

SPORTS IN THE WELFARE STATE

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Abstract: *The article touches upon the concept of “sport for everybody” as a part of the welfare state ideology in the countries of Western Europe. It shows segments and aspects of sports which within the welfare state.*

Keywords: sports, welfare state, welfaring of the state, Constitutional Law, Sports Law, public benefits, solidarity.

In the modern history sport is often connected with its ability to promote positive social development. Besides, sport is often used as a means of achieving different goals in the social field¹.

According to Freek Bohm, within the framework of conceptual approaches to the welfare state, such state has basic responsibility for ensuring welfare of the citizens. It is also the state’s duty to ensure an equal access for the citizens to the welfare; as well as to ensure fair distribution of resources among them. By means of realization of the corresponding policy such state guarantees a certain level of physical welfare, economic security and participation in the cultural life of the country. As a rule, it is about providing the citizens with different elements of social security, such as education, health care, culture, and also sports. The welfare state is also interested in conducting policy in the field of sports because it can affect other functions of the state, such as youth policy, health care policy, education, and economy².

According to Johan R. Norberg, development of the welfare state generally has a great influence on interaction of the public authorities and sports³.

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¹*Ekholm D.* Research on Sport as a Means of Crime Prevention in a Swedish Welfare Context: A Literature Review // Scandinavian sport studies forum. – 2013. – Vol. 4. – P. 91–120. – P. 92. <<http://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:657116/FULLTEXT01.pdf>>.

²*Böhm F.* Sport participation in Europe. The extent of contextual effects / Faculty of Social Science of Tilburg University // <<http://arno.uvt.nl/show.cgi?fid=130585>>. – 2013, June. – 53 p. – P. 2.

³*Norberg J.R.* A Mutual Dependency: Nordic Sports Organizations and the State // The Nordic World: Sport in Society / Ed. by H. Meinander, J.A. Mangan. – London: Frank Cass, 1998. – 200 p. – P. 115-135. – P. 125.

According to Jean Harvey, development of the welfare state is already an important factor of the state intervention in the field of sports⁴.

In general, within the concept of the welfare state, sports, namely sport «for everybody», mass sports, are an important element of broadly defined social security⁵.

In the European context, the concept of «sports for everybody» as one of the purposes of the state policy realization within the welfare state ideology was formed in the 1960s when the mass sports were defined by the Council of Europe as a tool for providing cultural development⁶.

Rapid economic growth in Western Europe in the 1960s was one of the factors of development of state services in the field of culture, art and sports; and also in other fields of the policy realization, traditional for the welfare state, such as health care, education, and social housing. Such recognition of sports as an element of public welfare made for adoption of the state policy aimed at provision and support of mass sports. Later, it was also supported by the state policy in the field of health care which was against a sedentary mode of life and increased calorie intake. Further development of sports, with the increasing political value in many states with advanced economy, was a result of the states readiness to recognize the right of access to culture, art, and sport as major social rights of the so-called «third generation»⁷.

It should be noted that the question of interaction of sports and the welfare state is inseparable from characteristics of social states of various models.

For example, public authorities of Scandinavian welfare states of the social democratic model broadly support sports, although the state control system of sports in such states was in many respects caused by sport autonomy and self-control. In Scandinavian countries sports is usually a great movement with roots in civil society⁸.

In Scandinavian social states the social democratic ideology of welfare made it possible to expand the state policy field realization. Many aspects of social life

⁴Harvey J. Sport Policy and the Welfare State: An Outline of the Canadian Case // *Sociology of Sport Journal*. – 1988. – December. – Vol. 5. – № 4. – P. 315–329.

⁵Uchiumi K. Japan// *Participation in Sport: International Policy Perspectives* / Ed. by M. Nicholson, R. Hoye, B. Houlihan. – London: Routledge, 2011. – 336 p. – P. 209–222. – P. 211.

