training and lifestyle counseling, with experts from the University of Physical Education and the National Association of Hungarian Dietitians, in seven different outdoor fitness parks of different districts of Budapest. At this free events on Wednesdays and Saturdays, participants first received a thorough physical fitness survey, after that they could join in a special circuit training, with the assistance and supervision of a highly trained coaching team. Each participant also had access to personal counseling, which provided them with useful insights into what changes they might have to do/make to their lifestyle to improve quality of life and how to incorporate sports into their daily lives. ★

Nearly 1,500 people
attended and actively participated
in the yoga event at the Citadel



THE SOFIA 2018 LEGACY

Increase of active people from 150.000 per annum to nearly 1.000.000

September and October were the most active and dynamic months in the sports program of 'Sofia – European capital of sport' Foundation. Among lots of activities we can highlight three key events which are seriously pushing the European Capital of Sport 2018 to develop even more in the field of sports.

BY DAMYAN DIKOV

Close attention should be paid on the first edition of *Sofia Urban Sport Zone*. This multisport and multinational event was held from 15th to 22nd September, co-funded by program Erasmus+ by the

European Union. For the first time in Bulgaria, the new, modern and among youngsters so popular urban disciplines had their own festival. With strong organization, logistics and management, the citizens



and guests of Sofia were able to see great combination between sport, social commitment and demonstration of the new urban culture among young people. A great way for the groups of 12 different countries to show willingness to participate in popular and modern disciplines. When we talk about those kind of activities, it is important to notice the huge role of the municipality and 'Sofia – European capital of sport' Foundation, by stimulating the community to a more active way of life and give a great example of attracting more people in the big cities to



participate in a not just sports, but social oriented event.

In *Sofia Urban Sport Zone* local and foreign federations, sports institutions, universities and clubs from different cities of

For the first time in Bulgaria, the new, modern and so popular urban disciplines had their own festival





The new urban disciplines are developing fast and get their global attention

Europe took part. Activities and competitions were held in 24 urban disciplines and in most of them spectators had the chance to give it a try themselves.

The city welcomed 337 foreign athletes and also were included more than 500 local ones. But the guests of the event were engaged not just with competitions. The program included a film festival, culture and touristic parts and an international conference on the topic *The new urban disciplines – development, trends and future* with 12 lectures – 8 of them from different countries. Among all there was an entertainment part on the stage of the event during the whole week – concerts, DJ parties, hip-hop, dance and a lot of urban culture.

IMPLEMENTATION IN NATIONAL, WORLD AND OLYMPIC TOURNAMENTS

Sofia Urban Sport Zone offered activities in the most popular urban sports and disciplines like: street dance, hip-hop dance, arm wrestling, mini football, 3x3 basketball, folklore dance, taekwon-do, parkour, free run, climbing, joga, sports orienteering, stunt, bungee jumping, zipline, airbag jumping, skateboard, longboard, roller blade, karate, acrobatics etc.

The new urban disciplines are developing fast and get their global attention, especially among young people and that is the reason why many international sport institutions started to implement this new activities in national, world

and Olympic tournaments. For example, during the summer Olympic games in Rio de Janeiro in 2016 some of them took part in the program – BMX, trampoline jumping and mountain bike. And some of the 5 new disciplines planned for the games in Tokyo 2020 are also urban – skateboard and sports climbing.

NDK 360 IS ALREADY INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF URBAN SPORTS

Just a week after *Sofia Urban Sport Zone*, citizens and guest of Sofia were able to enjoy the second edition of another urban event: *NDK 360 – European night of sport*. NDK is the national palace of culture in Sofia and it is an emblematic building in the center of the city. This event unites all sports disciplines which are able to integrate inside, outside, under and above the building like – sports climbing on the

facade, sports orienteering in the corridors, flying with balloon and bungee jumping above the top of the building, street fitness etc. Also 20 more accompanying sports activities were offered to the audience.

ATTRACTIVE NEW COURSE FOR WIZZ AIR SOFIA MARATHON 2019

Almost 6000 athletes from 52 countries took part in the updated Wizz Air Sofia Marathon 2019 on October 13th. From this year the organizers of the event offer brand new attractive course of the marathon which promotes the city in a new and successful way. Participants were able to run in central parts of the city, enjoying the beautiful and historical part of Sofia and also the widest and greenest boulevards and avenues. Athletes could choose between several distances – marathon (42.195km), half marathon

A great example of attracting more people in the big cities to participate in a not just sports, but social oriented event

(21.098 km), 10 km and mass distance of 3km (FunRun).

Traditionally, the most emblematic sport event for the capital of Bulgaria was under the auspices of 'Sofia – European capital of sport' Foundation. ★

DAMYAN DIKOV IS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE 'SOFIA – EUROPEAN CAPITAL OF SPORT' FOUNDATION.



THE HAGUE IS WORKING TOWARDS 2022

It's just two years till The Hague takes on its role as European Capital of Sport 2022. Behind the scenes, everyone is working hard in The Hague to make it an amazing sporting year and use the title to encourage residents of The Hague to get involved in sporting activities.

There is great power in sport and exercise. And The Hague knows it. Sport and exercise contribute to social engagement and have positive effects on health, personal development and the connection between residents. Sport also helps create a lively and attractive city. That's why The Hague and many partners are working intensively together to support sport and exercise in the city. The Hague is therefore aiming to ensure that all its residents engage in sport or exercise on a regular basis by 2030. Every resident of The Hague must be able to take part: young and old, with and without an impairment, whatever their origin. For one person, that might mean getting more involved in sport while another might prefer moderate exercise. In 2022, we want to reinforce this ambition.

The Hague will do so by organising great sports events between 2020 and 2022 for all its residents. Next to the many yearly sporting events, the World Sailing Championships and the Ocean Race are on the agenda for 2022. Also in 2020 and 2021 many events will take place in The Hague. Director of Sport in the municipality, Hanneke van de Marel: "Around the time





of the Olympic Games in Tokyo 2020, in the city we will be celebrating this with the Olympic Festival. Then in 2020 we have the Invictus Games, an international sports event to inspire recovery, support rehabilitation and generate a wider understanding and respect for wounded, injured and sick Servicemen and women. And in 2020 also the Special Olympics are being held, the biggest multi-sports event

The Hague is aiming to ensure that all its residents engage in sport or exercise on a regular basis by 2030



for people with a mental impairment in the Netherlands.”

In 2020-2022, The Hague will be doing even more to encourage people who do little or no sports to get exercising. Over the coming years, the focus will be on The Hague city district Escamp. This city district has the most and best sports facilities in the city, including Zuiderpark Sports



Campus, skating rink De Uithof and the many playgrounds and sports complexes in the various neighbourhoods. But its 70,000 residents exercise less regularly than their fellow city residents. There are also many problems relating to unemployment, obesity and isolation and there is little social cohesion. An ambitious programme aims to change this by using the power of sport and exercise. This will turn Escamp into 'Haags Sportkwartier' (The Hague Sports Quarter). The programme uses the available sports facilities and the more than 1,000 students at Zuiderpark Sports Campus, who will think up and implement new contemporary ways to get people exercising. ★

Every resident of The Hague must be able to take part: young and old, with and without an impairment, whatever their origin



ROVANIEMI 2020

Physical activity and sports have strong significance for the Finnish city of Rovaniemi. They reflect the activity and well-being of the community. Rovaniemi wants to promote an active lifestyle and to see the opportunities for physical activity and sports as a clear part of the urban environment. The municipality acknowledges the synergy benefits of sports and wellness tourism as a key part of its development, and is certain that the city, as well as the education and research institutes, the sport clubs and the sports businesses in the area, will greatly benefit from the award.

BY FRANS OOSTERWIJK



The city of Rovaniemi considers the well-being of its residents in a comfortable living environment as an important goal. This goal can be found in many municipal strategies and programmes. The number of sports facilities is uniquely comprehensive in relation to the local population of 62.447 inhabitants (which makes Rovaniemi the 16th most populous city in Finland). The city counts more than 100 sportclubs (which in total have a respectable 18.000 members) and according to the national sports facility database (LIPAS) there are about 600 different sports facilities in the Rovaniemi area. The most popular sports are football, ski sports, ice hockey, golf and floorball. In addition to the built environment, nature also creates a lot of opportunities for exercise and outdoor activities. Winters are not too cold in Rovaniemi and make it possible to enjoy fantastic and diverse activities in the snow. And summers are not too hot. During the midsummer there is even 24/7 daylight, which means night-time visibility!

THE MAKING, STORING AND DELIVERING OF SNOW

Rovaniemi, capital of Finnish Lapland, is located on the Arctic Circle and has been declared, in 1985, the official hometown of Santa Claus. The city is one of the country's leading international tourist destinations. The main attractions are the Arctic Circle, Santa Claus, Santa Claus Village, Santapark and a vast amount of skiing, snowboarding stadium and biathlon facilities. In Finland, municipalities must design the everyday environments, sports facilities

The capital of
Finnish Lapland
is located on the
Arctic Circle and the
official hometown
of Santa Claus



and other services for all residents. Top level sport maybe the most visible part of the physical activity continuum, but most of the resources must be targeted to health enhancing actions. The 5 most important challenges for 2020, as seen by the municipality of Rovaniemi, are:

- create better opportunities (in- and outdoor) for physical activities and sports;
- improve the co-operation in the business sector: tourism, sports events, topsports, fitness sports;
- improve the co-operation with sports clubs;
- the development of a wintersport centre;
- Last but not least: the development of an economical, efficient and ecological process of making, storing and delivering of snow! ★

EUROPEAN CITY OF SPORT

MILTON KEYNES 2020



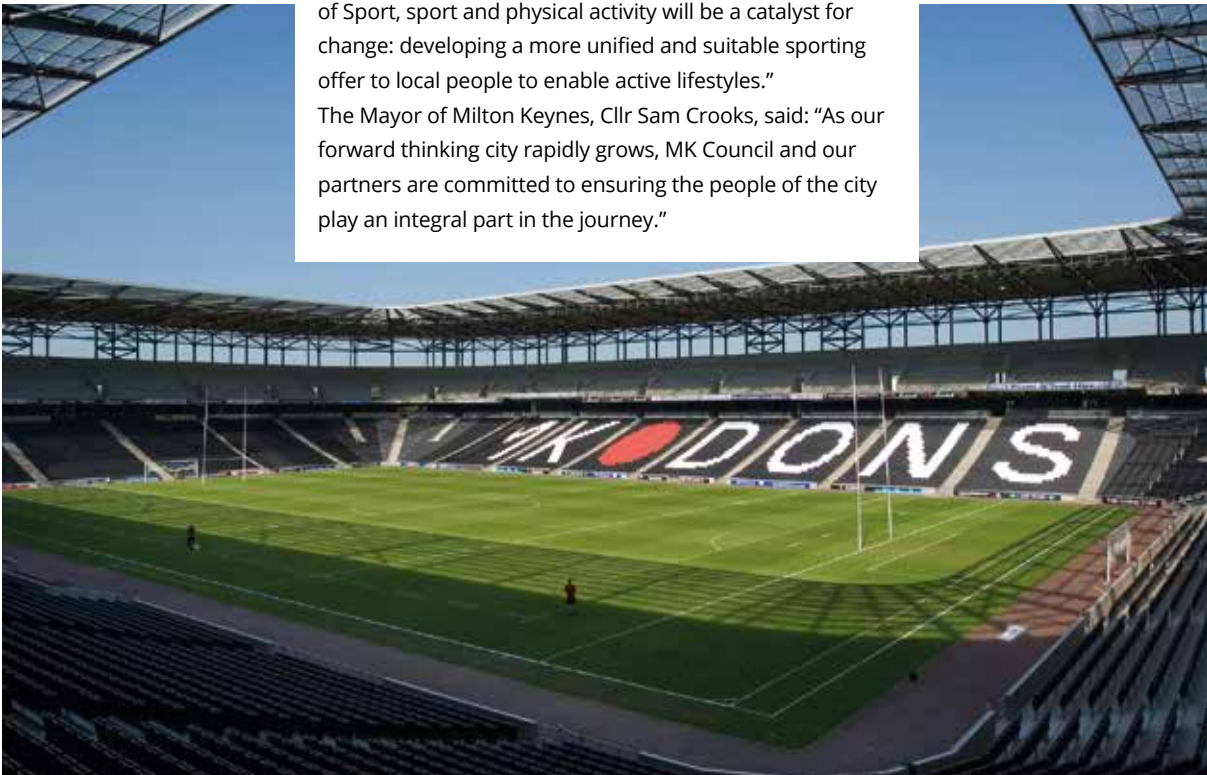
Commitment to a long-term sporting legacy

Milton Keynes is one of the most innovative, forward thinking and fastest growing places in the UK. With a current population of 280,000, MK is planning to be the home of 500,000 by 2050. Sport and physical activity play an integral role in the fabric of the city, and Milton Keynes Council (MKC), with their partners, will use the European City of Sport status to support its long-term sporting and cultural ambitions.

BY VICKI CLARK & HARRY WILMIN (SPORTS DEVELOPMENT MILTON KEYNES)

“We’re so excited to have been named European City of Sport for 2020”, said Cllr Jenny Marklew, MK Council’s Cabinet Member for Sport. “It recognises Milton Keynes’ sporting excellence, the great commitment of our local clubs and athletes, and our ambition to involve more people in sport and activity. Through designation as a City of Sport, sport and physical activity will be a catalyst for change: developing a more unified and suitable sporting offer to local people to enable active lifestyles.”

The Mayor of Milton Keynes, Cllr Sam Crooks, said: “As our forward thinking city rapidly grows, MK Council and our partners are committed to ensuring the people of the city play an integral part in the journey.”



Stadium MK, limitless potential for sports, leisure and culture.



The spectacular Red Bull Home Run.

INFRASTRUCTURE

In MK you are never more than 800m from a park; it hosts a vast range of sporting clubs, facilities, and major venues; and they have one of the most extensive off-road walking and cycling 'Redway' networks in the UK.

