

Impact of sport events on local communities: dimensions and measures

Hans Slender, Hanze University of Applied Sciences, Groningen, The Netherlands.

Contact: H.w.slender@pl.hanze.nl

Paul Hover, Mulier Institute, Utrecht, The Netherlands

Jerzy Straatmeijer, Mulier Institute, Utrecht, The Netherlands

Astrid Cevaal, Mulier Institute, Utrecht, The Netherlands

Most sport events are partially public funded and therefore expected to generate benefits for the host community. The evaluation of these benefits, the legacy, is difficult because the various dimensions (i.g. sporting, economic, infrastructural, urban and social) require different methodologies (Preuss, 2007). This study aims to identify which dimensions –if any- are the main objectives for event organisations and whether these dimensions are evaluated by independent researchers.

In total 33 sport events were included that were held between 1980-2015 in the Netherlands. The events were selected to vary in fixed vs. mobile, participative or elite sports. Only mega, large and hallmark events were included. A multiple case study was conducted based on secondary resources. The events' objectives were identified from documents from the various involved stakeholders. Only through researchers evaluated evaluation studies were included. The search for relevant documents was conducted by internet search and telephone and personal interviews. In total over 300 documents were analyzed.

All 33 sport events formulated social objectives. The most popular objectives are within the themes marketing, economics and social impact. Other themes mentioned are education, health, infrastructure and sustainability. For 5 of the 33 events these objectives were operationalised specifically. For 27 of the 33 events a minimal of one independent evaluation was conducted on one or more objectives. When the objectives of events in various time slots are compared, little differences are found. On the other hand a growing number of evaluations, especially within the themes of economics and marketing, are found.

The presentation will illustrate the development of evaluating instruments for various dimensions and stimulate understanding of the impact of sport events for organizing communities.

References:

Preuss, H. (2007). The conceptualisation and measurement of mega sport event legacies. *Journal of sport & tourism*, 12(3-4), 207-228.