⁶Henry I. European Policy Systems and Sport for All as a Policy Objective // <https://doc.rero.ch/record/28646/files/2012_-_European_Policy_Systems_and_Sport_for_All_as_Policy_Objective_-_HENRY_I.pdf>. – 19 p. – P. 1.

⁷Uchiumi K. Japan// *Participation in Sport: International Policy Perspectives* / Ed. by M. Nicholson, R. Hoye, B. Houlihan. – London: Routledge, 2011. – 336 p. – P. 209–222. – P. 211.

⁸Henry I. European Policy Systems and Sport for All as a Policy Objective // <https://doc.rero.ch/record/28646/files/2012_-_European_Policy_Systems_and_Sport_for_All_as_Policy_Objective_-_HENRY_I.pdf>. – 19 p. – P. 3.

became a subject of such policy, including the ones which were not earlier the priority at all. In such context, sports which help to develop physical and moral qualities of those who go in for it, is now to a far greater degree considered as a means of general welfare. In fact, as Johan R. Norberg claims, sports have become a part of the social democratic welfare state «project»⁹.

The welfare state policy in Scandinavian countries was followed by the concept of «a strong society», the central place in which was taken by the statement that the direct state intervention led to the most effective team work, which significantly affected relationship between the state and sports. It should be noted that within this concept it was supposed that sports would be operated by non-governmental organizations¹⁰.

According to researchers, high levels of the state intervention in the field of sports in Scandinavian countries can be considered as reflection of the social democratic ideology which is the basis of the general welfare of Scandinavian states¹¹.

In Denmark, for example, sports and health care are positioned by assets which are to be given to the population and in which the state of general welfare is interested¹².

In the research literature the focus is generally on the sports as a tool of achieving different goals of the welfare state and developing the fields in which such state is interested.

According to Niels Asle Bergsgard, Barry Houlihan, Per Mangset, Sveyn Ingwe Nodlend, Hilmar Rommetvedt, it is not obvious that the state social policy should also involve the field of sports because it is hardly possible to say that sport is one of the main spheres of interests of the social state; respectively, one can expect a low-key role of the welfare state regarding sports. However, after World War II the welfare state was considerably extended in many western countries, and such development is also characterized by the state obligations increase. In this context, sports and physical training can be considered as one of

⁹Norberg J.R. A Mutual Dependency: Nordic Sports Organizations and the State // The Nordic World: Sport in Society / Ed. by H. Meinander, J.A. Mangan. – London: Frank Cass, 1998. – 200 p. – P. 115-135. – P. 125.

¹⁰Norberg J.R. A Mutual Dependency: Nordic Sports Organizations and the State // The Nordic World: Sport in Society / Ed. by H. Meinander, J.A. Mangan. – London: Frank Cass, 1998. – 200 p. – P. 115-135. – P. 125.

¹¹Henry I. European Policy Systems and Sport for All as a Policy Objective // <https://doc.rero.ch/record/28646/files/2012_-_European_Policy_Systems_and_Sport_for_All_as_Policy_Objective_-_HENRY_I.pdf>. – 19 p. – P. 4.

¹²Pfister G. Sport for all - opportunities and challenges in different sport systems // Local sport in Europe. Proceedings of the 4th eass conference 31.05. –03.06.2007 in Münster / Ed. by D.H. Jütting, B. Schulze, U. Müller. – Münster: Waxmann Verlag, 2009. – 321 p. – P. 45–62. – P. 55.

the important preliminary conditions of effective defense of the state, as an important factor of providing health care of the population, and also as an important element of providing leisure of the population, which makes it falling within the scope of the welfare state duties¹³. According to Byarn Ibsen, sports differ from the main spheres of society which the social state has taken charge of (such as education, health care, social security) as the role of the state in this sphere is limited to providing bases of sports activity, and also to partial financing of this activity; whereas organization and management of sports fall on the shoulders of sports organizations¹⁴.

