



SPORT AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO INCREASE EMPLOYMENT IN THE REGIONS

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ABSTRACT

In recent years, sport has gained a significant profile in a number of European strategies and programs. The aim of this study is to open up potential opportunities for increasing employment in the regions through sport and its accompanying sporting activities. Compared to most industries, in times of economic turmoil, sports are proving to be resistant to recession. Methodology a theoretical and regulatory review was made, measuring employment in sport using the central statistical definition of the 'Vilnius definition' for sport, covering the main sport activities coded by class 93.1 - Sporting activities. The results analysed a number of regulatory documents, including recommendations and reports of various committees related to employment in sport in a broad and narrow aspect, identified stakeholders and described leading sports successfully supporting local employment. The conclusion provides guidelines for work related to additional information and intelligence programs on employment for non-profit organizations, municipalities and others. Discussion through state regulations in the field of sport should ensure that non-profit organizations and municipalities are more involved in the development of sport.

Key words: human resources, sports law, management, sociology of sport

INTRODUCTION

Sport is a reflection of the state of the processes that take place on a global scale. As a basic social institute it consists of all organizations in society that organize, direct and control human activity in sports situations. Based on this, such organizations are companies for the production of sports equipment, sports clubs, sports teams, state governing bodies in the field of amateur and professional sports, publishing houses of sports newspapers and magazines and others. They all appear as parts of the sports system (1) and the fastest growing industries.

The dispute cannot be separated or isolated from the social environment and from the other main social institutions - education, healthcare, economy, mass media. “Interacts with them through the sports product, which takes the following main forms: a sports competition turned into a spectacle; sports information obtained from the interaction between social actors; sports services offered by sports organizations; sporting goods, which are produced by the interaction with the social institute economy” (2). Social relations and interdependencies are clearly expressed, especially in financial terms. Their impact on sports in 2019 from the COVID-19 pandemic is 61.6 billion dollars less than the forecast for 2020, due to the suspension of events planned in the sports calendar. The marketing company Two Circles predicted that it would generate \$ 73.7 billion. For comparison, in 2019 the total revenues in professional sports were 129 billion, and the expectations for 2020 growth by 4.9% - 135.3 billion (3).

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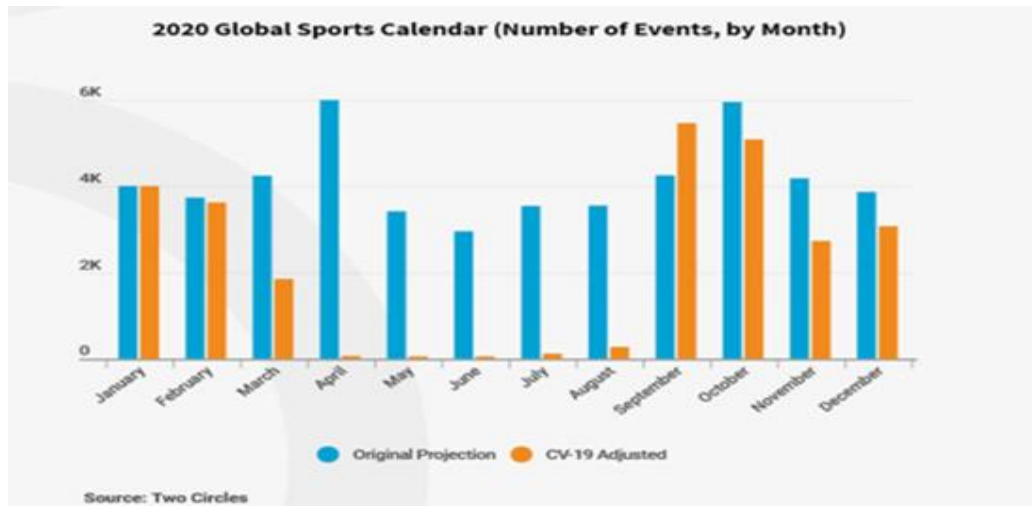


Figure 1. Global sports calendar before and after the COVID-19 forecast of Two Circles

According to the Ministry of Youth and Sports, the capacity of regional employment committees and municipalities will be developed to develop and apply for budget funding through programs that meet the priorities of the respective regional development strategy and of regional, regional and municipal development plans, encouraging partnership with the private sector, improving the choice of target groups and intensifying the delivery of community-service activities

The Ministry of Youth and Sports has launched a series of meetings with sports federations and clubs, at which, together with the Employment Agency, it presents them with opportunities to

apply for training and employment projects under its programs (2).

