

Sport for All Incentive in the Netherlands

Policy letter Sport for All

International Publication Series Health, Welfare and Sport nr. 5

The Hague, December 2000

Ministerie van Volksgezondheid, Welzijn en Sport – NL

Sport for All incentive in the Netherlands

Policy letter Sport for All

International Publication Series Health, Welfare and Sport nr. 5

This series provides information on the Netherlands policy which specifically relates to the health, welfare and sports sectors. The target groups are counterparts of the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport in other countries, international organisations, embassies of the Kingdom of the Netherlands abroad, foreign embassies in the Netherlands, researchers and other experts.

Contents

1	Introduction	5
2	Sport for all	6
3	Social values of sport for all	10
4	Key problems in sport for all	12
5	Partners and responsibilities in sport for all	16
6	The sport for all incentive	21
6.1	The reinforcement of the local sports infrastructure	22
6.2	Sports as a means in a local integrated approach	26
6.3	Cross-links	29
7	The role of national organizations	33
8	A regulation to stimulate local sport for all	35
9	Financing	39
	Annex	40



**To the Chairman of the Lower House of The States General
The Hague, June 18th, 1999**

1 Introduction

Sport forms an important part of the social infrastructure of our society. The great diversity of sport means that it is an important meeting place for almost everyone and also offers something valuable. In addition to the pleasure and entertainment it provides, sport can make an important contribution to achieving social objectives. Sport can be regarded as a training ground not only for physical skills but also for example for the development of respect for others. Sport contributes to general physical, mental and social wellbeing.

This contribution can be further increased if a more purposeful and conscious application of activities and policy at various executive levels can be achieved. That is not a sinecure in a time when the local sports sector in particular has to cope with various key problems and must find an answer to the rapid social developments and the higher demands of the sports-playing consumer and society.

The local sports sector therefore deserves support so that the values of sport can be exploited to the optimum. This is the reason why the Coalition Agreement has announced an intensification of sport for all policy. This intensification arises from the increasing recognition of the importance of sport in society and the widely held view that a local reinforcement of this is necessary.

After already being informed in February 1999 of the plans for top-class sport, you are now presented with the plans to reinforce sport for all.

These plans can be understood as a further elaboration of and supplement to the policy previously formulated in the memorandum 'Wat sport beweegt' (What moves sport) (1996). It must also be seen from the perspective of the 1999 - 2002 Welfare Memorandum 'Werken aan sociale kwaliteit' (Working on social quality) published in April 1999. The aim is for optimum exploitation of the social importance of sport particularly at local level.

The aim is for harmonisation with policy plans in other areas of government policy relating to youth, social coherence, health, big city problems, environment and green spaces in and around the town. The analysis of various studies is used. The New Style Administrative Agreement and the Sports Manifesto of the joint partners in sport (March 1998) is also subscribed to.

To produce this policy letter there have been several consultations with the relevant policy partners both bilaterally and jointly within the framework of the Broad Interdepartmental Sports Consultation and the Nijkerk Forum. NOC*NSF, VNG (Association of Dutch Local Authorities) and the Landelijke Contactraad (National Contact Council), the Inter Provincial Consultation and the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport (VWS) sat in on this latter consultation.

2 Sport for all

Sport for all takes many forms such as practising recreational sport in an unorganized and organized context within and outside the sports sector and the many competitive forms at local, regional and national level, often under the responsibility of the national sports organizations. Practising professional sport and top-class sport at a high level as described in the memorandum 'Kansen voor topsport' (Opportunities for top-class sport) do not fall under sport for all.

The reasons people take part in sport for all activities vary considerably. For sportsmen and -women the competitive character has long not been the only important motive. Often it is in fact the social or psychological component of sport or the aim for a beauty ideal that leads people to practise sport¹.

