

How to Get 600.000 Danes More Physical Active (Practitioner Contribution)

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Aim

Four years ago, the National Olympic Committee and Sports Confederation of Denmark and the Danish Gymnastics and Sports Association agreed on a common vision meaning that in 2025 50% of the Danish population shall be members of a sports club and 75% of all Danes should be physical active at a regularly basis. To succeed with vision 600.000 Danes must be moved either from being physical active on their own to an active member of a sports club or come from physical inactivity to physical activity.

Purpose and Background

Until 2014 the National Olympic Committee and Sports Confederation of Denmark and the Danish Gymnastics and Sports Association accounting for a total of 2.3 million members decided to end a long-term rivalry on the issues of members and funding and unite on a common vision with an aim to make Denmark the most sporting active nation in the world. Furthermore, the two organizations decided to change their fundamental strategy from looking only on getting Danes to be members of a sports club to extend their operational range to getting Danes more physical active irrespective of their organizational affiliations. The purpose of the common vision between the two major sports organizations in Denmark is to make sure that organized sport will stay strong and important in the Danish society in the future. Likewise, it is the purpose to make sure that the benefits of being part of a binding community in the sports clubs or getting access to the health benefits of being physical active will attract many more Danes to sport and physical activity. Thereby the Danish society will harvest a positive surplus on a number of social accounts including health, social inclusion, growth, employment and education.

Design and implementation

The design of the vision to get 600.000 Danes to be physical active is based on two tracks. One track is about renewing or rethinking a number of sports, so they will be able to attract more members and make a bigger part of the population more physical active. The other track is concentrated on improving the political framework for sports clubs and physical activity in Denmark. The foundation for the political work in public affairs is a comprehensive political catalogue, which is announcing 65 recommendations of political initiatives covering all government ministries except the foreign ministry.

The 65 recommendations are later boiled down to 25 recommendations, which are thought as the most likely political initiatives to be implemented in a timeframe of three years. A fundamental condition for a successful implementation is to secure a political ownership. The first step was to secure a prominent space for the vision in the government program. Then the different public affairs initiatives have concentrated on getting the top political ministers to take an interest for the agenda and show political commitment to discuss the necessary political initiatives, which can make more Danes physical active.

Outcome

The outcome of the public affairs work with a catalogue of 25 specific recommendations on how to get 600.000 Danes physical active has been a high-level conference hosted by the Prime Minister with a selected participation of six different government ministers, the umbrella organizations for regions and municipalities, employer associations, labor unions, major civil society organizations with health, social work and elderly. At the conference specific themes on sport and health, sport and integration, sport and social inclusion and sport and employment were discussed among ministers and organizations including the NOC and Sports Confederation of Denmark and the Danish Gymnastics and Sports Association. The recommendations from the conference were to set up three working groups. One with the Minister of Health as chair, one with the Minister of Employment as chair and one with the Minister of Culture as chair.

Implications

The future of the project is foremost concentrated on the recommendations that the three governmental working groups are set to come with in august 2018, and which will be presented by the Danish Prime Minister at another conference in the autumn of 2018. The NOC and Sports Confederation in Denmark and the Danish Gymnastics and Sports Association are working on getting the political support to the following proposals:

- Physical activity on prescription
- Physical activity as an integrated part of what is offered to unemployed
- A government fund, which can secure that more sports facilities will be renovated.

And then of course 22 other political recommendations, which across all governmental ministries are aimed at securing that by 2025 600.000 more Danes will be physical active.