
European Experience in the Creation and Development of Sports Cluster Associations

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Annotation: Sport is an important economic sector and plays a significant role in national economies. In addition, sport can play an important role in addressing a number of serious social problems such as physical inactivity, sustainable development and educational gaps. It should be noted that the physical culture and sports management mechanisms currently existing in Russia, while having a number of advantages, are not without significant shortcomings that limit their effectiveness. In this regard, a constant search is carried out for scientific and theoretical models of effective management of this area. In our opinion, the cluster approach can become the most promising tool for integrating authorities, sports organizations, federations and the population in this area.

Keywords: physical culture and sports, sports cluster, purpose and objectives of creation, participants, projects.

INTRODUCTION

According to various studies, the share of sports-related gross value added (GVA) in the total GVA of European Union (EU) countries ranges from 1.76% to 3% in the broad sports sector. The total employment in the EU generated by sporting events is 7.3 million people and is equivalent to 3.5% of the total employment in the EU [10-12]. These figures confirm that sport is an important economic sector in the EU and plays a significant role in national economies. In addition, sport can play an important role in addressing a number of serious social problems such as physical inactivity, sustainable development and educational gaps. Due to the practical lack of experience in the formation and development of sports clusters and their associations in Russia, the experience of functioning of the European sports cluster association was analyzed.

This kind of analysis seems to be useful for the purpose of methodological substantiation of the strategy for the formation and development programs of the project of territorial sports clusters in Russia. The purpose of the study is to analyze the experience of functioning of the European sports cluster association in order to methodologically substantiate the strategy for the formation and development programs of territorial sports clusters in Russia.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Information about the activities of European territorial sports clusters for this study was obtained from the official websites of the studied European sports cluster associations. Research methods: analysis of the statutory documents of European sports cluster associations; study of strategic programs for the development of European sports cluster associations, activity reports; comparison method; theoretical modeling method.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

According to the information provided on the official website of the European Platform for Sports Innovation (hereinafter referred to as "EPSI") [3], the organization is an official partner of the European Commission. It was created in 2008 at the first European conference on sport and innovation, held in Brussels (Belgium). "EPSI" was created in the form of a non-profit European association with a three-tier management system: General Assembly, Board of Directors, President. Day-to-day operations are managed by two Executive Directors: Alberto Beachy and René Viilens [3].

"EPSI" is a network organization. Currently, the members of the organization are 65 national innovation organizations representing 19 countries focused on innovation in the fields of sports, the sports industry, outdoor activities, healthcare, tourism and many other areas. The key tasks of "EPSI" are: creating a more favorable innovation environment for the sports industry of the EU countries (hereinafter EU), stimulation of technological innovations and creation of enterprises using innovative technologies [4]. Since December 2010, EPSI has been generating international sports and innovative projects in the sports industry, including modeling sports business clusters [9]. In the activities of EPSI sports clusters, special attention is paid to the use of the concept of a four-link helix (quadruple helix), where, along with science, business and the state, society plays a key role in the field of physical culture and sports as the end consumer of a sports product. Since 2008, EPSI has been organizing annual meetings both for the members of the association and for all interested parties. Meetings are held within the framework of conferences and forums. The conferences are attended by representatives of organizations related to technologies and innovations applicable in the world of sports, i.e. experts on the issues under discussion. As a result of the conferences, recommendations are made for EPSI participants. EPSI International Forums provide an opportunity for participants to exchange information, present new information, discuss future directions and priorities in sports, sports innovation and sporting goods, strengthen partnerships and create joint projects. For ten years, the topics of the conferences did not change significantly and remained within the framework of the goals that were defined in the EPSI strategic development program and announced at the first EPSI conference.

The field of sports has always been considered by the participants of international conferences and forums "EPSI" as a multifaceted social phenomenon, so every time the organizers of the conferences set themselves the task of intensifying the activities of sports clusters in those areas that were relevant to society and required special attention at a particular stage of activity. For example, realizing that sports clusters have a high potential for intersectoral interactions and relationships in various social and economic areas, one of the first conferences was devoted to the topic "Sport as a driver of industrial modernization and Later, the attention of the participants of the sports cluster association was drawn to the topic "Sports innovations in the city"[2]. Achieving certain socio-economic results, the participants of the sports cluster association expanded the boundaries of their activities, studied best practices and identified key ideas that contribute to the international integration of sports clusters within the framework of international forums and conferences. The topic "Development and use of innovative technologies in the field of sports and other cross-border industries" was given special attention at all international forums and conferences "EPSI".

Thus, the international forums and conferences "EPSI" are a platform that allows you to: - companies to demonstrate their products and projects; - to scientific and research organizations working in the field of innovative technologies in the field of sports, to identify new partners and consumers of services; - universities and other educational institutions to initiate cross-border contacts and cooperation; - sports organizations / associations to find new partners in the field of business, in the development and application of new technologies

and research in the sports industry; - government bodies to identify gaps in the legislation in the field of sports, develop, present and discuss new projects.

Currently, EPSI is implementing 6 large-scale regional and national projects [9]. One of the most important and large-scale projects is the Inno4Sports project. The project is aimed at the interaction of the EU countries in the field of sports and the sports industry. Project "Inno4Sports" (Sport for Growth and Healthy & Vital Communities - sports for development and a healthy viable society), duration 54 months (period from June 1, 2018 to November 30, 2022) [8]. Five "Erasmus+" programs. The Erasmus+ program is a new European Union program aimed at supporting cooperation in the field of education, vocational training, youth policy and sports for the period from 2014 to 2020. : - the project "BIG4SPORTS" - the creation of innovative management of the sports industry; - the "SCORES" project - assessment of the development of skills and competencies leading to employment in the sports field; - project "SPHERE" - sports rehabilitation and rehabilitation; - the project "EYVOL" - expanding opportunities for youth volunteering in the field of sports. The project will develop and implement innovative educational methods of using sports to promote intercultural dialogue, socio-economic development, including in the context of social integration through sports and major sporting events [9]. - project "Hema" - a healthy, mobile and active employee. The Hema project intends to raise awareness of the importance of health training, especially in the workplace. A study conducted in 2017 as part of the project found that 210 million Europeans are physically inactive. By identifying the forms of physical activity of European citizens, the researchers obtained the following data: - 13% of European citizens are physically active at work; - 36% of Europeans show physical activity at home, and this activity is carried out in two directions: doing housework and doing physical exercises (charging); - 13% - in sports clubs; - 40% - on open urban sports grounds and recreation areas (parks, squares); - 15% - in health and fitness centers;

Lack of physical activity costs the EU countries 80 billion dollars a year, approximately 80% of regional leaders do not have information about the current situation [1]. As part of the competitive selection of applications from participants in a sports cluster association for the implementation of projects developed by them, EPSI carries out their examination and creates favorable conditions for revision, if necessary. Information about pending EPSI projects is public.

CONCLUSION

Thus, "EPSI" is a supranational cluster, as its members are involved in cross-border cooperation. "EPSI" performs the function of a specialized organization of sports cluster associations, whose activities are aimed at creating a more favorable innovative environment for the entire EU sports industry. "EPSI" carries out activities aimed at the creation, development, coordination and management of projects in the field of sports. Thanks to the lobbying activities of EPSI, the development of sports and the sports industry have been included in the socio-economic development programs of the EU. In 2014, the EU created special funds to provide financial support to the sports sector and the sports industry. From year to year, the EU increases the amount of funds allocated to sports projects.

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