Ilieva analyses the management of sporting events in the sport system and opens opportunities for a better involvement of young people in a number of sporting initiatives (3). According to a study by Forbes, the most serious consequences for American sports. A two-month break would cost about \$ 5 billion from ticket sales, concessions, sponsorships and television rights. About 40% of this amount or 2 billion dollars will be the losses of MLB. After baseball comes basketball. The NBA and NSAA will lose \$ 1.2 billion and \$ 1 billion, respectively. The NHL, Nascar and MLS will lose a total of about 900 million.



The cost of COVID-19 in sports business

Predicted \$5bn loss on US Sports leagues by competition:



Figure 2. American sports - losses from COVID -19

In Europe, the five leading football championships suffered losses of 4 billion

euros. The most affected is the English Premier League, which due to COVID-19 registered

minus 1.25 billion euros. The losses of La Liga reached 950 million. Followed by the Bundesliga - 750 million, Serie A - 650 million and League 1 - 400 million (4).




Adding the postponed Olympics, the amounts increase. At the moment, the financial losses are still being calculated and no official information on the subject has been announced. All sports on all continents and countries are affected.

Table 1. European Championships - losses from COVID -19



The cost of COVID-19 in sports business

Predicted €4bn loss on top 5 leagues in Europe by revenue source:

	Matchday	Broadcasting	Commercial	Total
	170-180	700-800	250-300	1,150-1,250
	150-170	500-600	150-200	800-950
	130-140	300-400	200-250	650-750
	90-100	350-450	100-150	550-650
	50-60	150-200	100-140	300-400

When considering how many organizations can participate in the full service of sports systems, it can be visualized through the main levels of distribution and the underlying in the relevant state levels of sports management, including private organizations working in this direction. This is related to sociological diagnosis, prevention (5).and social design.

According to the Ministry of Youth and Sports, the capacity of the regional employment commissions and municipalities to develop and apply for budget funding will be developed with programs that meet the priorities of the respective regional development strategy and regional, regional and municipal development plans, by promoting partnership with the private sector, improving the choice of target groups and intensifying the implementation of community service activities (6).

Hypotheses:

➤ we assume that in the process of the research various problems and variations will be

revealed, related to the employment in sports and its peculiarities of manifestation in the regions, national and European scale;

➤ we assume that they will open additional opportunities for work programs in the field of sports employment for their optimization and reduction of unemployment.

The aim of the research is to monitor employment in sports and to reveal opportunities for increasing employment in the regions through sports. The following main tasks derive from the set goal:

- to reveal and analyse interpretations, variations and leading interrelations of sports and employment in the regions, national and European scale;
- to analyse work programs and good practices in employment through sport;
- to draw conclusions and recommendations in order to reduce unemployment in the

regions through sports, sports initiatives and sports activities.

The subject of the study are problems related to increasing employment through sport in the regions and its impact on unemployment and social integration.

The object of the study is the work programs of the European Union agreed by the Council, which set the priorities and set the principles underlying cooperation, statistical classification of economic activities in the European Community (NACE), International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO), European Statistical institute (Eurostat), national statistical institute (NSI), official statistical and normative documents, etc.

METHODOLOGY

To solve the main tasks, achieve the goal and prove the hypotheses, a complex methodology of research of normative, statistical and literary sources, content analysis and included observation is applied. Employment is measured through the use of the "Vilnius definition" of sport, covering the main sports activities coded to NACE Rev.2 class 93.1 - Sports activities. The dimension of the profession has also been introduced within sports employment. The methodology used is very similar to that used to assess cultural employment; all jobs in the economic sector of NACE and jobs in the sports profession (ISCO, "International Standard Classification of Occupations") outside the sports sector of NACE are considered simultaneously. In particular, all workers listed in code 93.1 of NACE rev.2 (Sports activities) and / or ISCO-08 code 342 (Sports and fitness workers) fall within the scope of this definition of sport.

The research was conducted in the period from February 2018 to May 2021.

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Bulgaria as a regular member of the European Union (EU), the European Parliament, the Council of Europe and the European Commission adopt a set of basic documents (charters, conventions, programs, strategies, plans) with a recommendatory character for the management and development of physical education and sports (7-11). Attention is focused on creating conditions for the implementation of the functions of physical education and sports - educational, social,

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health, cultural and recreational. Priority is given to the process of encouraging, motivating and organizing the involvement and involvement of citizens in forms of physical activity in order to maintain their good health (12). The Erasmus + program is one of the EU's funding programs for partnerships between sports organizations, non-profit events and research to strengthen the policy-making process (13). and supports volunteering within the European Solidarity Corps.

