

## A Comparative Perspective On Sports Clubs In Europe

**Breuer, Christoph; Feiler, Svenja**

German Sport University Cologne, Department of Sport Economics and Sport Management, Germany

E-mail: breuer@dshs-koeln.de

The idea of investigating sports clubs in Europe from an empirical and comparative perspective was initiated through the book "Sports Clubs in Europe" (Breuer, Hoekman, Nagel & Van der Werff, 2015) which comprises various country-specific information on sports clubs, but is not based on a common empirical approach. The underlying study is the first to allow a comparative analysis of sports clubs across ten European countries. The purpose of this study is to gain knowledge about the extent to which European sports clubs are socially inclusive, the extent of volunteering within sports clubs, and how sports clubs are working to recruit, qualify, and retain volunteers.

Central to the SIVSCE project are three theoretical concepts: Sports clubs, social integration, and volunteering.

There are seven features which are commonly used to characterize a sports clubs: 1) voluntary membership, 2) orientation towards the members' interests, 3) democratic decision-making structure, 4) voluntary work, 5) autonomy, 6) a non-profit orientation, and 7) solidarity (Heinemann & Horch, 1981; Ibsen, 1992).

An online sports club survey was conducted in each of the ten participating countries in the autumn of 2015. The total of 139,659 sports clubs were invited to take part in the survey. The email-invitation to the survey was sent centrally from Germany to clubs in nearly all countries (except for Flanders, the Netherlands, and Switzerland which used existing national surveys). The clubs had about two months to fill in the questionnaire which consisted of the same questions in all ten countries. The questions dealt with structural characteristics (e.g. number of members, sports), resources (e.g. paid staff, finances, facilities), goals, problems, management, as well as volunteering and social integration. A total of 35,790 clubs participated in the survey. Descriptive and analytical data analyses were applied.

Pertaining to volunteers the study shows that in clubs in Spain, Hungary, the Netherlands, and Denmark, averagely more than 20% of the clubs' members are holding a central voluntary position while in Germany and Switzerland, 13% and 14% of the members are volunteers. In line with this result, clubs in Germany and Switzerland report comparatively large problems with regard to the recruitment and retention of volunteers on the board level. Applying a regression analysis with the dependent variable "volunteers per members" shows that with increasing club size the share of volunteers decreases. This result is found in all countries and can probably be ascribed to the fact that the number of volunteers in fixed positions does not rise with more members. A further interesting result is that in Flanders, Denmark, Germany, and the Netherlands the existence of initiatives to recruit and retain volunteers positively impacts on the share of volunteers. Moreover, clubs that state to be involved in long term planning in Flanders, Denmark, Germany, and Norway rather have higher shares of volunteers relative to their members than clubs that do not put high value on planning. This shows that planning and professional club management can help to increase the share of volunteers.

With regard to social integration of different population groups, there are big differences with regard to the share of migrants, the elderly (65+), and people with disabilities across countries. While in Poland, about three quarters of the sports clubs estimate not to have any people with a migration background, this is only the case for roughly every fifth club in Norway, the Netherlands, and Germany and every fourth club in England and Switzerland. With regard to the elderly, more than half of all clubs in Poland and Spain report to have no members of this age group. Contrary, only 7% of sports clubs in Germany and 11 % of Dutch sports clubs state not to have any people aged 65 or older among their members.

### References

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This implies that sports frequency is higher when participants engage in settings that better fit their motivations and goals. Because of the growing importance of informal and flexible settings and health goals, professionals in the sports and health domains should take into account the motivations, goals and needs of different target groups who (want.Â Sports participation in sport clubs, gyms or public spaces: How users of different sports settings differ in their motivations, goals, and sports frequency. Ineke Deelen , Roles Conceptualization, Data curation, Formal analysis, Investigation, Methodology, Project administration, Resources, Software, Supervision, Validation, Visualization, Writing â€œ original draft, Writing â€œ review & editing. Europe has always been a major centre for sports development. Since the birth of the ancient Olympic Games until the present, organizational innovations have been developed and implemented in Europe and later distributed around the world. This historical leadership in sports development provides the European Union (EU) with a great opportunity to set the trend in the formulation and articulation of the rules and management system. The EUâ€™s leading role in shaping the regulatory basis of sport is ensured by the size of the sports market in Europe. Sport Clubs in Europe will appeal to scholars of nonprofit management, sports management and sports sociology as well as administrators and policy makers in the international sports community. Discover the world's research. 19+ million members.Â Jan 2015. Sport Clubs in Europe - A Cross-National Comparative Perspective. pp.187-208. Christoph Breuer. In book: Sport Clubs in Europe - A Cross-National Comparative Perspective (pp.419-435). Chapter: A Cross-National Comparative Perspective on Sport Clubs in Europe. Publisher: Springer International Publishing. Editors: Christoph Breuer, Remco Hoekman, Siegfried Nagel, Harold van der Werff.Â The preceding 20 chapters have presented national perspectives on sport clubs based on quantitative and descriptive information on the origin of sport clubs, the position of sport clubs within policy and society, and characteristics of sport clubs. In this chapter we offer a cross-national comparison based on the multilevel framework that served as a guideline for the authors for their country chapters.