Around 65% of the population aged from 6 - 79 years take part in some form of sport for all and physical activities². The highest level of participation (around 86%) appears to have been traditionally found among the youth (up to 17 years). Participation in sport is falling in the group aged from 18 - 24 years (from 80% to 74%). The level of participation of the older group increased in spectacular fashion over the period from 1979 - 1995 namely from 30% to 48% within the group aged from 55 - 64 years and from 18% to 31% within the group aged from 65 - 79 years. The policy aimed at this last target group has borne fruit with the campaigns and projects carried out within the framework of Nederland in Beweging (the Netherlands on the Move) and activities such as Meer Bewegen voor Ouderen (More Exercise for Older People).

The difference between the number of male and female sports participants has almost disappeared in recent years.

A comment must however be made on the high sports participation figures. It has been found that physical activity in leisure time and the number of hours sport practised per week have fallen considerably in recent years³. In addition it appears that approximately one third of Dutch adults can be regarded as physically inactive⁴.

1 Over versporting van de samenleving (On the sportification of society), Crum 1991

2 These figures come from the study Trendanalyse Sport (Trend Analysis Sport), carried out by the KUB (Catholic University of Brabant) (June 1998) and based on data from the SCP (Social and Cultural Planning Bureau), AVO 1979 - 1995.

3 Ruwaard and Kramers, 1997

4 Backx e.a., 1994

Many of the sport for all activities take place on an organized basis in clubs. Around half of all sportsmen and -women belong to one or more of the approximately 30,000 sports clubs in our country. This percentage falls with age. Many sportsmen and -women choose another form of organization in addition or as an alternative to the club. Fitness activities in particular attract approximately 1 million people a year. There are 1500 centres for sports and exercise (formerly called sports schools and fitness centres), and other providers, such as club and community centre work and education, are attracting more and more sportsmen and -women by organizing sports activities.

At the interface between sport and recreation, many activities also take place in an unorganized context, on or in the water, on the road, in the countryside and on the greens and in the parks in local communities. Popular sports are practised by very many people on their own initiative in an unorganized context, such as for example swimming, skiing and skating. Newer forms of sport such as surfing, inline skating, snowboarding and climbing are popular with young people. With advancing age, activities such as cycling, walking, swimming and tennis become more popular.

ALMOST 2 MILLION INLINE SKATERS

A record number of people at the Friday Night Skate in Amsterdam, yesterday evening. Eight hundred people in a five hundred metre chain right through the city. Young men with fluorescent jackets mark out the intersections for young girls in cycling shorts, young men in baggy clothing and fathers with their children.

Inline skating is no longer a rage, inline skating has become mainstream. In the Netherlands there are an estimated 1.5 million inline skaters. If the forecasts work out this number will grow within a year to two million.

The fact that inline skating has long passed the stage of trendy lads is also apparent from the Women on wheels event. 2,400 women on the go with fun and fitness inline skating.

Everything to do with inline skating is growing. Hockey and basketball matches on inline skates. Inline skating trips abroad, roller discos that are becoming popular again, books of trips and Internet sites.

NRC, 29 May 1999

The coaching and organization of sports activities is made possible by the professional and voluntary managers present in sport and adjoining sectors such as recreation, youth, club and community centre work and health care. The number of sport volunteers is enormous. According to recent research some 1 million people work unpaid or for a small expense allowance for sport. Set against figures from the Social and Cultural Planning Bureau (SCP) and the Central Bureau for Statistics (CBS) around 350,000 of these volunteers can be considered as 'key volunteers'; the other volunteers participate on an 'ad hoc' basis or on the 'periphery'⁵. Approximately 85% of sports clubs, mostly traditional members-for-members organizations, are run by volunteers.

5 'Het bestuur springt in met frisse tegenzin' (The management jumps in with fresh distaste). NOC*NSF August 1998. Civil Society en vrijwilligerswerk (Civil Society and volunteer work), part I and III, Social Cultural Planning Bureau 1994 and 1999



3 Social values of sport for all

Practising sport is relaxing, healthy and above all enjoyable for young and old. Practising sport together leads to bonding, in teams and in club and association. Sport ensures that people belong somewhere, take part in something. Practising sport and coaching sportsmen and -women leads to fulfilment and self-respect.