Stadium MK is a 30,500 seated international sporting and cultural venue, which opened in 2007 and is the home of professional football club MK Dons FC. Stadium MK has limitless potential – it's hosted the 2015 Rugby World Cup and is a venue for the UEFA Women's Euros 2021, as well as sell-out music concerts for global stars.

Milton Keynes is the number one choice for many leading sporting organisations in which to base their headquarters. The record-breaking Aston Martin Red Bull Racing Formula One is based in the city, as is Badminton England and Table Tennis England. All three organisations boast unrivalled success stories and a host of medals; further boosting MK's sporting credentials.

PEOPLE

Local sports clubs, of which there are many, have developed world class athletes from Milton Keynes. Olympic Gold winner at London 2012, Greg Rutherford is one of our own, as is English Rugby Union star Ed Slater. Jo Turney is one of

Europe's best young kart racers, and cyclist Ian Stannard has represented MK at the Tour de France.

MK's latest prodigies include England and Tottenham footballer Dele Alli, Disability Rhythmic Gymnast Janette Sharpe and English netball star Megan Thorne.

2020

Milton Keynes Council is working with its partners across the city to plan an exciting programme of sporting activities throughout 2020. Spanning all sectors and every community, Milton Keynes will make it a sporting year to remember.

The European City of Sport brand will be seen across the whole of MK, at businesses and in community groups – inspiring people to get physically active. MKC will champion our '20 in 20' campaign, encouraging people to get active and share their successes.

The year-long programme of sporting events will engage local sports groups at all levels, helping to boost civic pride. Current events lined up include: the MK Marathon; MK International Festival; National Cross Country; International football and ice hockey; Disability Sports Festival; Volunteer Celebration Day, as well as the opening of a brand new FA Football facility, and much more.

LEGACY

Milton Keynes will embrace European City of Sport 2020 as part of a long-term sporting legacy. We'll build closer alignment between sporting and cultural sectors, and create active partnerships with local businesses – which will all help to retain the momentum from 2020. And as a host city for the UEFA Women's Euro in 2021, MK will continue to empower women with the power of sport and physical activity. ★

“Sport and physical activity will be a catalyst for change”

Councillor Jenny Marklew

THE GALA OF THE YEAR

December 10th, the Annual Gala of ACES in the European Parliament

ACES Europe will organize its Annual Gala in the European Parliament to officially assign the recognition of the European Capital/City/Town/Island of Sport.

On this special occasion, Budapest 2019 will as well handover the European Capital of Sport flag to Malaga 2020 in a big ceremony with the attendance of the new European Commissioner Mrs Mariya Gabriel. ★



Budapest will hand over the European Capital of Sport flag to Málaga.

Last year's ceremony in Brussels, when Budapest was assigned European Capital of Sport 2019.



European Capital of Sport 2020

- Malaga (ES)

European Cities of Sport 2020

- Odivelas (PT)
- Milton Keynes (UK)
- Cosenza (IT)
- Grottaglie (IT)
- Piombino (IT)
- Cernusco Sul Naviglio (IT)
- Cakovec (HR)
- Bijeljina (BOS)
- Trnava (SK)
- Pazardzhik (BG)
- Smallerland (NL)
- Rovaniemi (FIN)
- Miramas (FR)
- Kryvyi Rih (UKR)
- Limassol (CY)

Euro-Mediterranean City of Sport 2020

- Dakhla (MA)

European Towns of Sport 2020

- Eгна Neumarc (IT)
- Chiusi (IT)
- Montegrotto T. (IT)
- Gozzano (IT)
- Kavarna (BG)
- Kuressaare (ES)
- Encamp (ANDORRA)
- Port-de-Bouc (FR)

European Island of Sport 2020

- Mali Lošinj (HR)

World Capital of Sport 2020

- Guadalajara (MEX) –

European Health and Sporty Company 2020

- ALSA (ES)

American Health and Sporty Company 2020

- Volkswagen Mexico

GLASGOW 2023

Changing lives through school sport, community sport and health sport

After evaluation visits to Glasgow and Genoa, the ACES Committee decided to assign Glasgow with the recognition of the European Capital of Sport 2023 and Genoa European Capital of Sport 2024. Glasgow is the first city that is declared twice as the European Capital of Sport in the history of ACES Europe. The first time for the Scottish city was in 2003.

BY FRANS OOSTERWIJK

The award recognizes Glasgow's efforts that have been made. Since 2003, more than 230 million euros have been spent on building and improving sporting facilities across the city. Moreover, 27 local centers give access to

68.498 club members, 323.000 citizens participate in free sport divisions. The city's vision is to make sports and physical activity a part of citizens' daily routine and sports to be an asset for local development.

A NEW CHAPTER

In the bidfile Glasgow explains how sport has transformed the city in the last twenty years. Being European Capital of Sport 2003 enabled Glasgow to win the Commonwealth Games 2014, World Gymnastics 2015



EUROPEAN CAPITALS OF SPORT

EUROPEAN CAPITALS OF SPORT

and European Championships 2018. More importantly: since 2003 sport has been woven into the city's fabric, its communities, institutions and attitude. With being European Capital of Sport again in 2023, Glasgow wants to underscore the beginning of a next chapter.

ENABLING POSITIVE AGEING

Since 2003, grassroots, voluntary and community sport have exploded across Glasgow, unleashing passion, opportunity and commitment, as the bidfile points out. "Over the next 20 years we want to integrate sport

Glasgow highlights since 2003

- *Leveraging more than 230 million euros of new world-class sporting events infrastructure;*
- *Around 10,000 people now employed in the sports sector and as Gros Value Added (GVA) contribution of more than 400 million euros;*
- *Hosting countless major sporting events;*
- *Achieved and retained a Top Five Global Sports City ranking.*

and physical activity solutions across communities, health and social care. Many of the challenges we will face transcend

medical solutions. They relate to an ageing population, poor mental health and social isolation. The potential of community sport and physical activity to enable positive ageing, build wellbeing, meaning and connection, is enormous."

PERSONALISED CARE AND COMMUNITY-BUILDING

By 2040 Glasgow wants sport and physical activity to be a routine part of giving everyone a sense of control over their lives, connection to the neighbourhood and trust in the people around. In that year, as the bidfile claims, "Glasgow's public services will be the most innovative, preventative and outcome-focused in the world." Health, social care, education and sport approaches will have merged into personalised care and community-building. "In 2040, Glasgow will be recognised across the world as the city which finally eradicated the legacy of its past – poverty, inequality and ill-health." As the theme of the European Capital of Sport 2023 bid, the city chose: "Changing lives through school sport, community sport, health sport." ★



GENOA 2024

Active city for healthy lifestyles

In contrast to Glasgow, Genoa wants to use the award of European Capital of Sport 2024 mainly to increase the number of visitors and support the sports tourism economy, profiting from its ideal location between the Liguria Golf and 2000 meters high hills, the nice climate, beaches and broad availability of sports facilities. Investments will be made to improve facilities, build new structures and to attract at least one major (top) sporting event per year.

BY FRANS OOSTERWIJK



Genoa, capital of Liguria, is best known for its two football teams that are currently both in the Serie A: Genoa and Sampdoria. But the city is also famous for its swimming (notably in open water), rowing and sailing tradition, and is visited already by a lot of tourists who swim and snorkle in the sea or go out in a canoe, kayak or sailing

boat. The beautiful and unique surroundings of Genoa also attract many runners, bikers and hikers. In the city itself all kinds of facilities for sport and keeping fit can be found: swimming pools, gyms, football and rugby fields, baseball, athletics and tennis courts, of which the number is growing all the time. As mentioned in the bidfile: “The range of

sports facilities is of the god quality”. Which makes Genoa, with its unique combination of winter and summer sports, “the perfect destination for all sport fans”.

EXPAND SPORTSMANSHIP RATE

Of course the municipality of Genoa doesn't want to please only tourists. In the bidfile the city promises to do the maximum to help the 200 sportclubs in Genoa to fulfil their important sportive and social functions. With financial support of course, but also by encouraging people to become a volunteer. Genoa wants to expand the sportsmanship rate

of the population. Therefore it wants to make clubs and fitness and sports centres more accessible for reluctant groups, especially elderly and people with physical or mental disabilities, removing as many possible barriers to enter. And making true that way the slogan of the bid: “Active city for health lifestyles.”

TOPLEVEL SPORT

Because of its positive result for grassroots sports and the local economy, the municipality also wants to invest in toplevel sport, by attracting at least one major (top) sporting event per year. Organisers of such events are eligible for a subsidy, under the condition that they organize side-events for those who are not (top) athletes. Genoa also promises a broad range of measures, to promote – in cooperation with schools, clubs and social and care institutions – health and integration through sports in all social classes and neighbourhoods. As said in the bid: “Sport is not a miracle cure, but Genoa wishes to make use of the possibilities that exist.” ★

“Range of sports facilities in Genoa is of the good quality

HOUSE OF SPORT: HUB OF SPORTS ORGANISATIONS

The European Platform for Sport Innovation (EPSI) and The House of Sport unite and boost the sport sector at European Level.

EPSI www.epsi.eu is a membership based networking organisation that represent a great variety of stakeholders operating in the realm of sport from different European Member States. It focuses on innovation in many areas such as physical activity; education, leisure, tourism, sport events, health, technology, economy, transport and urban as well as urban planning

BY ALBERTO BICHI



The EPSI's family share a common goal to promote a better environment to enhance business and innovation in physical activity/sport across the European Union both in public and private environment. As such, it strives to further promote and strengthen collaborations and networking opportunities among organisations operating in the realm of physical activity throughout the entire sport value chain and its related sectors in order to ultimately boost business and project creation in the European sports ecosystem. Besides, this further maximises the role of physical activity/sport as a key actor in promoting further social and economic benefits for civil society across European Member States as well as health at large.

Accordingly, EPSI has created the House of Sport (HoS) back in 2015 in order to further share and coordinate strategic goals and future development for the whole sport sector at the municipal, local, regional, national and European level. In this respect, EPSI and the HoS are actively working towards an important aim and vision for the entire sport ecosystem and beyond which is to create a single hub so as to boost cooperation and projects / business opportunities among its key stakeholders in Europe.

The HoS is to become the "Home to Europe's Sports movement"



Today, the House of Sport (HoS) is the heart of the sport family in Brussels!

THE HOUSE OF SPORT

Today, the House of Sport (HoS) is the heart of the sport family in Brussels! Since March 2019, the HoS is in a bright and modern 300 m² office in 40 Rue Joseph II - Brussels, this is to be strategically located in the centre of the European Quarter. Indeed the HoS resides in the core of the European Union Sport Policy, between the European Parliament and the

European Commission DG EAC, as well as the Executive Agency dealing with all Erasmus+ programmes. Currently, the HoS is a consolidated and recognised reality renowned as the European HoS hub for a wide range of organisations/ business operating at the forefront of the sport ecosystem in Europe including ACES Europe (European Capitals and Cities of Sport Federation) and EurEthics Training Academy – which have their offices and activities within the HoS premises and has most recently become an EPSI member.

Within the HoS family there is a shared holistic and innovative approach in order to effectively and unanimously boost the sport sector across the European Member States. This is with the ultimate aim to promote and maximise collaboration so as to further promote the role of physical activity/ sport sector to boosting the socio-economic development across a wide range of business sector, as well as across the entire civil society.

OPERATIONS AND ACTIVITIES

The core objective of the HoS is to reunite all sport organisations scattered all over Europe that are willing to share resources, time and energy in the promotion of common goals in different fields such as : Lobbying / Project and Business creation. The HoS represents a hub of organisations which have understood the relevance of joining forces

in the promotion of the sport sector, and its spillover effects in order to ensure a strong and powerful voice at the European level. The HoS creates unique opportunity with its members / partners to embrace and share further knowledge on good practices, as well as promoting networking opportunities, projects and business creation among its members.

Besides, the HoS also plan common events in close collaboration with the European Institutions, national, regional as well as local public and private authorities. In this regard, EPSI being the backbone of the HoS, has recently organised the CO-INNOVATE IN SPORT Conference in July 2019 which aimed to explore innovations in relation to new technologies in the sports ecosystem and will organise its Brokerage event on January 29th 2020 in Brussels for the kick starting of new projects financed by some European programmes . The HoS members have the shared objective to joining forces with the aim of coordinating strategic goals and future development for the whole sport sector at the regional, national and European level.

FUTURE CHALLENGES

In the future, the HoS aims to continuously grow its network and activities, as well as the number of sport organisations which have their offices in the HoS premises. Accordingly, the HoS aspires to continue



to stimulate a cross-sectorial cooperation by including not only organisation operating in the sport sector but also those organisations operating in sport-related sectors such as education, leisure, tourism, events, health, technology, innovation and transportation. This is to have an ever-increasing powerful and unanimous voice to raise awareness on the benefits of sport and physical activity, as well as to promote and strengthen collaborations in the realm of sport in order

The House of Sport family aims to promote and maximise collaboration

to further boost synergies in the European sports ecosystem as well as within the other neighbouring sectors. The HoS aspires to remain at the forefront of the sport sector in Europe by embracing an holistic and innovative approach with an ever rising number of organisations and events joining the sport family. ★

ALBERTO BICHI IS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF EPSI AND HOUSE OF SPORTS

BE CONNECTED: BUILDING A NETWORK FOR SPORT CITIES

One of ACES projects this year was to build a network of awarded cities that aim to strengthen their collaboration. The network would give cities the opportunity to make their views known to ACES Europe and to voice their own opinions to EU policy makers in all the relevant European institutions.



Being members of the network, municipalities would also get exclusive invitations to workshops and events organized specifically for them by ACES Europe and get the opportunity to network with their peers who also participate in the network. Additionally, all those who opt to take part in the network would gain the right to continue using their title even after the year when they were awarded.

