

Measuring social impacts of co-hosted sport events

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Staging major and mega sport events is a challenge in many perspectives. Accelerating costs, security concerns, lack of credibility regarding the international sporting federations and concerns regarding the verifiable benefits of the sports events in relation to the costs are often mentioned as main reasons (Coates & Wicker, 2015; Koenecke et al., 2016; Langer et al., 2017). One strategy in order to share risks, to reduce costs and to use public financial support more efficiently is the co-hosting of sport events. This strategy, hosting major and mega events by two or more countries or cities, has gained enormous attention in Europe over the last years and a clear trend in this direction can be observed, in particular in team sport events, like recently the Ice Hockey World Championships 2017 in Cologne and Paris, the Euro Basket 2017 in Turkey, Romania, Finland, and Israel, the Handball Euro Championships 2020 in Norway, Sweden and Austria, and many more.

Heere et al. (2012), Horne and Manzenreiter (2004), and Kristiansen et al. (2016) were the first ones who analysed the management and impacts of co-hosted sports events. Kristiansen et al. (2016) looked at the stakeholder management of the co-hosted European Youth Olympic Festival in 2015 by Austria and Lichtenstein. In terms of social impacts of the event they identified reinforced cross-border relationships and closer and stronger ties between the people in this region. Heere et al. (2012) as well as Horne and Manzenreiter (2004) indicate in their studies that co-hosted sport events can have large positive societal consequences for the bilateral relationships of the hosting nations, for the national and cross-national identity. The research in regards to social impacts and legacy of sports events and particular of co-hosted sport events is very limited.

Considering the social exchange theory (Blau, 1964; Homans, 1961; Kelley & Thibaut, 1978; Thibaut & Kelley, 1959) sports events can act like an agent for social change with a greater social legacy when co-hosted. However, the management of social legacy in terms of the variety of social impacts, influencing factors etc. through co-hosted events is a research area which has not been a subject of intensive research yet. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to develop a theoretical framework which considers the specific characteristics of co-hosted sport events and their social impacts.

From preliminary analysis the review of the literature indicates a huge variety of aspects which can be considered for measuring the social impacts of co-hosted sport events, e.g. social capital on organisational level between the local organising committees, stronger social cohesion across national borders, effects of integration and socialisation, reduced prejudices and resentments against other nations, mitigated hostility toward strangers on individual and society level (Chalip, 2006; Heere, et al., 2013; Hiller, 2000; Kersting, 2007; Heyne et al., 2009). As it is a work in progress, an approach what and how to measure the social impacts of a co-hosted sport event will be presented at the conference which is going to be applied for the Handball World Championships in Denmark and Germany in January 2019.

This study is the first one which looks at the potentials co-hosting sport events can have with the focus on the management of social impacts and legacy. The possibility for co-hosting major sports events and the potential for a positive social legacy is an idea which should be carefully considered by international sporting federations as well as by the nations who are interested in hosting mega sports events.

Keywords: sport events, social change, co-hosting, social legacy