A good practice in this direction is the European Sports Week initiative to promote sport and physical activity throughout Europe under the motto # Be Active (14). National Sports Academy "Vasil Lenski" and students majoring in sports management took an active part in the organization, conduct and volunteer initiatives. The goal was to raise awareness of how important an active lifestyle is for everyone and to enable people to start playing sports! This type of event is useful in several main aspects: Stimulating good governance in municipalities by awarding major sports events;

- To look for the economic dimension of sport (such as sustainable funding and the legacy of major sporting events for the area where they take place, such as modern infrastructure);
- Development of human resources, which are key in conducting such sporting events (through education, training, employment and volunteering);
- Providing support for other sports initiatives, such as research, conferences and regular dialogue with sports stakeholders. Expert groups working on this issue are: "Sport and Economics" (XG ECO), "Physical Activity and Health Improvement" (XG HEPA) and others that play a key role in implementing evidence-based policies in the sports sector. Improving the functioning of the labour market through sport will lead to increased investment in human resources, support for sustainable macroeconomic development, which in turn will generate more and better jobs in order to increase employment, labour productivity and social inclusion. in the regions. Currently, Sofia is the district with the highest relative share of the working age population - 66.5%, followed by Blagoevgrad and Smulyan districts with 64.7% each. Vidin district has the lowest share of the working age population - 54.8%.

Problems are emerging given the limited number of able-bodied people, the share of people with higher education is insufficient, the number of illiterates and people with low education is alarmingly high (15). According to preliminary data for March, the average gross monthly salary of employees by employment and official legal status by statistical regions and districts in 2021 is the highest in Sofia (capital) - BGN 2,068, and the lowest in Blagoevgrad - 957 BGN.

In the sector "culture, sports and entertainment" average annual salary of employees by employment and service by economic activities and sectors in: 2019 is a total of BGN 13,105. In the public sector BGN 12,150, and in the private sector BGN 13,709. 2020 is a total of BGN 13,070. In the public sector BGN 12,862, and in the private sector BGN 13,231 (according to the latest NSI data 24.02.2021) (16).

The "culture, sports, entertainment" sector is risky in seven of the nine elements of working conditions. Except for the elements of discrimination, violence and work organization. In general, the country registers low levels of violence, harassment and discrimination in the workplace. The share of respondents from the culture, sports and entertainment sector who share about such problems at work is within the national average. There are no statistically significant deviations in any of the indicators used to measure the area of violence and discrimination in the workplace. The sector is not risky with regard to this element of working conditions.

Statistically significant values of the risk index are reported for the other elements of the working conditions. The highest values are reported for the working time element, and the lowest for the working environment element. The specificity of the sector in terms of wages is reflected in the relatively higher share of employees who declare that they receive other additional remuneration and the very low share of employees who have other, mostly non-monetary benefits. There are no registered employees in the sector who declare that they receive payments for share participation in companies. A significant proportion of employees are defined as middle-income and middle-income (17).

With the help of information from the annual sports initiatives and competitions through labour market research, analysis and assessment of labour market trends, new ones will be developed and the implemented programs, measures and actions on the labour market will be improved. Emphasis will be placed on the preventive improvement of employability through sport. Success will depend on the provision of the necessary specialists and financial resources, as well as on the partnership at regional and institutional level. The successful inclusion of young people in the labour market through sports is also a type of training, as well as the updating of their key competencies is a prerequisite for their successful employment. Sport has a disciplining and positive effect on the category of young people. Not including them hides risks of: problems in the early periods of starting and developing a career, discouragement, loss of qualifications, employment in the informal economy, social isolation and others. They, in turn, have a negative impact not only on the individual but also on society as a whole.