FORUM

A part of this initiative was the creation of an online platform in which local authorities have access to information about policy updates on a regular basis, as well as news about EU funding opportunities, upcoming and ongoing project proposals in the field of sport. The idea behind the forum is to create a virtual space for sports officials in municipalities, where topics of different nature will be discussed and best practices will be exchanged based on the interests of the participants themselves. In addition, a monthly newsletter is sent to our network with all the news and developments regarding the forum ★

ACES Europe unfolds a new plan: The Sport Academy

In parallel to the 'Be Connected'-project, ACES Europe decided to organise a Sports Academy. This is also aimed at municipal actors – the sports departments or any other interested entities within the municipal administrations.

The academy will aim to discuss topics of relevance to the participants in the format of a fully immersive multiple day event, where a knowledgeable team or single lector would engage with them in order to bring in new knowledge, help exchange ideas and best practices, and facilitate further on the European level the practices of cooperation among municipal actors from across the European Union and wider Europe.

Annual event

The expected outcome is a recurring annual event to bring together those interested and to thus strengthen ACES Europe's network and establish it as a value-added partner for municipalities outside of the scope of awarding them for good sports policies and practices.

PEOPLE FROM SPAIN DON'T PLAY ICE HOCKEY

The popularity of specific sports throughout Europe

Where you were born, does impact the sport you will play. People from Spain are far less likely to play ice hockey than people who were born in Sweden. Weather conditions are a big influence when it comes to the prevalence of sports in particular countries. Although it's almost impossible to measure how popular specific sports are around Europe, it's fair to state that football beats all other sports by a mile.

BY LEO AQUINA

Despite the fact that it's *mission impossible*, sports marketeer Ryan Parker, who works at Human Kinetics, an international information provider on physical activity and health, made an effort to list the popularity of sport in a great number of countries around Europe. He combined several sources, with Google Trends over the past five years as first point of reference.

"It's by far not a hundred percent guarantee", Parker says. "But I believe Google can give you a fairly accurate estimation. Apart from Google I used sources such as the Teneo Sport and Sponsorship Index (TSSI), which concluded that Gaelic Games (the Irish national sports gaelic football and hurling, which resort under the Gaelic Athletic Association) are the number one sport in the Republic of Ireland. That makes Ireland the only European country in Parker's survey, where football did not top the list.

CHABAL AND LIDSTRÖM

"After the top three football, tennis and golf, it really depends on location", Parker says. "In north-west Europe, rugby union would make the top three, but in the north-east ice hockey would be among the three most popular with gymnastics in the top five. In southern Europe, basketball and volleyball are more popular."

If former rugby star player Sébastien Chabal would not have been born in France but in Sweden, he might as well have become an ice hockey player. Would Swedish NHL-legend

Nicklas Lidström have been born in France, he might have been a rugby star. But, football being football, Cristiano Ronaldo would have been Cristiano Ronaldo all around Europe.

RUNNING AND CYCLING

Although probably one of the most practised physical activities throughout Europe, Parker excluded running from his research for practical reasons: "In Google many people search the keyword running for a variety of sports. Instead, athletics was considered but that did not make the top five of any list." Running might have come second on the European list of most popular sports and if we only consider the number of people who actively practise the sport – by the nature of his method Parker's research tends to focus more on the passive popularity of the sports – running might even be on top. Parker: "Unfortunately that's almost impossible to measure. Even if you could get hold of

Top three most popular sports in Europe:

1. Football
2. Tennis
3. Golf

all the individual membership numbers of the national sports federations throughout Europe, the number would be a shot in the dark. Most people who regularly run are not affiliated to any club or federation at all."

Cycling is hard to measure too. Parker did include the sport in his survey, but to his own surprise it did not make the top in any of the nations analysed. "Like running, many people ride a bike without being officially registered to a club or a federation. Still I would have thought that cycling had been in the top five in France, with the Tour de France being a very popular annual event." It's also hard to believe that the sport



Is tennis a big sport in Switzerland because of Roger Federer? Or is Roger Federer the result of tennis being a big sport in his native country?

does not come at least second to football in cycling-mad Belgium, with its popular yearly spring classic races. “Google may have fell short in accurate translations on this occasion”, Parker admits. Another possible omission is speed skating, which is immensely popular in the Netherlands but lacks on the list. “I’ve got to admit that I did not include speed skating in my research. I may have missed a couple of specific national peculiarities”, he says.

“After the top three football, tennis and golf, the popularity of a sport really depends on location”

Ryan Parker (*Human Kinetics*)



Regardless the regional differences, Cristiano Ronaldo would have been Cristiano Ronaldo all around Europe.

HISTORY AND CULTURE OR HAVING A SUPERSTAR?

In most analysis of the popularity of speed skating in the Netherlands, history and culture are mentioned as key factors. Many countries have their own specific sport interest or even their own specific national sport, like the Gaelic Games in Ireland. Apart from the weather, history and culture, television and media, having a global superstar correlates with the popularity of sports in countries. Whether having a superstar is the reason or the consequence of the sports' popularity, remains the question. Is tennis second after football in Switzerland because the success of Roger Federer? Or is Roger Federer the result of tennis being a big sport in his native country? Based on scientific sports research in the past one would think the latter is more probable.

Researching the beneficial effects of the London 2012 Olympic Games, professor Barry Houlihan of Loughborough University once stated that sport is not magic dust. Although people tend to think that watching top sports inspires individuals to go and exercise themselves, research time and again has proven that it's not automatically the case. Similar research investigating the effect of Olympic success in specific sports, has never found an instant automatic positive effect on the growth in participation in those specific sports. However, success in a sport can lead to an increased audience. The popularity of tennis in Switzerland may well be attributed to Roger Federer's ongoing dominance of international men's tennis. In the long run, this has an effect on the Swiss sporting culture and history, and therefore may eventually have a positive effect on the number of tennis players in Switzerland too. ★

Most popular sports in European countries (excluding football)

Country	Sport
Austria	tennis
Belarus	ice hockey
Belgium	tennis
Bosnia & Herzegovina	tennis
Bulgaria	tennis
Croatia	handball
Cyprus	basketball
Czech Republic	tennis
Denmark	handball
Finland	ice hockey
France	rugby union
Georgia	rugby union
Germany	handball
Greece	basketball
Hungary	handball
Italy	volleyball
Latvia	basketball
Lithuania	basketball
Malta	tennis
Moldova	tennis
Netherlands	golf
Norway	skiing
Poland	skiing
Portugal	tennis
Republic of Ireland	gaelic games
Romania	tennis
Russia	ice hockey
Serbia	tennis
Slovakia	tennis
Spain	basketball
Sweden	ice hockey
Switzerland	tennis
Turkey	basketball
Ukraine	tennis
United Kingdom	golf

ERASMUS+: 70 MILLION EUROS FOR SPORT IN 2020

Grants should increase levels of participation in sport, physical and voluntary activity

Sport is still a relatively new area for action at EU-level but it is rapidly growing in importance, as the 2020 annual work programme Erasmus+, the programme for Education, Training, Youth and Sport clearly shows. The annual EC-budget for sport will rise from 48.6 million euros in 2019 to 69.8 million in 2020.

BY FRANS OOSTERWIJK

The European Commission proposal for the Erasmus+ programme for Education, Training, Youth and Sport of 2020 has a total budget of 3.39 billion euros. The annual EC-budget for sport will rise from 48.6 million euros in 2019 to 69.8 million euros in 2020.

GOALS

The activities in the field of sport aim to help develop the European dimension in sport by generating, sharing and spreading experiences and knowledge concerning sport. Ultimately, projects and activities supported through Erasmus+ should lead to increased levels of participation in sport, physical activity and voluntary activity. More specifically they will aim at:

- Increased participation of Europeans in sport and physical activity;
- Increased knowledge and awareness regarding sport and physical activity;
- Increased awareness of the

role of sport and physical activity in contributing to social inclusion, equal opportunities, well-being and health;

- Strengthened cooperation between institutions and organisations in the field of sport and physical activity;
- Increased participation of individuals, public authorities, sport organisations and other relevant organisations in sport and physical activity initiatives;
- Improved sharing of good practices between the above actors;
- Increase participation of harder-to-reach individuals in sport and physical activity.

GRANTS

The 70 million euros for these goals are available by grants. In all partner-countries, organisations can apply for financial support for projects and activities that encourage people to a healthy lifestyle and participation in sport and physical activity; promote

In all partner-countries, organisations can apply for financial support for projects and activities that encourage people to a healthy lifestyle and participation in sport

voluntary activity in sport, combat doping, match-fixing, violence, racism, discrimination and intolerance, improve good governance in sport and encourage social inclusion and equal opportunities in sport, including access to sport of people with disabilities. The

maximum EU co-financing rate for those projects and activities will be 80%; the total budget is 42.587.779 euros.

An extra 10 million euros are available for innovative projects encouraging social inclusion and equal opportunities in sport; promoting European traditional sports and games; supporting the mobility of volunteers, coaches, referees, managers and staff at non-profit sport organisations; protecting athletes, especially the youngest, from health and safety hazards by improving training and competition conditions.

A extra 5 million euros are granted to (organisers of) not-for-profit sport events, to support volunteering, social inclusion and gender equality during the event, and implementation of the European





PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK

Week of Sport. The grant can be used for the preparation and organisation of the event, educational activities for athletes, coaches, organisers and volunteers in the run-up to or during the events, and the organising of side-events.

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

Then there are the grants for best ideas and proposals, in different categories. Within the framework of the European Week of Sport, there are grants for the organisation of national activities that cover awareness-raising and communication activities on the value of sport and physical activity or promote

synergies between the field of sport and the fields of health, education, training and youth through conferences, seminars, meetings. Those activities can be organised by clubs, federations and associations, but have to be coordinated by a national coordinating body. The maximum EU co-financing rate will be 80%, the total budget available is 7.000.000 euros.

Another 600.000 euros are available for cooperation with international organisations with highly recognised expertise (like for instance the World Health Organization), to add value of evidence-based policies in the field of sport. The cooperation

has to cover particular fields such as enhancing health by sport, the fight against doping, match-fixing, violence, racism and discrimination and the promotion of gender equality.

ADDED VALUE

Good knowledge, information and evidence on social, economic and governance-related aspects of sport and physical activity are a prerequisite for effective policy making in these fields. Added value can be achieved by encouraging data collection and evidence reinforcement, spreading good practices from programme countries and sport organisations and by reinforcing networks at EU level. The EU holds 500.000 euros available for studies and services to networks and for surveys and data gathering, aiming at strengthening the evidence base for policy making. Another 2.200.000 euros will be available for the organisation of the annual EU Sport Forum and other congresses, meetings, seminars, events and communication activities that strengthen the development of the European Week of Sport

and the dialogue with sport stakeholders.

AWARDS

Finally, the EC holds a budget of 45.000 euros for the #BeInclusive EU Sport Awards (for organisations or public authorities which have successfully developed a sport project aimed at social inclusion) and another 45.000 euros for the #BeActive Awards (for the most innovative practices to promote physical activity in 3 categories: education, the workplace and local communities) Those projects have to be presented by National Coordinating Bodies or Partners of the European Week of Sport. ★

An extra 10 million euros are available for innovative projects encouraging social inclusion and equal opportunities in sport

SPORTS AND ENVIRONMENT

The role of physical activity and sports in building a sustainable future

Physical activity and sports not only enhance one's health and quality of life, but can also play an important role in the need for environmental protection and a sustainable future for us all.

BY ROMANOS ANTONOPOULOS

Can you imagine your daily life without driving so often? It may sound hard, given our fast-paced lifestyles, but a car doesn't necessarily make our lives easy. In order to avoid dealing with traffic jams and limited parking space, walking, using public transport, or cycling to get around can be better options for people living in large urban areas. The health benefits deriving from walking and cycling as well as the reduction of your vehicle's costs add up to benefits related to the environment; fewer cars on the road mean less CO2 emissions.

According to the European Environment Agency (2019), passenger cars are a major polluter, accounting for 60.7% of total CO2 emissions from road transport in Europe. Moreover, the EU is facing increasing levels of urbanisation, which are expected to increase from today's 75% to 83.7% in 2050.

The above mentioned predictions prove that there is no time to be wasted, while they make even more urgent the need to find innovative and sustainable solutions in urban spaces. In 60s and 70s, when European cities were designed in their current form, the aim was to adapt them to cars. In the last decades, creating more people-oriented spaces has been a priority for cities through diverse actions, such as improvement of cycling and shared mobility, reshaping of streets, creation of green areas and promotion of conviviality.

ACTIVE LIFESTYLE AS PILLAR OF SUSTAINABILITY

Several countries dealing with increasing urbanisation levels have started placing the concept of an active lifestyle in an inclusive, sustainable city in the center of their agendas. What is more, physical activity can have an important role in the implementation of UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that have been presented in the 2030 Sustainability Agenda. Concretely, sport can

contribute to "the realization of development and peace in its promotion of tolerance and respect and the contributions it makes to the empowerment of women and of young people, individuals and communities as well as to health, education and social inclusion objectives" (2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development A/RES/70/1, paragraph 37). Moreover, the contribution of sport to the environment is demonstrated in the 11th SDG which promotes the creation of inclusive and sustainable cities, emphasising on the improvement of air quality, the increase of green areas in urban centers,

citizens' social inclusion, along with the mitigation of climate change.

GREEN CITIES

Copenhagen, capital of Denmark, focusses heavily on physical activity and green policies, aiming to be the first carbon-neutral capital in the world by 2025. Having already reduced 50% its CO2 emissions during the last 20 years, the city has achieved remarkable results in active mobility. Concretely, 50% of city-centre trips are made by bike and 96% of citizens are able to walk to parks or beaches in less than

The need to find innovative and sustainable solutions in urban spaces is urgent



The Scheveningen marina has been awarded with the Blue Flag certificate for for the third year in a row.

15 minutes. Strongly inter-related to its green and health policies, Copenhagen is on the top of UN's Happiness and Health index.

