

From the Sports Festival to the European Day of the Sport

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Aim of paper

The aim of this paper is to showcase this initiative, intending to strike agreements with other territories in Europe willing to organize the Sports Festival, that has as its objective in a medium long term, the creation of the European Day of Sport

Organisational/managerial context

The Provincial Council of Barcelona is a supramunicipal administration body that has as its main mission to offer assistance and cooperation to the municipalities of the province of Barcelona (311 municipalities and more than 5.5 million inhabitants). The sports department is in charge of improving the quality of life of the citizens of the province of Barcelona through three main ways:

- The invigoration of sport at the municipalities through sport activities;
- The establishment of sport facilities that permit the implementation of the above mentioned sport activities;
- The commissioning of training and research that allows the optimisation of the implementation of the services given to the local sports sectors.

Part of the Provincial Council of Barcelona and with the aim to promote sport among its population, has been the Sports Festival launched in 2002.

Organisational/managerial practice/issues

The Sports Festival is a popular recreational and non competitive sport event open to the participation by the general population and adapting the activities to the physical level of the participants.

It emerged from an initiative by the provinces of Turin and Barcelona, joined by other territories and institutions such as Foral Provincial councils of Euskadi and the Provincial Council of Girona; and there already has been contact to establish agreements with other territories. Every year the Sports Festival is organised during the first weekend of June. Its goals are as follows:

- To promote sport and physical activity to all citizens;
- To promote the values of sport as an active life style, the benefits for the health, integration, the companionship and respect to the others...;
- To inform citizens about the sport activities and the sport facilities on offer in the municipality;
- To achieve that during a whole weekend sport becomes the dominant scene in the streets and in the sport facilities of cities and villages;
- To encourage the participation of the maximum number of citizens;

- In a medium term, with the support of other European territories, it is intended to apply for the creation of the European day of the Sport with the goal to promote the practice of sport as stated in the White Paper on Sport approved by the European Commission in July 2007.

The Sports Festival has been created to encourage the participation of the whole population, with no age limit and with the purpose of allowing the participation of all citizens without any kind of discrimination. The activities on offer are designed by each municipality, according to their specific sports offer, and consists of a popular sport offering. The activities are implemented at the sport facilities and at the public urban and/or natural areas of the municipality, involving the entities to encourage the sport practice of the whole citizenship. The Sports Festival is promoted by the sports area of the Provincial council of Barcelona and it is organised by each municipality with the general coordination of the provincial Council of Barcelona and with the support of the Sport Councils of the Provinces of Barcelona. Some relevant data in the Province of Barcelona is presented below:

INDICATORS	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Municipalities participating	88	114	113	110	158	195
Areas of activity	300	413	427	427	585	600
Activities	421	413	488	559	885	630
Participants	45.000	60.000	63.000	90.000	141.000	154.000

Implications for sport and sport management

It is important for all sport organisation to promote the sport activity among the population trying to make participation without barriers possible. Ee consider that the Sports Festival can contribute to increase citizen's participation in sport activities. As a consequence we would like to enter into agreements with other territories in order to increase the number of participants in the Sports Festival, working towards the creation of the European Day of the Sport.

References

European Commission (2007). *White Paper on Sport*.
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