

## Governance of sport for all policies in Slovenia

**Authors:** Simona Kustec Lipicer, Renata Slabe Erker and Simon Ličen

**E-mail:** simona.kustec-lipocer@fdv.uni-lj.si

The aim of this paper is to present the research project conclusions in which we analyse and evaluate governance patterns of sport for all policies in a small post-socialist EU country of Slovenia in the last ten years term. In this period the country has from the perspectives of political situation underwent numerous internal and external challenges – from entering the EU, EURO zone and OECD at the international floor, to the first major internal political ideological shifts, political corruption affairs. In the last years the state has also been exacerbating in deep social-economic and moral-value crisis. The leading question in regard to our analysis was to recognise, understand and evaluate the governmental interventions into sport for all policies in the stated circumstances. Doing so we wanted first to recognise the leading patterns of citizens' attitudes towards sport activities and the role of the state authorities in this regard. For the stated purposes we conducted public opinion data analysis of the special 2007 series of the International Social Survey Programme (*ISSP*) on Leisure Time and *Sports*. Parallel we also conducted a classical policy analytical study in which we first monitored the normative and financial backgrounds for the implementation of the national sport for all policies and their measures, and then evaluated them with the

qualitative data, gathered through the semi-structured interviews with the key national governmental and non-governmental policy stakeholders in the field. Also a special web-survey for assessing the citizens' attitudes towards the existing and potential future policy measures for the state promotion of the citizens' sport activities was conducted on the sample of more than 3,000 respondents. The conclusions of the analysis showed that in the field of sport policy in Slovenia a set of discrepancies can be disclosed. Besides the fact that the comparison of the citizens' preferences as disclosed through the public opinion polls and the existing governmental policy interventions revealed only a limited mutual congruence, also system general discrepancies between the normative and actual implementation of the policy design were revealed. The common denominator of all of the discrepancies seems to lie in the characteristics of the 'virtual' modes of democratic policy governance which can be on the one hand seen through the existence of highly recognised and internationally comparable democratic policy norms and principles at the normative, e.g. 'on the paper' policy level and on the other hand through the set of inequalities and ignorance (from programme, financial to moral and ethical) when the actual every-day policy implementation is at stake. The effects of the described policy construction have thus often led to the violations of the basic democratic norms and principles, to the establishment of the closed policy networks, clientelism, politicisation and corruption inside the field of sport policy in general and consequently sport for all policies.