The Hague is another example of a city adopting green policies. Rising sea levels and other threats are the challenge that is high on the agenda of The Netherlands as a whole. In this commitment, The Hague, international capital for Global Justice with its unique location on the coastline, leads the way. The city strives to be climate-neutral in 2030, which is 10 years ahead of the national goal. Many hotels in the city hold the international Green Key certificate, an eco label that is assigned to hotels. It serves as a recognition for sustainable operations and observance to strict environmental regulations. The engagement of The

Hague with sustainability also resulted in the Kijkduin resort, Scheveningen beaches and the marina being awarded with the Blue Flag certificate for clean beaches and marinas for the third year in a row. On top of that, The Hague has more solar panel installations than any other city in The Netherlands!

Vienna too has to be considered among the most qualitative and sustainable cities to live in. With its dynamic Urban Mobility Plan 2025, Vienna has been mainly focusing on the areas of eco-friendliness, efficiency and health. To achieve its objectives, the capital of Austria has been taking measures to promote shared mobility, organise transport in a smart and efficient way as well as increase the space for pedestrians and cyclists. Notably, more than

The Hague has more solar panel installations than any other city in The Netherlands


87% of the children in the age from 6 to 14 years prefer to walk, use bicycles or travel on public transport in their daily lives.

SPORTS AS A MEANS OF EDUCATION

Integrating physical education and physical activity in urban areas will help meeting UN SDGs, while bringing several benefits to the community. Local sport activities in the cities can be a perfect opportunity to improve social policies,

redesign infrastructures and renew transports. Furthermore, sport events, the big ones as well as the smaller ones, can generate raising-awareness campaigns about responsible consumer behaviour (e.g. recycling), sustainable tourism and environment-related issues. ★

ROMANOS ANTONOPOULOS IS COMMUNICATION MANAGER ACES EUROPE.



CALCULATING THE SOCIAL BENEFITS OF SPORT

Getting better insight in investments in sport and their outcome

Sports and exercise increase health and happiness. Although there is growing evidence that sport can create social benefits, a suitable method to measure how much value it exactly adds was lacking. How do we know whether the added value outweighs the investments? In the UK and in the Netherlands researchers came up with a method and with figures.

BY LEO AQUINA

In 2016, the Sheffield Hallam University Sport Industry Research Centre published the report *Social Return on Investment in Sport: A participation wide model for England*. Following this example, the Dutch Kenniscentrum Sport (Knowledge Centre for sports Netherlands) asked two specialised institutes – Rebel and the Mulier Institute – to calculate the so-called social return on investment (SROI) of sports and exercise in the Netherlands.

The researchers from Sheffield Hallam found an SROI of 1.91 in the United Kingdom, which was calculated by dividing the value of outcomes (£44.75 billion) by the value of inputs (£23.46 billion). The associates of Kenniscentrum Sport found an estimated SROI of 2.51 in the Netherlands. The total costs amount to 4.4 billion euros while the revenues were calculated to be 11.1 billion euros.

STAKEHOLDERS AND HEALTH OUTCOMES

There are two types of SROI: evaluative and forecast. The Sheffield Hallam researchers chose for the first. The research was conducted retrospectively and based on actual outcomes that have taken place. At first the researchers identified stakeholders, which include relevant government departments and government-funded agencies, local



Sports and exercise increase health and happiness. But at what costs?

In the UK, for every £1 invested in sport in 2013/2014, £1.91 worth of overall social impact was generated

authorities, secondary schools and universities, commercial sport providers, voluntary clubs, sports participants and sports volunteers. The values of sport's impact were estimated in improving six health outcomes: reducing criminal incidences, improving educational attainment and the return from higher education (enhanced value of human capital), volunteering, and improving subjective wellbeing.

CALCULATING THE VALUE

The SROI value in the British report is calculated by dividing the value of outcomes by the value of inputs. Inputs are those things that stakeholders contribute in order to make activities possible. The inputs to the sports industry are primarily money (financial) and time (non-financial). Total inputs to sport in 2013/2014 are calculated to be £23.46 billion.

Outcomes in the Sheffield Hallam research were identified through a systematic review of literature and consulting academic experts in the field of health, crime, education and social capital. The six health outcomes were identified as having a strong relationship with sports participation for a total amount of £44.75 billion. This means that for every £1 invested in sport in 2013/2014, £1.91 worth of overall social impact was generated.

DIFFERENCES AND SIMILARITIES BETWEEN BRITISH AND DUTCH APPROACH

The Dutch approach was similar to the British, with a couple of differences, says Karin van der Maat from Kenniscentrum Sport: “For the input we used similar stakeholders, but they have included voluntary work and we did not. In outcomes we partly looked at a different type of benefits, for instance excluding subjective wellbeing and including quality of life, which was derived from a previous study by research and consultancy firm Ecorys.” In that study, comparable to the UK-study, the focus was on benefits that arise when someone regularly does exercise, compared to little or no exercise. In order to subsequently translate that into an entire population, the SROI study used the so-called Dutch ‘exercise guideline’, that has been applied since 2017. For everyone in the Netherlands

who complies with the exercise guideline, social benefits have been calculated. To keep the right balance between costs and revenues, the study also only includes the costs of which can be stated that they are directly related to (facilitating people to) exercise.

TOTAL COSTS AND REVENUES

The Social Return On Investment reflects the social costs and benefits that are related to people who exercise. In the Netherlands (17.3 million inhabitants) the total costs are more than 4.4 billion euros. This is the sum of all costs incurred by the national government, the national Olympic Committee and the Sports Federations (NOC*NSF), municipalities, companies and the sporting and physical active society itself. The largest cost drivers are expenses for commercial facilities, municipal expenditure, expenditure on sports equipment, and subscription and entrance fees for sport clubs.

The central government and health insurers both have a (small) positive balance between revenues and costs

The total revenues amount to 11.1 billion euros. The societal value of sport and exercise can be subdivided into the categories health, social (including well-being / happiness) and work. The largest revenue items – expressed in euros – are: improved quality of life, savings on sickness absence and increase in labour productivity.

DUTCH SROI OF 2.51

With 4.4 billion euros of investments and a total revenue of 11.1 billion euros, the social return on investment in sports and exercise (SROI) in the Netherlands is estimated at 2.51. This outcome reflects the current state of affairs.

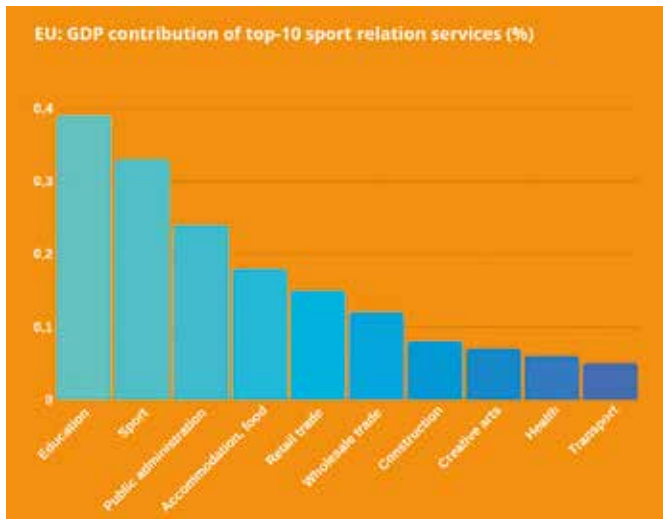
WHO INVESTS AND WHO BENEFITS?

Looking at the distribution of costs and revenues among the parties involved, the Dutch research concludes the following:

- People who exercise or are physically active invest the most compared to other parties involved. There are

also many social benefits for this group, mainly due to a higher quality of life and a higher life expectancy. In addition, social effects such as increased well-being and reduced loneliness are not expressed in euros in the SROI study. These kinds of effects also largely impact the people themselves, so that the relationship between costs and benefits in reality is even more positive for this group;

- Municipalities invest more in sports than they directly benefit. But municipalities also benefit from a healthier and happier population; after all, the municipality is there for the well-being of all its inhabitants;
- The central government and health insurers both have a (small) positive balance between revenues and costs. Health insurances benefit from a sporting and physically active society because this leads to a reduced demand for care. On the other hand, active people live longer and therefore





Sports facilities, like swimming pools, sport/exercise courts, stadiums and other infrastructural works, are by far the largest cost item for municipalities

healthcare costs also rise;

- Businesses (employees), in absolute numbers, benefit most from a population which exercises or is physically active. Not just in absolute, but also in relative terms the revenues for this group are much higher than the costs.

MUNICIPAL DIFFERENCES

The SROI of sports and exercise differs per municipality. To approximate the local SROI, Kenniscentrum Sport asked their associates to not only calculate the national SROI in the Netherlands, but also build a dashboard to calculate the estimated social value per municipality. In this dashboard, municipalities can compare themselves with a peer group. These are the municipalities with comparable socio-economic variables, which are known to have an effect on participation in sports and exercise (such as disposable income and / or share of highly educated people). Additional assumptions have been made

to arrive at an estimate per municipality.

The extent to which residents of a municipality exercise or are physically active, and therefore also the social benefits and SROI of a municipality, depends on several factors. In addition to the range of commercial facilities (such as fitness) and the attractiveness of the outdoor area (such as wooded or green area), it is mainly about:

- **Sports facilities.** This is by far the largest cost item for municipalities. It is important for the youth in particular, who exercise relatively more at sport clubs;
- **Sports promotion.** Municipalities can use proven effective interventions to get specific target groups. The use of neighbourhood sports coaches is aimed at getting more people to exercise or to be physical active, by making a connection between providers of sport and well-being, education, health care, etc. Interventions

What does it mean?

Example: municipality A has an SROI of 1 in 2.25

What does this say?

It says that there is a positive ratio between all revenues in municipality A, because people comply with the exercise guideline, and all costs incurred in municipality A (by citizens themselves, by the municipality, by the government, etc.). The SROI indicates whether value is added with investments in sport and exercise, which is the case with municipality A - with an SROI higher than 1.

What does it not say?

The SROI study provides a great deal of insight and is a starting point for further improvement of policy. However, one should bear in mind that SROI does not reflect the effects of a separate investment decision. In short, all invested euros together yield a positive social return, but the SROI does not tell which invested euro (central government, municipality, resident, etc.) pays off better. An SROI of 1 in 2.25 does not mean that if one euro extra were to be invested by, for example, the municipality or a sponsor, this would yield 2.25 euros in social benefits.

in other policy areas, such as the social domain, can also influence participation in sports and exercise;

- **Socio-economic variables.**

It follows from the literature that variables such as age, income and urbanity explain more variation in participation in sports and exercise than the municipal policy itself.

TOOL FOR POLICY MAKERS

In order to get an explanatory story behind the SROI, in-depth analyses were carried out for several municipalities, in line with their policy objectives and specific questions. For example: to which extent national trends such as aging, individualization and urbanization are visible

in these municipalities, how municipal spending is structured, and how they relate to comparable municipalities. A comparison was made of the key indicator exercise-friendly environment and research was done on the various indicators for participation in sports and exercise. It also looked at how the SROI related to municipalities with similar socio-economic characteristics. Finally, the analyses provided insight into the effect of choices in the sports infrastructure on the SROI, the role of sport stimulation through effective interventions and how sport is used as an intervention in other policy areas. . ACES intends to include this tool in network of cities in the future. ★

ITALIAN AWARDS CEREMONY AT CONI, ROME



On November 4th, the traditional Italian awards ceremony was held in the Hall of Honor of the Italian Olympic Committee (CONI) in Rome.

Following the opening greetings made by President of CONI, Giovanni Malagó and the President of MSP Italia – ACES Europe, Gian Francesco Lupattelli, ACES Europe and MSP recognized officially the cities/towns/communities of sport for the years 2019-2021 that have distinguished themselves in promoting social and inclusive sport on their territory.

In the presence of the Honorary President of MSP Italy, Silvia Costa and the Vice President of the Liguria Region, Sonia Viale, there was also the traditional delivery of the 'bowls' to athletes who have distinguished themselves in different disciplines as well as to the mayors of the assigned cities/towns/communities of sport. In addition, honorary awards were handed to Italian athletes, managers and champions. ★



Italian Cities, Towns and Communities of Sport 2019

Cities: Oristano, Arco del Benessere, Vercelli, Mantova,

Towns: Sesto Calende, Omegna, Livigno, Chianciano Terme

Community: Sportland

Italian Cities, Towns and Communities of Sport 2020

Cities: Grottaglie, Cosenza, Piombino

Towns: Cernusco Naviglio, Egna Neumarkt, Chiusi, Gozzano, Montegrotto Terme

Community: Castelli Romani, Italian Riviera, Archeo Vesevus

Italian Cities, Towns and Communities of Sport 2021

Cities: Rieti, Potenza, Siena, Terni

Towns: Auronzo di Cadore, Pontinvrea, Sansepolcro, Segni

Community: Valle del Monte Bianco, Valdichiana Senese

NEW MEMBERS OF THE ACES EUROPE FAMILY

Municipalities from new countries join the project in 2020

For the first time in the history of ACES, municipalities from Andorra, Cyprus, Mexico, Morocco, Ukraine and Estonia are awarded for European Towns of Sport, reaching the total number of approximately 40 countries the last 20 years

BY BILYANA MIRCHEVA, FRANS OOSTERWIJK

Having started with the first European Capital of Sport, Madrid, in 2001, the ACES-network of municipalities has grown steadily over the years. ACES Europe has always warmly accepted new municipalities to our family. It is an especially significant achievement when we succeed in including municipalities in countries which had not previously had any participants in our project. This year, for the first time in our organisation's history, municipalities from Andorra and Estonia have put forward their candidacies for European Towns of Sport.

Both of them champion the 5 key aspects that ACES Europe is looking for in candidates, namely enjoyment in exercise, willingness to achieve, a sense of community, learning fair play and improvement of health.

KURESSAARE, ESTONIA

Kuressaare in the Saaremaa region of Estonia grabbed our attention immediately with its positive outlook and amazing array of events planned for 2020. Among those, we see plans for the Enduro World Championship in motorcross, the Ultima Thule Marathon and Three Days Race for runners, Karujärve cycling marathon, many volleyball matches with top European clubs and the Ott Tänak rally. Not only does Kuressaare have a great looking sports agenda, it also has some great facilities – a modern new tennis court, eight official outdoor health parks, and trails, as well as a plan for the modernization of the town's stadium, all prove the dedication to sports of the islanders.