A range of sports and interpretations are involved in the fight against unemployment at regional, national, European and global levels: athletics examines the functional responsibilities of the organizers of athletics competitions of various ranks (18), karate - analyses the finals of world championships and this how it affects the regional level in the training of high-class athletes, improve the system of training and sports training of athletes (19, 20). etc. Employment and sport in Europe Employment in sport represents more than 1.7 million people in the EU and is constantly increasing. In 2018, 1.76 million people worked in sports in the EU-28: more than half were men (55%), a percentage in line with total employment. People in the 15-29 age group make up 38% of the total number of people employed in sports, more than twice the share in total employment, while the age group 30-64 years represents almost 60% (20% less than the share of total employment). work). About 46% of those employed in sports have a secondary education level (ISCED levels 3-4), 38% have a high level (ISCED 5-8) and 16% have a low level (highest level ISCED 2); these percentages are close to the proportions observed for total employment. Between 2013 and 2018, employment in sport increased by

3.2% relative to the average annual growth rate (AAGR), compared to 1.4% observed for total employment. The largest increases in EU Member States are observed in Greece (AAGR + 17%), Croatia (AAGR + 16%) and Latvia (AAGR + 12%), while only four countries have a negative trend in their AAGRs: Austria (-1.4%), France (-2.9%, note the break in the series), Slovakia (-3.6%) and Romania (-5.2%). Between 2013 and 2018, employment in sport

increased by 3.2% relative to the average annual growth rate (AAGR), compared to 1.4% observed for total employment (see Table 2 and Figure 1). The largest increases in EU Member States are observed in Greece (AAGR + 17%), Croatia (AAGR + 16%) and Latvia (AAGR + 12%), while only four countries have a negative trend in their AAGRs: Austria (-1.4%), France (-2.9%, note the break in the series), Slovakia (-3.6%) and Romania (-5.2%).

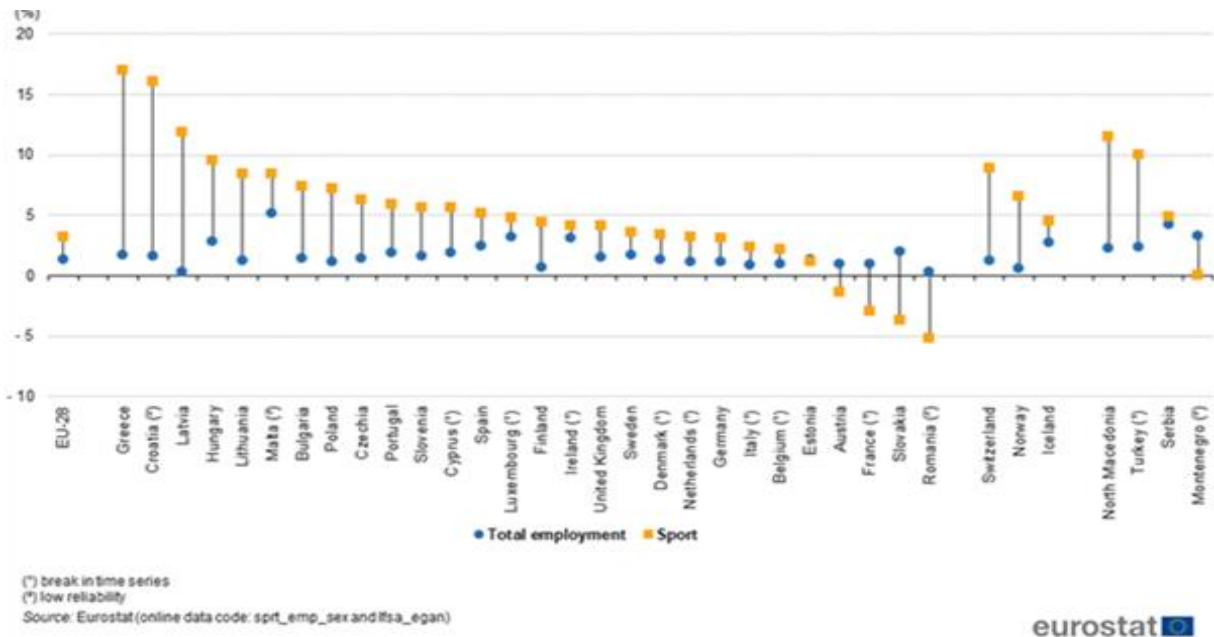


Figure 3. Average annual growth rates in sports and general employment, 2013 - 2018 (%) (21)

Employment in sports as a share of total employment In 2018, employment in sport represents 0.8% of total employment in the EU, ranging from 0.1% in Romania to 1.7% in Sweden. For most EU Member States, the share of sports employment reaches a maximum of 1%; in addition to Sweden, only in the United Kingdom, Finland, Ireland (note that there is a break in the series) and Spain, this share exceeded 1%. Compared to total employment, jobs in sport still account for a relatively small share, but the contribution of sport is steadily increasing - from 0.7% to 0.8% in almost all Member States and at EU level, for the period 2013 – 2018 year.

