

An Examination The Sport Events In The Hague Between 2014 And 2016: What Factors Determine Economic Impact?

Van Herpen, Noud Antonius¹; Bostock, James²; Laitila, Osmo³

¹The Hague University of Applied Sciences, The Netherlands; ²University of Derby, United Kingdom; ³JAMK University of Applied Sciences, Finland

E-mail: N.a.vanherpen@hhs.nl

Background

The Hague is seeking to become an 'eventful city' through an event portfolio, which although incongruent, is interrelated through strategic planning to achieve multiple outcomes for the municipality (Richards & Palmer, 2010; Ziakis, 2013). More specific The Hague wants to be known as "The Sport City at Sea". As such they organised several international sport events. In 2014 the Rabobank Hockey World Cup was hosted in the city of The Hague, in 2015 the Beach Volleyball World Championships was at 'the Hofvijver' and the Volvo Ocean Race held a Pit Stop in The Hague. In 2016 the 'Olympic Experience' was organized at the beach in The Hague.

In general, the challenge in comparing economic impact studies is that the researches are often conducted applying different methodologies and data collection procedures. This leads to a situation where the study results are controversial. Preuss (2011) describes that one of the top challenges in economic impact studies is the insufficient knowledge and information about the consumption patterns of the event visitors and residents, and reliable estimation of the number on people visiting the event. In this particular case we were able to measure the events in a similar and valid way which enables an exploration of how different sport events affect the economic impact of The Hague. More importantly, it will enable an assessment of which factors are the driving factors behind economic impact. Knowing the driving factors makes it possible to maximize the positive impacts. To do so we will compare the events hosted in The Hague to events held in Finland (World Rally Championship) and Rotterdam (World Short Track Championships). To use the information given by spectators for strategic planning and determining key performance indicators is a clear example of 'Sport Business Intelligence'.

Research questions that will be answered are:

1. What are the key performance indicators for economic impact?
2. How can event organizers benefit from knowing their visitors?

Methods

Face to face surveys were conducted at the events. A systematic sampling approach was adopted, with trained researchers interviewing every 10th visitor to ensure that the sample was representative of the total attendee population (Veal & Darcy, 2014). The questionnaire consisted three main categories; background information, economic expenditure and the way visitors see the event and the city of The Hague. The questionnaire was based upon the guidelines used in the Netherlands to evaluate sport events, which in turn is based upon international literature (Preuss, 2007). Our research gathered over 5,000 valid surveys. Usually the data gathered at an event is only used to determine economic impact of the events itself. We now will combine the data from different events in order to analyse and determine the driving factors of economic impact and give event organizers tools to maximize economic impact.

Results

The results of this study are not yet complete as the final event took place in March 2017. Our initial analysis has already uncovered some interesting results with regards to the economic impacts (ranging from several ten thousands to several millions of Euros). For example it is interesting to whether the place where you host an event has influence on the measured economic impact. Is it better to host an event in the city centre or just outside the city centre in a special venue? And what is the relationship between spending patterns and visitor profile? Does educational level has an effect? Is gender important? Does age correlate to the different spending categories? During the workshop we will discuss the differences between the events in terms of economic impact and we will pinpoint specific indicators that should help events to leverage economic impacts.

Conclusions

Once all the data is combined, this research will evaluate whether the "strategic patterning" of the events supported by The Hague municipality achieve economic benefits (Ziakis, 2013). The wider goal of this paper is to find important factors that might affect economic impact, highlighting the different impacts from the

different sport events. This can then provide vital information for The Hague and other event organizers in terms of how to use *Sport Business Intelligence* in order to maximise positive or economic impacts.

References

- Preuss, H. (2011). A method for calculating the crowding-out effect in sport mega-event impact studies: The 2010 FIFA World Cup. *Development Southern Africa, 28*, 367–385.
- Preuss, H. (2007). The conceptualisation and measurement of mega sport event legacies. *Journal of Sport & Tourism, 12*, 207–227.
- Richards, G., & Palmer, R. (2010). *Eventful cities: Cultural management and urban revitalisation*. Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann.
- Veal, A. J. & Darcy, S. (2014). *Research Methods for Sport Studies and Sport Management: A practical guide*. London: Routledge
- Ziakis, V. (2013). *Event portfolio planning and management: A holistic approach*. Oxford: Routledge.