The aim of
Kuressaare 2020 is
to encourage the
town's inhabitants
to believe in
themselves and
their strengths



On October 17, during the autorally of Saaremaa, Kuressaare was visited by the ACES Europe evaluation commission under supervision of ACES-Europe secretary-general Hugo Alonso.

The aim of the Kuressaare 2020 Town of Sport programme is to encourage the town's inhabitants to believe in themselves and their strengths and to allow the island to become modern sports-wise. The sport programme for Kuressaare 2020 will be organised on the Saaremaa island and other involved regions to allow the visitors to fully enjoy the variety of sports and culture. A major goal mentioned by the municipality is to plan sports events in a manner that includes people who have been left out. For a town of its size, with approximately 13,500 inhabitants, Kuressaare has presented a very comprehensive event programme for throughout the year, and we look forward to their 2020 quarterly reports with detailed information about how the 365 days of events are going.

ENCAMP, ANDORRA

Encamp, a parish in Andorra, has also been awarded the title of European Town of Sport in 2020. The municipality has been active in making sports an integral part of its economic and touristic activity. The municipality has over 35 sports clubs and other related entities, as well as great infrastructure and policies focused on sport. The combination of these components make Encamp and the region of Encamp-El Pas de la Casa a great destination for sports tourism. Encamp possesses a ski station, Grandvalira, as well as sports centers both for the general public and for professional athletes.

In terms of clubs, the Encamp Volleyball Club has a track record in the Spanish Superliga 2, and the local football club boasts with the largest youth football base ever. For 2020, the municipality has organised some large scale events,



ACES Europe president Gian Francesco Lupattelli (third left) and ACES Europe secretary-general Hugo Alonso (third right) are warmly welcomed by members of the municipal council of Encamp.

such as the Spartan Race, the Travessa of Encamp and the Ultratrail, the cyclotourist march of La Purito, the Trofeu Andros car race and the Skimo6, while also preparing a solid agenda of events for the population as well. The area includes a lot of trails, ranging from short distance to vertical, as well as a via ferrata, a trail marked with steel cables along a rock wall. ★



Other new countries for 2020

Estonia and Andorra are not the only new countries that take part of the ACES network and will share the values of fair play, physical activity and inclusion as well as the determination to better the quality of life of their citizens by sport. They are joined by Cyprus and Ukraine, and by Mexico on the American continent and by Morocco on the African continent.

Cyprus, Limassol

On Cyprus, Limassol will be City of Sport 2020. Limassol is after Nicosia the biggest city of Cyprus and a rapidly growing shipping and business centre. For the last 20 years Limassol municipality organises 'Lemesia', the most massive and important sporting event in the city and throughout Cyprus. A great variety of sport activities, games and races, are organised, including the International Marathon Race, Veterans Track & Field meeting, Beach Water Polo Tour, Fencing, Swimming, Karate, Boxing, Rhythmic Gymnastics and Rowing.

Ukraine, Kryvyi Rih

In Ukraine, Kryvyi Rih is awarded the title City of Sport 2020. Kryvyi Rih, literally Curved Horne, is one of the bigger cities of Ukraine (>600.000 inhabitants) where an innumerable amount of sports can be practised. The Metallurg stadium (capacity: 30.000), former home of Premier League club FC Kryvbas Kryvyi Rih, the Ice Arena and the Children's and Youth Sports School No. 1, are the best known facilities of the city.

Mexico, Guadalajara

In Mexico, the city of Guadalajara is chosen to be World Capital of Sport 2020. For a specific and extended report on Guadalajara see pages 54-55.

Morocco, Dakhla

In Morocco, the city of Dakhla is honoured with the titel Euro-Mediterranean City of Sport 2020. Dakhla, because of its touristic infrastructure named Pearl of the South, is situated on the southern shores of the Mediterranean. The city is considered as the Moroccan access to Africa on the one hand and to the other countries of the world on the other. A lot of sports can be exercised in Dakhla and the city is famous for its facilities for kitesurfing and watersports. In recent years, the city has organised some big events, such as the African and World Championship Kitesurf, the Dakhla Triathlon and the international swimming contest 'Morocco Swim Trek'.

On October 14, just before the start of the city half marathon, ACES Europe secretary Hugo Alonso handed over the European City of Sport 2020 award to Yevgeny Udod, chairman of the regional council (m).



Members of the municipal council of Guadalajara celebrate the award with Hugo Alonso, secretary-general of ACES-Europe.



On november 9th, Dakhla was visited by the evaluation commission of ACES Europe, under supervision of president Gian Francesco Lupatelli (front, fifth right).



EUROPEAN CITY OF SPORT

BATUMI 2019

The EU approach towards sport works for Georgia

The small country of Georgia, located in the Caucasus region and at the eastern end of the Black Sea, is ambitious to become member of European Union. As ex-Prime Minister Mr. Zurab Zhvania said "I am Georgian, and therefore I am European", Georgia is proving to be a European country with European values in every aspect of life. This approach concerns the sport and healthy lifestyle as well.

BY MALVINA KOBALADZE, FRANS OOSTERWIJK



In antiquity, Georgia was known for its sports and large-scale competitions. Many historical sources and archaeological materials prove the existence of physical exercises and sports in Georgia. Based on this, it becomes clear that already 28 centuries ago, Georgians had a specially designed arena for sports and that there was a high culture of physical training and exercise.

Since Georgia has signed the Georgia – European Union Association Agreement, on every level of governance the country is working on implementing reforms in every direction to reach the European standards.

EUROPE AS EXAMPLE

European experience in sport is very important and useful for Georgia, as in Europe there are many countries with developed sports and Georgia should follow and share their experiences. Innovation is always useful, not only in one or two types of sports, but also in the overall development of sport in all aspects, as well as in terms of infrastructure, protection of general values and standards of the world of sports.

“The experience and support of the European Union is very important for our country”, stresses Mr. Zviad Zaalishvili, Head of Mass Sports Division of the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport of Georgia. “In 2019, the European Week Of Sport took place in Georgia for the second time. Aim of the event was to involve representatives of any

With dozens of kilometers of segregated cycling infrastructure, Batumi seems to be cyclists’ paradise of the Caucasus



age categories in sports activities, develop school sports, as well as raising people’s awareness of sports and sharing the importance of sports in general.”

THE AMBITIONS OF BATUMI

Throughout its existence, Batumi has always been a city of strategic importance. Today Batumi is a modern, dynamic city with an expanding service industry, the biggest tourism potential in the country, and a perfect balance between a rich historical past and modern urban lifestyle.

“Over the last three years, when we started thinking about gaining the title of European City of Sport, more than 600 million Lari (around 200 million euros, MK/FO) was spent on the construction of new sports facilities and infrastructure in Batumi”, Mr. Irakli Pataridze explains, Chairman of the Committee for Education, Culture, Tourism and Sport of Batumi City Council. “However, only developing the infrastructure is not enough to make sport successful and nurture a healthy future generation and champions to the city. We need to do everything we can to get kids out of the screens, take them to the sport halls and playgrounds and share with them the significance of a healthy lifestyle and teach them the importance and love of sports in everyday life.”

BROAD SPECTRUM OF SPORTS

With dozens of kilometers of segregated cycling infrastructure, Batumi seems to be cyclists’ paradise of the Caucasus. Batumi started to invest in cycling infrastructure together with other grand projects, to make this location attractive and comfortable for both citizens and its guests.

Batumi is also very famous for its Equestrian Club that was formed in 2013 and actively participates in various

competitions. Batumi City Hall periodically organizes special horse riding programs, especially for children with autism spectrum disorders.

New sport activities are encouraged in Batumi, to give citizens more varieties to choose. Sup Surfing (Paddleboarding) is a new kind of sport that has just started to develop. The city was already famous with its rowing and sailing clubs in the seventies of the 20th century. This year, the rowing club was officially reopened to give chance to a new generation to be involved in rowing sports disciplines.

Every year, Batumi City Hall and Batumi Boulevard Administration are improving open air facilities and infrastructure that are accessible for everyone who wants to be active and healthy. Many groups of people are engaged in fitness and aerobics on Batumi Boulevard. The vast number of sport events through the year, organized by municipal bodies, sport organizations and regional government, encourage children, young people and elders to be active, sportive and healthy, and demonstrate the values of the EU approaches towards sports for the city of Batumi.

THE VALUE OF AMATEUR SPORT

Recognition of Batumi as European City of Sport obviously shows the development of the city and its values for last years, as well as the infrastructure and high standards of local facilities. The general document of the city developing policy 2018-2022 also comprehended the value of amateur sport for every citizen's health and lifestyle.



Marula, Leo Burti and Lasha Talakhadze

Georgian traditional wrestling, Marula (equestrian sports), Lelo Burti ('field ball') are listed by UNESCO as an intangible cultural heritage. Georgia is most known for strength sport disciplines, but nowadays the country sophisticates in other directions, like water polo, alpine skiing, figure skating, tennis, chess, baseball etc. Nevertheless it's important to highlight the unbelievable results of the country's national giant, Lasha Talakhadze, winning European and World Weightlifting Championships over the last years with great world records. All these are proofs that Georgia is a country of general sports.

Nowadays, even non sportive conferences, congresses or events are organizing sportive parts among their program. Like it was done on the international diplomats conference 'Georgia's European Way' or at the most important cultural event for Batumi 'BATUMOBA', the day of declaring Batumi as self-governing city in Georgia. Besides professional sportive events that were implemented in recent years, the municipality added another 200 days of physical activities and amateur sports events for everyone.

Batumi municipality always was carrying out programs for disabled peoples and providing accessible environment on streets and buildings. This year, the city started life-style programs to improve their physical and psychological condition, and adapted the beach on Batumi boulevard for disabled people.

SPORTIVE TOURISM

Batumi always has been an attractive venue for sporting and cultural events. This year the nationwide opening ceremony of the European Week of Sport was held in Batumi, being European City of Sport 2019. Next year the new infrastructure represented by the Batumi Central Stadium and the New Sports Complex will provide extra opportunity to attract larger sportive as well as non-sportive competition and events. Because of the sportive results within the framework of Batumi European City of Sport, the Batumi Municipality has stated that the city is not only Europe's leading emerging tourism destination (as declared this year by World Travel Awards), but also the most sportive place in East Europe. According to this, the Government of Ajara Autonomous Republic decided to implement research for the development of sportive tourism, not only in Batumi City but also in the whole region. ★

MALVINA KOBALADZE IS DELEGATE OF ACES EUROPE FOR GEORGIA.

GANJA 2019

Awarding the title to Ganja has been a gateway between the city and Europe

Sports policy in Ganja (Azerbaijan), is successfully implemented. On March 5th, the national Day of Physical Education and Sports wasn't held in Baku but for the first time in the region, in Ganja. On the same day, the project Ganja - European City of Sport 2019 was launched, which reflects the centuries-old history, modern development and sporting achievements of Ganja. About 20,000 people attended the sports festival and there was a sporty atmosphere all over the city.

BY MUSHFIG JAFAROV

Awarding the title European City of Sport 2019 to Ganja, has been a gateway between the city and Europe, and now Ganja is not only a sporting city in Europe, but also a city with its own cultural and national values. This event not only pleases the community, but also stimulates our athletes.

More active than ever

As a result, athletes of our city are more active than ever in national competitions, international tournaments, world and European championships. Four athletes from Ganja, participating in the XV European Youth Summer Olympic Games in Baku in 2019, won gold and silver medals. Other successes include Paralympic champion Ramil Gasimov, who won a bronze medal at the European Judo Championships in Genoa, Italy in the weight category of 73kg. At the European Judo Championships for juniors in Poland, Turan Bayramov represented our city in the 60kg weight category and won a gold medal. Vilayat Bayramov won the gold medal in the 62kg weight category at the Sambo Country Cup and qualified for the World Junior Championships in Uzbekistan. In the European freestyle wrestling junior championship, Ibrahimov Abdrakhman won the gold in the 48kg weight class in Krakow, Poland. Murad Hagverdiyev won a silver medal in the 45kg weight category at the European Junior Championships in Italy. International grandmaster Ulviyya Fataliyeva has qualified for the Women's World Cup in Antalya, Turkey. At the European Junior Wrestling Championship in Pontevedra, Spain, Turan Bayramov won a gold medal.

*9408 athletes participating in more than 40 competitions
The development of sports, regular involvement of adolescents and young people and the formation of a healthy lifestyle*



among all segments of the population, is always in the spotlight in our city. During the first 9 months of this year, within the framework of the project Ganja - European City of Sport 2019, more than 40 national, international and local competitions were held in our city and 9408 athletes participated in those competitions.

Ganja is now among the sports cities in Europe, and we have great support in this regard by the Ministry of Youth and Sports and Ganja City Hall. A press and Facebook page have been created in connection with the election of Ganja as European City of Sport and information was added about events organized in the city during the year. Advertisement boards were made and plastered throughout the city, contracts have been signed with local television and radio channels and all sporting events are being promoted. It cooperates closely with the Sports Federations, the Ministry of Youth and Sports. Regional and National competitions are also held more often in the city.

It also should be noted that Ganja was the first signatory of this success among the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), a regional intergovernmental organization of ten post-Soviet republics in Eurasia, formed following the dissolution of the Soviet Union.

MUSHFIG JAFAROV IS HEAD OF THE GANJA CITY YOUTH AND SPORT DEPARTMENT.

GUADALAJARA 2020

WORLD CAPITAL OF SPORT 2020

Deserved recognition for one of Mexico's most legendary sports cities

The city of Guadalajara is the capital of the State of Jalisco, Mexico. It is located in the central west of the country, at a distance of 461 kilometers northwest of Mexico City, and has a population of about 1.5 million people. The city is seen as the 'most Mexican city in Mexico'. The hat dance jarabe tapatio originates from Guadalajara, and many mariachi orchestras also have their origins there.