8% (from 29% in 2013 to 21% in 2018), the lowest share among all Member States. Data sources. As no Eurostat data collection is specifically dedicated to sport, sports statistics are derived from existing surveys in the EU. Sports employment statistics are derived from the results of the European Labour Force Survey (EU-LFS), the main source of information on the state of the EU labour market and employment trends (23) The hypotheses of the study were confirmed.

Since 2013, the percentage of young people employed in sports has increased by 3% (from 35% in 2013 to 38% in 2018). Among these countries with reliable data for the two years, Sweden and the United Kingdom have the largest increase, by 7 and 6%, respectively. In contrast to the Czech Republic, it decreased by

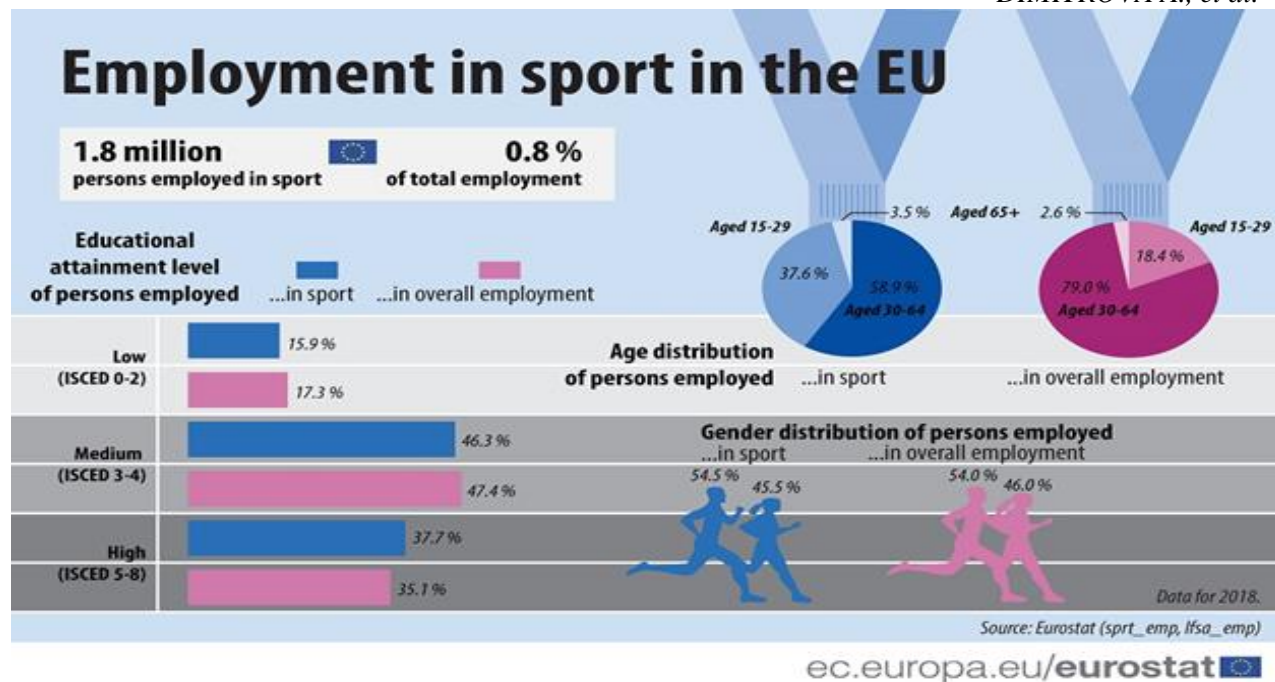


Figure 4. Share of people aged 15 - 29 in sports employment and in total employment, 2018, (22)

CONCLUSION

The data eloquently showed that a comprehensive and interdisciplinary approach is needed to solve specific social problems, a basis for forecasting and control.

Effective support for the regions can be provided through the implementation of sports and sports initiatives that will contribute to employment.

Sport is a suitable alternative for social inclusion of the unemployed in the labour market and an opportunity to increase employment in the regions.

Creating incentives for employers in municipalities to invest in sports and sports-related infrastructure will encourage job creation. The ultimate goal of social design is social innovation - the creation of new types of social relations, socio-subject structures or the transformation of old ones.

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