

Participation in sports: Lithuanian consumption patterns

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The level of sporting development in a country today plays highly significant role in its economic development. This important interrelation might be explained by the way people are engaged in sports and by the amount of money they invest in it. Therefore, participation in sport studies (due to a greater recognition of sport and its impact on the social, economic development, promotion of healthy life style, etc.) have received a great interest in the last years. Different aspects of the participation in sport (Gratton&Taylor, 2000; Taks&Kesene, 2000; Wicker et al, 2010; Scheerder et al, 2011) have made scholars to be interested in deep analysis of comparative studies at national and international levels. More and more participation in sport studies lead not only to the quantity measures and description of the different population groups engaged in exercising, but also provide with a set of recommendations as a solid background for the policy decision makers. Likewise participation in sport studies with a special attention to the consumer's spending aspects play an important role in measuring the economic dimension of sport at the national level (Preuss et al, 2012). However, the situation in different European countries at different sporting and economic development levels regarding participation and determination of various consumption patterns differs.

The aim of this paper is to analyze the participation in sports and consumption patterns in Lithuania.

The survey employed two methods: CAPI (Computer Assisted Personal Interview) and CAWI (Computer Assisted Web Interview). The survey was done using a modified instrument developed in Germany (Preuss et al, 2012). The survey sample consisted of 3506 respondents, who spent part of their budget on sports activities (active or passive), according to six socio-demographic criteria: age (15-75 years), sex, education, social status, place of residence, average income per family member excluding taxes. Data about consumer spending on 71 sports were collected Data were analysed using SPSS19. The following results were achieved by the survey:

1. The proportion of active and passive participants of the sport market equals 86 to 14. In general, women are more active than men. The most active participants are aged 26-30 and passive participation is popular among age group of 18-20. More than half of the respondents (55 percent) have a higher degree and are specialists or public servants (37 percent). The majority (82 percent) lives in the cities.
2. The most popular sports among active participants are: jogging (n=803); individual exercises in the gym (n=684); fitness (n=435); basketball (n=409). The consumers of passive sport participation are: basketball (n=1326), football (n=726) and moto sport (n=658).
3. The analysis of the survey results revealed the consumption patterns towards traditional (olympic) sports and the forms of physical activity (jogging, joga, etc.). Basketball, swimming and tennis remain the most popular traditional sports and receive the biggest part of consumer expenditure. Individual sports and different forms of

physical activity, such as, jogging, exercising in fitness centers, bowling, Pilates, etc. prevail in the active sport participation market.

4. Higher concentration of traditional sports is observed in the passive sport participation market only as an object for watching.
5. The average expenditure on active sports participation is higher in individual sports and different forms of physical activity than in team sports. The survey results revealed the spending on sports goods and services in 2014 was over 1.45 million EUR by active sport participants and over 0.29 million EUR by passive sport participants.

It is the first survey completed in Lithuania to analyze the participation trends and the expenditure on active and passive sport participation. The study has a great value both for the providers of sport services as well as for sport policy makers at local and national levels. It gives not only the understanding of sport consumption patterns but also rationalize decision making process towards promoting different sports, generating investments for the providing more preferred sport services to the customers thus rising participation in sport level in general. The analysis of the study results was funded by Physical Education and Sport Foundation.

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