BY FRANS OOSTERWIJK



In Guadalajara, sport is a factor of great relevance in increasing the quality of life of its inhabitants. Physical activity is projected in current municipal policies in such a way that it serves as a means through which people improve the standards of well-being and coexistence.

For decades, important international events have taken place in the city of Guadalajara. Such is the case of the Olympic Games in Mexico in 1968, when the Jalisco Stadium and the Guadalajara Country Club were mounted on the wave of Olympic fervor, being soccer and tennis branches, respectively. As well as in the World Soccer Championships in 1970 and 1986, in which the Jalisco Stadium was the scene of some matches.

In addition, in 2011 the city hosted the XVI edition of the Pan American Games, the most important on the continent, for which an amount of \$295.2 million dollars was allocated for the construction and remodeling of numerous sports facilities, which are fully used today.

Guadalajara is a city prepared to carry out more events of this type since, in addition to its sports infrastructure, it currently has a hotel offer of 28,500 rooms distributed in the metropolitan area. 3,500 more will be added during the remainder of 2019 and in next year, as a result of the ongoing construction of 23 more hotels.

NO ENTRY COST

Other sporting events with international scope that are held in Guadalajara are the Half Marathon and the Marathon, both declared Intangible Cultural Heritage of Guadalajara on January 19, 2018, and certified by the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) with the Gold Label the first, and Bronze Label the second. As well as the Gran Giro, a national cycling competition in which athletes from other countries also participate, and which has the endorsement of the Mexican Cycling Federation.

In the Guadalajara metropolitan area there are a total of 37 sports facilities in which 35 different disciplines can be practised. In addition, it has 79 Sports Units and 4 Multisport Gyms, with no entry cost, with the objective of providing the population with possible spaces for recreation and sports. And a Recreational Route that consists of a linear park of 28 km, developed every Sunday of the year and holidays, where some of the main roads of the city are closed for the use of alternative transport mechanisms (bicycle, skates, skateboards, etc.). Its average attendance per day is 100,000 people.

IDOLS AND REFERENCES

The city of Guadalajara has several professional teams in different sports. Two first division soccer teams compete in the national league, Chivas and Atlas. In baseball, the Charros de Jalisco team participates in the Mexican Pacific League. As for basketball, the city is



For decades,
important
international events
have taken place in the
city of Guadalajara

represented by two teams, the Jalisco Giants in the Pacific Coast Basketball Circuit, and the Astros in the National Professional Basketball League. Recently, an American football team has ventured into professionalism: the Tequileros de Jalisco, which compete in the Mexican Football League of Mexico (FAM).

The city is also represented by some internationally renowned athletes, such as boxer Saúl Canelo Álvarez, Formula 1 driver Sergio Checo Pérez, football player Javier Chicharito Hernández, former golfer Lorena Ochoa and volleyball player Samantha Bricio. They are Guadalajara's sports idols and references of the new generations. ★

AMERICAN CAPITAL OF SPORT

SANTIAGO DE CALI 2019

All the glory comes from daring to start

Madrid, Abu Dhabi, Santiago de Cali. 2000 and 2019. Cities and dates that mark milestones in the history of ACES Europe: Madrid was the first European Capital of Sport in 2000 and Abu Dhabi and Santiago de Cali the first World Capital of Sport and American Capital of Sport, respectively, in 2019.

BY GONZALO CUESTA



Santiago de Cali, capital of the Colombian Valle del Cauca, is a city that has placed sport as an angular element of its policies as a catalyst for the objectives set by the political direction of the city.

Concepts such as social transformation, public policies, inclusion, grants, private public collaboration are part of their DNA and most importantly, they have been implemented more strongly throughout the current year if possible than what has been done in years previous.

There are no more rewarding aspects when assessing the policies of cities in sports matters than observing the work delivered, done with passion, from monitors and specialists with children and young people who, due to life circumstances, have not had the same facilities as others to dream about your future.

TOOL FOR SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION

When these barriers of life can be overcome to integrate them into society and in the workplace and that they can





hopefully see their future, all this is achieved through sport, the satisfaction that creates all of us who love sports. Not as mere physical activity but as a tool for social transformation we feel very satisfied.

Above the great sporting events is the work with people, who hold on tight to that practice, because there they are equal, fight, compete, learn, win, live, dream. How much satisfaction of a job well done when children affected by drugs, war and crime shake the tragedy through sports and find their way of life, shape their way of being, change their dubious life for the future, for opportunities.

Thank you and congratulations to all the actors that are involved, who fight every day to achieve the success of commendable sports policies that are transcendental in the daily lives of many people. That was an essential aspect that the technical commission of ACES Europe valued to certify that Santiago de Cali was clearly deserving the American Capital of Sport award.

How much satisfaction when children affected by drugs, war and crime shake the tragedy through sports and find their way of life, shape their way of being, change their dubious life for the future, for opportunities





ACES AMERICA

The conviction from ACES Europe that the project that embodies our organization can be implemented in America, has led us to make the decision to establish ACES America, a subsidiary of ACES Europe that will develop the policy and foundational principles throughout the Continent.

To raise awareness of ACES America, establish institutional contacts and get in touch with numerous mayors and ministries of Sports, in addition to creating and developing the work structure in America, has been the work undertaken in a year of hard and intense activity.

The celebration of the First International Sports Meeting in Santiago de Cali last September, where we were organizers of the event with the Mayor of Cali and the support of UNESCO, Coldeportes (ministry of Sports of Colombia) and the American Sports Council (CADE), which encompasses all ministries of Sports of America, has been one of the pillars of our work in 2019.

We hope that the project of placing sport at the top of the political agenda is a reality in America

An event of great interest that was a success, not only of presence, but for the quality of the speakers and the interest of the round tables held. Cities such as Madrid, Lisbon, Glasgow, Cali and entities such as the Inter-American Development Bank, the Spanish Football League, the FC Barcelona Foundation, Direct TV, athletes such as Vanessa Córdoba or the Vice President of CADE and minister of Sports of Puerto Rico Adriana Sánchez Parés without forgetting the presence of UNESCO Saadia Sánchez explaining the Kazan Action Plan, brought knowledge and experience to a day that we hope will continue next year.

AMERICAN WEEK OF SPORT

Multiple contacts have been established with mayors and regions of the American continent that have expressed interest in participating in future calls for awards and work is being carried out in a future agreement with the American Sports Council in order to give even more institutional coverage to the award and be the embryo of the future American Week of Sport where the American Capital of Sport is the annual banner of this sporting event.

The Union of Capitals and Ibero-American Cities, the OAS or the Ibero-American General Secretariat that organizes the summits of Heads of State are part of the next institutional meetings of our organization in order to give the greatest possible entity and recognition to our award.

We continue working to give the greatest media content and economic and social impact to the cities that deserve the awards in line with the enormous work carried out in Europe in these years. We hope that the project of placing sport at the top of the political agenda is a reality in America. From ACES America we will work boldly to achieve it. ★

Go ahead!!! Vamos!!!

GONZALO CUESTA IS DELEGATE OF ACES EUROPE FOR ACES AMERICA.

AMERICAN CAPITAL OF SPORT

WE ARE CALI, WE ARE SPORT!

The successes of the American Capital of Sport 2019

The capital of Valle del Cauca stood out for the impact of its 14 free sport programs, focused on stimulating the physical activity of its inhabitants and minimizing access limitations of the most vulnerable population.

BY CARLOS EDUARDO ARANGO WILLIAMSON

The Secretary of Sport and Recreation of the Mayor's Office of Santiago de Cali takes credit for the work that has been done since 2016 by changing the scheme to professionalize the sport in the 22 communes and 14 districts of the city, benefiting to more than 400,000 people. Today 57% of the *Caleños* (people from Cali) practice some sports activity and that makes us have a better city. Cali has been distinguished for many years for being the sports city of Colombia, for its outstanding high-performance athletes, for its sports scenarios but the most important thing is the transformation and social inclusion that we have achieved through sport.

Cali currently has 14 free sports programs, offering recreation and physical activity from early childhood to the elderly, minorities and people with disabilities. Being the 2019 American Capital of Sport ratifies Cali for its sporting vocation and becomes a role model for other nations that want to adopt its proposal.

WORLD SPORT MEETING

Cali closed the year of this appointment with the realization of the First World Sport Meeting 'Sport as a tool for transformation and social inclusion based on public policies',





that took place on September 6, 2019, a theme that revolved around the public policies of sport and it was very enriching to hear the experiences and benefits of six American and European cities (Cali, Guadalajara, Lisbon, Madrid, Glasgow, The Hague) that all have inclusive sport policies; the vision of the ministries of Sport by the American Council of Sport and Mindeportes Colombia; the contributions of important foundations and private entities with programs focused on sport with proven benefits; and ACES Europe with its recognition of European and American sports capitals for its inclusive approach and the network of cities that support each other.

The speeches showed the strategies of the cities that understand the benefits of sport in topics such as health, coexistence, peace and education. But the most important was Unesco's presentation with the Kazan 2017 Action Plan

Today, 57% of the people from Cali practice some sports activity and that makes us have a better city

Cali currently has 14 free sports programs, offering recreation and physical activity from early childhood to the elderly, minorities and people with disabilities

that proposes how to increase the impact of sport on global sustainable development goals when carried out from a clear and comprehensive strategy.

We saw that, although there is nothing new in itself, it is totally new to understand that the strategy must be complete and simultaneous, offering sport, physical activity and recreation to all age groups and vulnerable populations from a multisectoral approach. Additionally, we learned the importance of public-private collaboration in the the sports infrastructure and the support to high performance athletes.

NETWORK OF CITIES

The network of cities proposed by ACES Europe, and from which Cali has already benefited, offers immense benefits on issues in which there are cities with knowledge and good practices on issues that other cities do not have, such as supporting the operation of sports clubs that massify sports practices, attention to displaced populations, migrants or victims of conflict, use of physical activity as part of medical treatments etc.

Given that there is no evidence and proven studies on the results of a comprehensive policy such as the one proposed in this meeting, we hope that there will be a second meeting, in which the Kazan 2017 proposal will be strengthened with some baselines and strategies of measurement, experiences of small cities with different problems, the participation of central states and private participation aligned with the new strategies. ★

CARLOS EDUARDO ARANGO WILLIAMSON IS SPORT DIRECTOR CALI.

EUROPE AND CHINA GROW CLOSER IN SPORT

Social integration, the integration of women, children, the elderly and the disabled in sports activities, is the noble ideal of ACES Europe. More and more this idea is adopted and promoted by China, as a manifestation of the ever growing relationship between Europe and China.

BY ACES EUROPE



Since the establishment in 1999, ACES Europe has devoted itself to helping and supporting the development of institutions of sport and individuals in Europe and in the world. By evaluation and support cities and towns to increase social cohesion, improve the health of citizens and quality of life through sports activities. We do all we can to improve the participation rate of sport cities and sport towns through professional knowledge and extensive international cooperation, promote international sport ideas, assist in the rational planning and using of sport infrastructure and facilities. 'Social integration' is the noble ideal of ACES Europe, we try our best to integrate women, children, the elderly and the disabled into society by participating in sports activities to improve their happiness.

COMBINED SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

In recent years, the relationship between Europe and China has become closer and closer, and exchanges in the field of sport and culture have become more and more frequent. ACES Europe and partners in China have already carried out fruitful



work. Since 2015, we have established a base of scientific research in Jiaozuo City, Henan Province in China, and carried out a series of scientific research on junior football to the advanced European sport theory (which comes from Germany) to Chinese youth, educators and coaches, radiating it to kindergartens, primary and secondary schools in the city. The research work

focuses on scientific training and systematic application of European scientific ideas and combines Chinese actual national conditions. It takes football as an entrance, combines various and interesting ways of sport, so that children have the opportunity to experience and participate in almost all sport arts. This work has been commended by the municipal, provincial and national levels in China, and is expected to popularize scientific research results throughout the whole of China. Among them, children's football training has been launched in 75 kindergartens in Jiaozuo City in 2019.

COLORFUL CARE ACTION

In June 2018, our representatives and Chinese partners participated in a series of sports activities organized by Liaoning Guangming School (the largest Orphan School in

Asia) and Shenyang Welfare Institute in Liaoning Province. Up to now, Liaoning Province has continued to carry out the 'Colorful Care Action', holding weekly sports rehabilitation training activities for disabled, orphans and autistic children and their families. This work has trained a large number of professionals and volunteers for the local community. Their job has brought plenty of benefits to the local citizens.

CAMPUS SPORT

As a country with huge population, the importance of campus sport in China is self-evident. In 2019 our representatives in China, Xia Sheng and Liu Yifan, led the team to Zunhua City, Hebei Province, to carry out campus football work based on Zunhua No. 2 Middle School, and explore the training mode of youth football talents from kindergartens to high schools, and try to involve the whole city, such as sports and education offices, social organizations of sport, families, volunteers and sports fans. During this period, Korean friends also came to Zunhua and had friendly exchanges with us. This year, Hao Yi, the vice General Secretary of the Next Generation Working Committee of China, and Mao Wei, vice General Secretary of the Leading Group of China Youth Campus Football Development Plan, visited Zunhua City, to investigate and research the development of the 'Colorful Football Campus Training Base' and gave them high comments.

The relationship between Europe and China has become closer and closer, and exchanges in the field of sport and culture have become more and more frequent

COLORFUL SPORTS CARNIVAL

In 2018, the ideas and work of ACES Europe were widely recognized by Chinese cooperative organizations, sport and education departments, sport cities and sport towns. In October 2018, Xia Sheng from China, member of our evaluation committee, participated in the evaluation work of Abu Dhabi, the capital of the United Arab Emirates. In December of the same year, we invited Xia Sheng and Liu Yifan to attend our annual meeting and Gala in Brussels, and the meeting at UNESCO headquarters in Paris. They bring us the opinions and voices from China.