Important values can be attributed to practising sport. For the individual these are values such as health, development and improvement, both on a mental and physical plane. The importance of sufficient regular physical exercise in the prevention of physical complaints and psychological problems is evident. But also the relaxation and the extreme effort necessary for a performance can be seen as important values of sport. Sport contributes to maintaining quality of life and promotes an active life style.

In addition to the values for the individual, sports activities can also be utilised in the broader social perspective. Sport literally and figuratively makes people more active and enables them to participate in society. Sport attracts and motivates people for a wide variety of reasons to practise sport or take exercise, to referee a match, to sit on a management board or to watch a match all together. Participation in sport can offer opportunities for integrating people in a vulnerable position - such as deprived young people, lonely older people, the chronically sick, people with a handicap, those on benefit or the unemployed. An available and accessible range of sports on offer makes an important contribution to the social quality of the society in which bonding and cohesion and the prevention of social exclusion are very important⁶.

Sport is however not a panacea for solving all sorts of social problems but sport can make an important contribution to solutions, provided it forms part of an integrated policy. Obviously the actual importance of these activities may differ depending on the sport and the individual situation.

Unlike top-class sport, sport for all has much less social impact on the media, sponsoring and the public, but in spite of this its economic importance must not be underestimated. Many millions of Guilders are spent on sports clothing and sports equipment in shops and drinks and snacks in sports canteens and sports

6 See also 'Werken aan sociale kwaliteit' (Working on social quality), Welfare memorandum 1999-2002, Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport (VWS), 1999

halls and there is also strong growth in employment in sport for all. Sport and exercise also save medical and absenteeism costs⁷.

Although the differences between top-class sport and sport for all have undeniably become greater in the last decade due to the professionalization in top-class sport, the relationship between and function of the two forms of sport with respect to one another are very important and have perhaps been reinforced. Top-class sport cannot exist without the growth and development of new talent within clubs from sport for all. Conversely sport for all also needs top-class sport; primarily because the power of attraction that top performances have on young people and the role model function that top-class sportsmen and - women fulfil.

It is striking that the enormous popularity of sport, recreation and exercise activities has meant that carrying out these activities has long not been only the domain of the sports sector.

For example sports activities are organized to keep potentially early school-leavers at school, sports activities are used within the framework of out-of-school care and neighbourhood development, sport leads to economic activity (and not only in the sports industry), offers more employment and 'more exercise' is a recognised tool in health care and assistance.

In other sectors too the understanding is slowly but surely growing that sports and exercise activities can give added value within this sector.

The realisation of this added value at local level, both within sport and outside it, is an important challenge for the years to come. An additional incentive of the national government for sport for all will be to stimulate and support that process.

7 Stam e.a., 1996

4 Key problems in sport for all

Various publications and studies⁸ have shown that the sports sector in particular is faced with a growing number of key problems at local level.

In the case of sports clubs, this relates mainly to key financial problems and management problems. The key financial problems often relate to accommodation charges. Because of the pressure to make cut-backs, local authorities have in recent years been forced to take a critical look at spending on sport. This has led to increased prices for using sports facilities and falling subsidies. For clubs who find it difficult to generate extra income themselves, the increased charges are recovered from the members, but there are also limits on this.

The management problems in sport partly relate to a change reported by the Social and Cultural Planning Bureau (SCP) in the reasons why people do voluntary work. The trend towards individualisation means that the importance that people attach personally to goals or activities comes first. The natural and often lifelong affinity with the organization or club is disappearing. Although it is anticipated that the number of volunteers will not fall further for the present people (continue to) want to carry out less labour-intensive tasks and more short and complete tasks. Changes in the club culture and a different (more consumer-oriented) attitude of the members of these organizations make it more difficult to find new executive members.

The clubs also have to cope with the general trend that recruiting new members has become more difficult and that many sportsmen and -women often change sport and form of sport. This may weaken the bond with the sports club. Sports providers are also faced with the consequences of demographic developments. The fact that older people account for a relatively larger proportion of the number of sports participants demands changes in what is offered.

The falling participation of the group of young people and the group of adults aged 35 - 54 years is also causing additional problems for organized sport. Also the influx of ethnic minorities is in relative terms lagging behind the growth of this population group in society.