Management of sports and also financial support of sports in the welfare states are often characterized by a high level of decentralization, which is also characteristic for other spheres where the welfare state realizes its policy¹⁵.

Today, sports can often be considered as a means of different crimes prevention. So, crime is often comprehended as a social problem, and it is the social state which can solve social problems by means of active intervention¹⁶.

The state of general welfare and its characteristic features can influence the field of sports not only directly, by means of realization of the corresponding policy, but also by means of supporting of the volunteer sector in this sphere. So, for example, in the welfare states of the universalist model the volunteer sector plays a rather small role in such spheres as health care or education. The main role belongs to sports, leisure, and culture, with volunteer organizations winning a great part of the state support¹⁷.

Speaking about practical application of the concept of sports as one of the tools of the welfare state, let us turn to the experience of Finland.

In 2009, the Ministry of Education in Finland published the Resolution on Sports and Physical Activity Promoting Policies¹⁸.

¹³Bergsgard N.A., Houlihan B., Mangset P., Nodland S.I., Rommetvedt H. Sport Policy: a comparative analysis of stability and change. – New York: Elsevier, 2007. – 304 p. – P. 8.

¹⁴Ibsen B. Sport and Welfare Policy in Denmark // <https://ecpr.eu/Filestore/Paper_Proposal/f435c7c6-2e99-4f0d-bc54-9428cf73cf5d.pdf>. – 18 p. – P. 13.

¹⁵Ibsen B. Sport and Welfare Policy in Denmark // <https://ecpr.eu/Filestore/Paper_Proposal/f435c7c6-2e99-4f0d-bc54-9428cf73cf5d.pdf>. – 18 p. – P. 14.

¹⁶Ekhholm D. Research on Sport as a Means of Crime Prevention in a Swedish Welfare Context: A Literature Review // Scandinavian sport studies forum. – 2013. – Vol. 4. – P. 91–120. – P. 92. <<http://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:657116/FULLTEXT01.pdf>>.

¹⁷Ibsen B. Human Resource Management for Volunteers in Sports Organisations in Europe / Centre for Sports, Health and Civil Society of University of Southern Denmark // <http://static.sdu.dk/mediafiles//7/E/5/%7B7E5C8A58-8081-43C4-BCC3-2DE71F5800AB%7D_Movements2012Nr5.pdf>. – 70 p. – P. 16.

¹⁸Government resolution on policies promoting sport and physical activity // <http://www.minedu.fi/OPM/Julkaisut/2009/Statsrxdets_principbeslut_om_riktlinjer_fxr_frxmjande_av_idrott_och_motion?lang=en>; <<http://www.minedu.fi/export/sites/default/OPM/Julkaisut/2009/liitteenet/opm44.pdf?lang=en>>. – 22 p.

According to this resolution, the Government emphasizes the need to consider sports and physical activity as a part of the way of life and to consider the policy in the field of sports as a part of the policy aimed at providing welfare of the population¹⁹.

Besides, it is specified in the Resolution on Sports and Physical Activity Promoting Policies that sports should be included in the list of basic services within realization of the policy aimed at providing welfare of the population by municipal units²⁰.

¹⁹Government resolution on policies promoting sport and physical activity // <http://www.minedu.fi/OPM/Julkaisut/2009/Statsxdets_principbeslut_om_riktlinjer_fxr_frxmjande_av_idrott_och_motion?lang=en>; <<http://www.minedu.fi/export/sites/default/OPM/Julkaisut/2009/liitteet/opm44.pdf?lang=en>>. – 22 p. – P. 17.

²⁰Government resolution on policies promoting sport and physical activity // <http://www.minedu.fi/OPM/Julkaisut/2009/Statsxdets_principbeslut_om_riktlinjer_fxr_frxmjande_av_idrott_och_motion?lang=en>; <<http://www.minedu.fi/export/sites/default/OPM/Julkaisut/2009/liitteet/opm44.pdf?lang=en>>. – 22 p. – P. 19.