In 2019, ACES Europe and Leading Group of China Camps Health Movement, Leading Group of China Youth Campus Football Development Plan, China Caring for the Next Generation Health Sports Foundation, China Youth Concern Committee Health and Physical Culture Development Center, Beijing Colorful Youth Football Development Center launched comprehensive cooperation with 'Colorful Sports Carnival' and other Cooperation models. Mr Gian Lupattelli, John Swanson, Antonio Mendes, Hugo Alonso, Lucas Vorel-Adams, Andre de Jeu and Ms Andrea Junger were recognized as international experts of Chinese institutions.




In recent years, the Chinese government has attached great importance to the work of sport towns



PROMOTION SOCIAL INTEGRATION

In recent years, the Chinese government has attached great importance to the work of sport towns. In 2019 Xia Sheng, as member of our evaluation committee, was acknowledged by the General Administration of Sports of the Chinese government as member of the expert group, and joined the work of 'supervision and evaluation' of sports towns at the national level in China. This work evaluates and guides the investment in sports fields, sport infrastructure, public transportation, sport and public environment, and the promotion of social integration by sport. It is helpful to the planning and construction of sport towns in China. ★



SPORTS AND EXERCISE: HEALTH, HAPPINESS AND... INJURIES

How statistics can help injury prevention policy

Sports and exercise increase health and happiness, but they also cause injuries. Some sports are riskier than others. Football, fitness and running produce the biggest number of sports injuries in the Netherlands. Although some countries have their own measuring tools, there's no European standard for measuring sports related injuries. "Insight in the statistics of sports related injuries could lead to better ways of prevention", says Ellen Kemler, researcher at the Dutch Consumer Safety Institute VeiligheidNL.

BY LEO AQUINA

VeiligheidNL keeps track of national sports injury statistics, based on figures of the national statistics bureau (CBS) and the so-called *Lifestyle Monitor* (Leefstijlmonitor) of the national health institute RIVM. The annual report showed that 4.1 million people in the Netherlands suffered at least one injury in 2018. The total amount of sports injuries in the Netherlands was 5.4 million, which is about 3.4 injuries per 1000 hours of sport.

FOOTBALL: 7.3 INJURIES PER 1000 HOURS

It's no surprise that the most popular sports football, fitness and running produce the most injuries. These are the most practised forms of physical exercise in the Netherlands. "Despite the numbers, fitness is still a relatively safe sport", Kemler says. "Fitness generates 1.8 injuries per 1000 hours of exercise. Football produces 7.3 injuries per 1000 hours, and running 6.3." Based on the injury numbers, VeiligheidNL initiated injury prevention interventions and it also customises international prevention programmes, such as FIFA's 11+ (see box) for the specific Dutch needs. "The programme is very effective", Kemler says. "But Dutch trainers struggled with it because it is time-consuming and players found the exercises too static or boring. Together with the Dutch federation we are developing new exercises."

RUNNING

Based on the fact that running, as one of the most practised forms of exercise, generates a lot of injuries especially among the less experienced runners who just started running, VeiligheidNL developed a tool called runfitcheck.nl. "More than 2 million people in the Netherlands run, but running has an above average injury risk", programme manager Casper Dirks says. "Runfitcheck.nl is an e-health intervention which helps runners to listen to their body and therefore minimize the injury risk."

KNEE AND ANKLE

The Dutch injury report not only researched which sports generated the most injuries,



but also kept track of the type of injuries. Knee injuries were most prevalent, with ankle injuries coming second. VeiligheidNL developed interventions for knee, ankle and shoulder injuries in volleyball and field hockey and also cooperated

with the Amsterdam VU University on the prevention of ankle injuries. Scientific research about the effect of preventive measures, led to the development of sport specific training methods in order to prevent ankle injuries in

FIFA 11+

The FIFA 11+ is an injury-prevention programme, which has been specifically designed to prevent football injuries. It was developed by a panel of international experts to build on earlier injury-prevention efforts, including the PEP programme and FIFA 11.

The programme takes twenty minutes to complete and is designed to be performed twice a week. No specific equipment is needed. The FIFA 11+ consists of 15 exercises divided into three separate components:

- *Running exercises (8 minutes), consisting elements of encompassing cutting, change of direction, decelerating and proper landing techniques;*
- *Strength, plyometric and balance exercises (10 minutes), which focus on core strength, eccentric control and proprioception;*
- *Running exercise (2 minutes), high-speed and change-of-direction running.*

There are three levels for each specific exercise (level 1, level 2, level 3) that increase the difficulty of each respective exercise. This allows for both individual and team progression throughout the course of the competitive season.

More traditional football warm-up programmes are quite variable and typically encompass running exercises, static and/or dynamic stretching, movements involving change of direction, and short passing. They typically average from five to 45 minutes in duration. The average warm-up programme does not typically emphasise on qualitative movement.

amongst others volleyball and basketball, both high-risk sports in the Netherlands.

To be effective, the prevention programmes differ from sport to sport. "Various sports are organised differently in the Netherlands. Therefore our efforts to implement prevention methods are focused on different stakeholders in the different sports", Kemler says.

18-34 MEN MOST INJURY PRONE

Apart from the type of sport and the type of injury, the figures provide insight in gender and age group. "In general, men are injured more often than women", says Kemler. "Men suffer 4.0 injuries per 1000 hours of exercise and women 2.7. This could be caused by the type of sport they practise. In the Netherlands men play football a lot more than women." The data

on age groups is quite specific: "After 55+, people are less likely to suffer from sports injuries.

Most injuries occur in the 18-34 age group, closely followed by the 0-17 group. There are fewer injuries between 34-55."

In the prevention programmes VeiligheidNL takes these age groups into account. "We try to focus those programmes on our knowledge about age groups. For example, we know that girls have an increased risk to sustain knee injuries once they're in their puberty. Therefore we already start with prevention exercises at the youngest ages, in order to have those exercises incorporated at puberty."

EUROPEAN STATISTICS

The Netherlands have a standardised method and detailed databases to generate useful statistics about sports related injuries. Some other

Runfitcheck

People who visit www.runfitcheck.nl start with a short test. Runners have to answer a brief list of questions, after which they're categorized as a specific type of runner. The outcome of the test leads to a specific running advice, which can be put into practice straight away. The advised exercises and training intensity are focused on the improvement of the possible training capacity. It consists of:

- Muscle strengthening exercises;
- Training schedules;
- Varying the surface;
- Warming-up and cooling-down.

Apart from the advice which is generated by the website, the runfitcheck offers the possibility to request a personalized exercise programme. In that case, runners will receive a weekly personal email, with videos of specific exercises and a specific schedule.

countries have similar methods to generate statistics, but there's no European standard for injury data on an equally detailed level. "There are European figures based on EHIS (European Health Interview

Survey)", Kemler says, but that's very general. There's an injury database with a number of injuries in relation to the number of people who exercise, but it's not sport specific and there's no information about the type of injuries, nor the age groups. What would Kemler need to generate European statistics? "In the Netherlands we make use of data from the municipal population registration in order to generate a sample which represents the entire population. You would have to create a similar sample in all different countries and develop a standardized question list." And what questions would Kemler ask? "At least, we would like to know the amount of sports and exercise, the type of sports, the amount and type of injuries, age and gender. With those questions it's possible to draw up a report, which could be a policy tool for policymakers." ★



TESSA WULLAERT

“In women’s football, fans, teams and players stand close to each other”



“I hear that more often: that our football brings a smile to people’s faces. You should not compare women’s football to men’s football, both have their own style and level. But what people like is our appearance. Our game is friendlier, sportier. We radiate more sport, less war. While we sometimes go to the edge too. But men’s football is so aggressive and grim sometimes. Women’s football players are also closer to the audience. Men sometimes behave as if they live on another planet. That has undoubtedly to do with habituation. Men’s football has been the center of attention

already for so long, we only recently experience the warmth and recognition of a large audience. That audience feels a great sympathy for us. I want to answer that sympathy and that means that we, as players, teams and fans, are closer to each other.

I play football from the age of five. Always with boys. Nobody encouraged that, it came out of myself. My parents have always let me go my way. And the boys liked me because I could do something. At FC Wakken, my first club, I have always played in boys teams, together with another girl who was also good. At the age of 14, 15 years, when

we reached puberty, that was no longer possible and we ended up in a girls team. A lost year. I learned nothing more. Then I started playing at Zulte Waregem. Together with that other girl, but she got injured and dropped out.

Women have been achieving at top sports level for a long time, look at swimming, athletics and all those other sports, and it’s actually bizarre that football is still so far behind. In Belgium, matches of the national team attract 5000-7500 spectators, but in the national league, you sometimes have to be satisfied with a crowd of 100, 200 people. In England you see the

same extreme differences. At Manchester City we sometimes play our league matches for 500 or 1000 spectators. But at the FA Cup final last year at Wembley, between City and Arsenal, there were 30, 40,000 spectators in the stands. When I played my first Manchester classic against United in September, there were so many. Kick! We played that match at the Etihad Stadium, where the men also play. Manchester City is serious about women's football. But our budget contrasts sharply with what the men get. Especially in the salaries and way of travelling. Nothing is too crazy for men, we women just travel economy class and by bus. That's a shame sometimes: everything starts and ends with money in football. In terms of facilities and media attention, women's football has already improved a lot, but it still needs to be a lot better. Women's football can only really grow if clubs and associations put in much more money. They too of course must want to make women's football great. Now that women's football has been discovered as a crowd puller, that development will continue, although it will take a while before FIFA or UEFA has a female president! Let's have more female trainers, coaches and officials first. UEFA has since started a training course for women. I also participate in this, although I do not yet know whether I want to stay in



HOLLANDE HOOGTE

sports after my active career. Sometimes it is hard for me to be away from friends, family and girlfriends for a long time. And there is more than football! I studied tourism and after my career I would like to roam the world for a few more years as a flight attendant." ★

TESSA WULLAERT (26) IS A PROFESSIONAL SOCCER PLAYER AT MANCHESTER CITY AND THE STAR OF THE BELGIAN WOMEN'S TEAM. SHE USUALLY PLAYS WITH NUMBER 9 AND IS AS MUCH AN ATTACKER AS A GAME DEALER. IN 2019 SHE WAS THE #BEACTIVE AMBASSADOR TO BELGIUM DURING THE EUROPEAN WEEK OF SPORT.

“It will still take a while before FIFA or UEFA has a female president! Let's have more female trainers, coaches and officials first

#BEACTIVE

ACES Cities of Sport 2019 successfully team up with the European Week of Sport

Launched in 2015, the European Week of Sport has grown into the biggest event celebrating and promoting grassroots sport in Europe. In 2019, the fifth edition, which took place from 23-30 September, attracted 13.678.959 million people to 23.000 events in 42 countries (https://ec.europa.eu/sport/week_en). Working closely together with partners in all 28 member states, the European Commission has established the European Week of Sport as the flagship event, inspiring them to be active and by helping to make physical activity more accessible and integrating it into their daily lives.

BY FRANS OOSTERWIJK



Paralympic Day was one of the successes in Portimão during the European Week of Sport.

PARTICIPATION CITIES OF SPORT

A number of ACES awarded Cities of Sport participated to the European Week of Sport 2019 by organizing events under the EWoS-framework and contributed massively to its success.

Participating cities were:

- Varna (Bulgaria): 14 events – 1940 participants;
- Fuenlabrada (Spain): 1 event – 4000 participants (cycling). On September 29, the municipality organised a bike parade all around the city;
- Portimão (Portugal): 39

- events – 7108 participants. Municipal Paralympic day (September 26) with the practice of various sports by children and athletes with disabilities. That day also marked the 11th anniversary of the Paralympic Committee of Portugal;



Youngsters celebrating the European Week of Sport in Batumi.

- Mantua (Italy): 3 volleyball matches – 6 teams - 2700 total spectators;
- Batumi (Georgia): 13 events – 1000 participants;
- Sisak (Croatia): 1 event – 500 participants. On September 28, Sisak hosted a BMX show with two ramps and 3 riders in the city center, followed by a workshop the following day in the city's skatepark. In this event Senad Grošić, World Champion and professional Red Bull rider, participated and shared the secrets of BMX riding;
- Toruń (Poland): 3 events – 690 participants.
- Paggaiio (Greece): Promotion of physical activity in schools.

RECOGNITION FOR ACES

As a result of its online presence and its awarded cities' activities, ACES has been

The events by the ACES awarded Cities of Sport participating in the European Week of Sport 2019 contributed massively to its success

recognized among the most active partners of the European Commission's campaign #BeActive. The announcement was made during the #BeActive Awards Gala in Budapest on October 18, with the presence of EU Commissioner Tibor

Navracsics and the attendance of the partners of the European Week of Sport.

#BEACTIVE AWARDS 2019

During the same Gala, traditionally the last event within the framework of the European

Week of Sport, the European Commission awarded projects and individuals dedicated to the promotion of sport and physical activity. The #BeActive Education Award 2019, which highlights sport projects outside the standard school setting, was won by Estonia's Schools in Motion, a programme that promotes holistic school culture based on physical activity. The #BeActive Workplace Award was won by Sport Malta – for creating a calendar of events to help employees to increase their activity in the workplace. The #BeActive Local Hero Award went to Hungarian Nóra Kádár-Papp – who started a free, self-help project for post-pregnancy physical and psychological recuperation in 2014 – a project that has grown to over 20.000 registered members. ★



The succesful BMX event in Sisak.



4000 participants in the city's bike parade in Fuenlabrada.



Mantova staged a hard-fought women's volleyball tournament.

THE EUROPEAN CITIES CHALLENGE

Dust off your running shoes or bike!

Healthy is the new cool. With this statement the founder of Kinetic Analysis, Maarten Gijssel introduces us to the European Vital Cities Challenge. Cities need to challenge more and more health problems that occur when adults step into older age. The increasing healthcare cost and aggravating disease burden are serious challenges to an ageing and more sedentary society. The European Vital Cities Challenge (VCC) is empowering citizens to pursue a more vital lifestyle through personal insights, learnings and fun. A combination of online and offline events for all ages, everywhere, for every activity level.

BY MAARTEN GIJSSEL



Being active and healthy becomes a new trend, and this is a success for society's collective wellbeing. There is an increased motivation for people to invest in themselves, leading to a better awareness of the impact of healthy choices for a more energized life. VCC's participant's feedback: "Exchanging a drink for going an hour to the gym or half an hour running became my new lifestyle and gave me the feeling of getting back on track." When people get direct insight in the consequences of their lifestyle choices, they are more likely to make healthy decisions.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO) a vital city is conscious of health and striving to improve it. A growing group of people supporting the quantifying self-movement is ready for the next step and a new platform reinvents this initiative. This vitality platform helps to gain insight into personal health and vitality domains and shows cross-correlated views of measurements on various domains. For example, how do activity patterns relate to sleeping patterns? However, understanding biometrical data was never an easy task and above all, needs a personal cause to become relevant for the user.



The Vital Cities Challenge invites everybody to participate in their own personal fitness level

VITALITY PLATFORM

The vitality platform KAVI engages users with gamification, facilitating the vital cities challenge. Firstly, the user engages in a team challenge where the activity

patterns contribute to the overall score for a particular city. Secondly, inhabitants get insight in their health data in a new way, improving 'health literacy'. The portal creates a better understanding of what

this personal health data mean and enables people to act upon personal insights. Getting insights while collaboratively working towards personal health goals or maintaining a certain vitality level is a great way to engage inhabitants for a more healthy lifestyle. Users see the impact of their efforts at a glance, monitoring personal progress as well as their city's performance.

Scaling from a first competition between two urban areas that was adopted cross-country, the Vital Cities Challenge now

Online and offline

Tracking biometrics can help people to get better insight in their wellbeing, enabling them to make more healthy choices in life. Being coached online and seeing your fellow-city-team members, keeps you motivated and helps you to become the most vital version of yourself. The Vital Cities Challenge builds an active, social and critical community.



becomes a pan-European challenge that changes the rules of the game. The challenge begins where people connect their activity monitor, wearable or smartphone to the software application. The user starts tracking its steps and join the challenge. Later new activity outcomes like cycling, climbing stairs but also metrics like weight or blood pressure, can be added. Based on the chosen metrics, the platform delivers personal coaching at any place and time. Artificial Intelligence helps to connect to the audience in a unique way through a self-selected coach. The users have the option to activate, track, plan and design their own personalized schedule. The vitality platform encourages and supports inhabitants to build and maintain a healthy lifestyle.

VITAL CITIES CHALLENGE

Contributing to a better health, the Vital Cities Challenge engaged already 80.000 people throughout Europe. An example that worked well to raise awareness among regions was an action initiated in the south of the Netherlands early 2018, where the prize money for the most active area within a city was used to develop an urban playground in the same part of the city. In France, raising money for a charity fund was the primal motivator for inhabitants to engage in the challenge. The Germans, on the other hand, loved to compare their personal score with a famous soccer player from the city.

The Vital Cities Challenge invites everybody to participate in their own personal fitness level. It is not given that areas with many healthy and young people will score better than an area with a more aged population. An algorithm awards personal progress of multiple individuals

How to increase vitality?

Scientific evidence, as well as significant audience feedback, drive Kinetic Analysis to help more European areas to increase vitality among regions. Kinetic Analysis (<https://www.kinetic-analysis.com/>) is a company specialized in human motion data, creating an essential impact on people's lives. On a personal level by improving people's quality of daily life. On an economic level, by reducing health care costs and facilitating sustainable engagement.

Are you ready to represent the city challenge of your city?

Compete with other European cities while getting in shape.

Cycling, walking or climb stairs help!

How it works: your city chooses to participate in the European Cities Challenge. You officially become one of the first Europeans to compete in this challenge. Now you can gain credits for your city while you are burning calories and become stronger.

The more you burn, the more points for your city and the more chances to win and become one of the fittest cities in Europe.

How does it work?

Well, dust off your running shoes and your bike, but before that, synchronize your wearable device or phone to the vitality platform. Create your profile, and you are registered!

The platform is excellent to link wearables

The application facilitates a subscription for your personal vitality..

to the overall city score, where the gains result in both online as real-world progress. Progress on personalized motivational coaching instead of absolute activity scores include everybody, whether you are in rehabilitation, a marathon runner, young professional or enjoying life as a retired older adult.

POSITIVE HEALTH

The KAVI vitality platform deals effectively with challenges that many areas throughout Europe face with a more sedentary and aging population. It addresses inhabitants directly to become

more active. All previous projects showed not only significant weight loss, better BMI scores, less fat percentage or a smaller waist circumference, but also improved sleep and personal positive health scores. The term *positive health* is derived from a new health concept. It stands, based on research by dr. Huber, for a broad view on health, where health is no longer considered as a static condition, but rather as a dynamic ability to adapt and to manage one's wellbeing. ACES Europe plans to launch this Challenge in the future ★

THE EVERLASTING LEGACY OF TIBOR NAVRACSICS

European week of Sport, #BeActive Awards and 70 million euros for sport in Erasmus+!

Education is the prime task of the European Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport. In 2017, that priority was accentuated by the fact that EU leaders put education on top of their political agenda. But nobody will argue that Tibor Navracsics, the Hungarian Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport 2014-2019, didn't pay attention to sport!

BY FRANS OOSTERWIJK





The following actions and initiatives form the core of Navracscics mandate. Working closely together with Member States, Navracscics created the *European Education Area*: a space where no borders hamper learning, studying or carrying out research; where spending time studying or working in another country is standard for the majority of students and teachers; where young Europeans can speak two languages in addition to their own and develop a strong sense of identity as Europeans; a space also where Member States recognise each other's diplomas, help to develop digital and entrepreneurial skills of their youth and commit themselves to promote shared European values and social inclusion through education. To emphasise these goals, in January 2018 and September 2019 Navracscics hosted the first and second *European Education Summit* in Brussels.

ERASMUS+

In 2017 Navracscics also led the campaign to celebrate 30 years of the EU's most successful programme: *Erasmus+*. That year more than 750.000 participants got involved in 1.900 events in 44 countries across Europe. In 2018 it was announced that the budget for Erasmus+ for 2021-2027 will be doubled to 30 billion euros, making the programme more inclusive and accessible to young people from all parts of society and creating learning opportunities abroad for more than 12 million people (see also pages 39-41).

Next year,
the budget
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million
euros to
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During the mandate of Navracscics, Erasmus+ participation increased across the Balkan and East and South Europe. The Commission reached agreements with Serbia, Armenia, Georgia, Kosovo, Moldova, Tunisia and Ukraine. Erasmus+ also supports African students and teachers and is a key factor in establishing new relations with China.

EUROPEAN IDENTITY

The European Solidarity Corps and *DiscoverEU* will also be profiting from the doubling of the Erasmus+ budget, two initiatives taken by Navracscics to create more opportunities for young people. The European Solidarity Corps was started in 2016. More than 160.000 young people have since signed up to support and make a difference in communities across Europe: helping them to deal with the aftermath of natural disasters, tackling the effects of environmental destruction



and climate change or restoring cultural heritage sites.

DiscoverEU, started in 2018, enables 18-year-olds to travel and explore Europe, learn more about shared values and experience what it feels like to be European. Since the beginning, around 50.000 young Europeans have received travel tickets. The program got an effective kick start by the 2018 European Year of Cultural Heritage, established to highlight the role of culture in

creating a sense of belonging. Under the motto 'Our heritage: where the past meets the future', 10.6 million people took part in 18.300 events across 37 European countries.

SCIENCE AND KNOWLEDGE

Navracsics also strengthened the *Joint Research Centre*, the European Commission's in-house science and knowledge service, where 3.000 scientists support departments across the Commission in designing, implementing and

helping to enforce policies. This support involves for instance developing new methods to monitor vehicle emissions, improving disaster preparedness, testing food quality and developing tools for the use of digital technologies in the classroom.

Extra money was as well invested in the *The Publications Office* (the official publisher of all EU documents, which also serves EU citizens and businesses by offering access to official information and data on topics as food safety, climate change and economics and in *The European Institute of Innovation and Technology* (meant to foster entrepreneurial talent and innovation skills) and the *Marie Curie Actions* (an already 23 years existing programme to boost Europe's innovation capacity by training and supporting excellent researchers).

EUROPEAN WEEK OF SPORT

Navracsics leaves an everlasting legacy in sport too. Next year, the budget for sport (coming out of the Erasmus+ budget) will rise from 48.6 million euros in 2019 to 69.8 million in 2020.

In 2015 the *European Week of Sport* was launched, which grew into the biggest annual event celebrating and promoting grassroots sport in Europe.

In 2019, the fifth edition attracted 13.7 million people in 42 countries — including partner-countries in the Balkan and East Europe. Together with the member states, the EC has established the EWoS (with the *#BeActive Awards* as promotional tool) as a flagship event, reaching out to people in their communities, inspiring them to be active and to make physical activity an integral part of their lives.

#BEINCLUSIVE EU SPORT AWARDS

In addition to the *#BeActive Awards*, commissioner Navracsics in 2017 launched the *#BeInclusive EU Sport Awards*. This prize rewards organisations and projects that support people from disadvantaged groups through sport, helping migrants, refugees and people from ethnic minorities or with disabilities to find their place in our society. ★

MORE ABOUT THE LEGACY OF NAVRACSIKS IN THE EU-PUBLICATION 'LAYING THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE EUROPEAN EDUCATION AREA': [HTTPS://PUBLICATIONS.EUROPA.EU/EN/PUBLICATION-DETAIL/-/PUBLICATION/90897CEB-DEBF-11E9-9C4E-01AA75ED71A1](https://publications.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/90897ceb-debf-11e9-9c4e-01aa75ed71a1)

The *European Week of Sport* that was launched by Navracsics, grew into the biggest annual event celebrating and promoting grassroots sport in Europe

GRAND MOTOR TRAIL 2019

12 days, 8 cities, 1600km all around Italy.

In April ACES Italia organized the first Grand Motor Trail 2019, a trip that included visits to all the awarded cities, towns and communities of sport 2019.

BY ROMANOS ANTONOPOULOS

Starting from Oristano on the island of Sardinia and ending up to Lombardy's Livigno, the famous vintage Caterham Super Seven accompanied by 2 vehicles, travelled 1600 km, with the purpose of raising awareness among young people about the values of passion, commitment, responsibility and above all mental strength to overcome the challenges of life.

WORLD-CALIBER ATHLETES

In this wonderful journey participated torchbearers, world-caliber athletes, namely Rachele Sanguiliano, the volleyball champion and gold medal winner, Marco Confortola, who climbed 8000 meters on Everest, Mara Santangelo, winner of Roland Garros, Daniela Masseroni, gymnastics olympic athlete, Claudio Chiappucci, road cycling champion, Gian Maria Gabbiani, speed pilot, and the freediving world champion Mike Maric. The athletes were entrusted with the task of launching initiatives in the cities and meeting with school groups and the public in the main squares.



The great protagonist of the event, the 'Tedofora' car, moved to Chianciano Terme, where it was announced that 5 local students would be able to accomplish a 2 weeks internship for the School year 2019/2020 in Milan. The journey continued towards 'Arco del Benessere' (Liguria, Piedmont, Vercelli) and in the following days the torch passed from the towns Mantova, Sesto Calende, Omegna and finally Livigno. The *Grand Motor Trail* was warmly accepted from locals, as well as in all the cities the interest for participating

into the meetings with athletes was extremely high.

UNITE CITIES

"It was the first edition of the *Grand Motor Trail*, that had the objective to symbolically unite the 8 cities that were awarded this year, giving strength to the network's ability to generate proper social policies and sharing projects aimed at common goals", said Vincenzo Lupattelli, President of ACES Italia. The initiative, in collaboration with the 'Training for the Future' project was carried out by Bosch and Randstad Italia. ★



ROMANOS ANTONOPOULOS IS COMMUNICATION MANAGER ACES EUROPE.



DRENTHÉ, NUMBER ONE COMMUNITY OF SPORT IN EUROPE

A year ago Drenthé was pulled to Brussels. They were the first Dutch region to be named European Community of Sport. Beyond all expectations what that brought about in Drenthé.

All those people, mostly volunteers who made sure with their enthusiasm that this prize came to Drenthé, went the extra mile. Event organizers, sports organizations, neighborhood sports coaches, they all looked at how they could make their normal activities even better.

As soon as we give an example, we come short other initiatives. The start of the year was completely in atmosphere; we walked on the TT circuit in the middle of winter to hear the stories behind the Community program. With a page in the Volkskrant and an hour on NPO1 the Netherlands watched. We started in January with the month of Midden-Drenthé. Quite a few inspiring people came by: Pieter van den Hoogenband, Mart Smeets en Maarten van der Weijden inspired all over Drenthé. Gio Lippens inspired in Gieten, Gerard Kemkers in Exloo and Rinne Oost in Emmen. It doesn't get much more impressive.



In April the European list leaders came to Assen. In July the entire Equestrian world to De Wolden. And in September the entire Dutch Sport world came to Emmen; during the VSG congress, 300 aldermen and officials went in search of the Secret of Drenthé. Suddenly it is about Drenthé in professional journals. There was the spin-off of the World Championship Para-Cycling and 'Live like a pro'... even our King Willem-Alexander stepped on the simulator. And while everything happened everywhere, hundreds gathered during the year to make the plan for the coming years. During the Future Outlook, SportDrenthé Draait Door or the plans of neighborhood sports coaches.

Yet, this year is also the year of Alex, Bitania, and Milan. My heroes of the year. The faces of the Community year. Alex, now addressing groups from his isolation. Bitania, 10 year old Eritrean girl, who finally gets swimming lessons and can go out with her friends. And Milan, who climbed the Alpe d'Huez on his hand bike. They are the shining examples of what sport can bring. On December 28, during the Drenthé 200 in Roden, we are going to tell these stories. A fitting end to a fantastic sports year during the month of Noordenveld. ★

HANS DERKS
COMMUNITY OF SPORT DRENTHÉ



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to be the best European Community of Sport

Please be welcome

and enjoy the experience of sport & exercise in Drenthe



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