The whole sector is also faced with a growing demand for quality by members and consumers. Within the club (but also in the sports and exercise centres)

8 Survey De zorgen van sportclubs (The concerns of sports clubs), NOC*NSF, 1996, Ruimte voor Ontwikkeling (Room for Development), NOC*NSF 1997, Vrijwilligers in de sportvereniging (Volunteers in the sports club), Hoogendam & Meijs, Nov 1998

there needs to be a climate that aims for expertise, self-motivation, safety, health and tolerance. That requires the presence of sufficient and well-trained management at various levels.

Increased expertise requirements, however necessary these are, merely reinforce the management problem further, certainly as far as the sports-specific functions are concerned that also relate to the voluntary management. Clubs also have to cope with the demand to make a contribution to social processes such as the integration of the handicapped, emancipation and establishment. Also the regulations and related costs from national and regional organizations and authorities do not make things any easier.

'AS A HANDICAPPED PERSON YOU BELONG'

The volunteer prize in our country is the National Compliment. Every year three main prizes are distributed between volunteer initiatives that appeal to the imagination. Last year the second prize was won by football club Hieronymus from Tilburg.

The jury found Hieronymus exceptional because in the indoor football competition mentally handicapped and non-handicapped members play together in teams. The aim of this is to integrate the handicapped into the club: "as a handicapped person you belong".

"Hieronymus has a pioneering function in this", according to the jury report. "The indoor football initiative can easily be transferred and has now within the KNVB (Royal Dutch Football Association) led to inclusion of the teams in the regular competition.

Sport en Vrijwilligerskrant (Sport and Volunteers Newspaper), edition 1998

An additional complication here is that various signals indicate that the sports providers far from always know where people can go for support questions or how the advice offered can be implemented in the club with the present management. What is available from the support organizations is not transparent, sometimes overlapping and the organizations are sometimes not very focussed on answering questions.

Also management training plays too little part in this. Although important steps have been taken by various sports organizations some training for voluntary sports managers does not take sufficient account of these developments and the 'new' volunteers in sport.

The key problems are often not associated with sport or specifically with certain tasks of sport. They are related to social developments that also have an effect on sport. Also far from all clubs, organizations and sports can be lumped together.

Some sports providers are flourishing and know how to find their way to consultants and support organizations, others are having a difficult time.

Not only the sports organizations, but also local authorities are faced with the question of how the required improvements in organized sport can be stimulated and implemented. In organized and unorganized sport and sport in the community there are also key problems in the field of town and country planning and the accessibility and fitting out of facilities and public spaces.

In addition to the specific key problems in sport for all local authorities also have to cope with social key problems relating to quality of life, safety, health and social participation. The nature of the problems differs and varies depending on the number of inhabitants, space and infrastructure present, employment etc. In some towns the problems are complex because the problems are accumulating. Local authorities are looking for solutions to these key problems and see promising opportunities here in using sports activities.

Looking over the key problems we must state that it is very important to equip and support the sports providers so that they can cope with the new requirements made of them. That requires an important incentive at local level as otherwise, after all, the previously described wish for reinforcement of the social importance of sport is already nipped in the bud.



5 Partners and responsibilities in sport for all

Clubs, sports schools and other organizations are primarily themselves responsible for the sports activities they organize and their quality.

Although these organizations focus primarily on sport as an end in itself, their responsibility also extends, with other organizations, to preventing possible negative side effects such as for example discrimination, doping and vandalism. Of course local sports providers also contribute to positive social processes such as social integration, education and health promotion. But in view of the primary objective of the sports providers, the nature of the member or customer organizations and the present equipment, the maximum positive effects cannot be expected there without supplementary policy.

To optimise the positive social effects support must be provided, certainly if sport is to be methodically and systematically used as one means of solving social problems.

The own responsibility of the sports providers is also apparent from the financing of sport for all at local level. Traditionally the own contribution of the participants in the form of contributions to financing for sport for all occupies an important place here. According to the latest available figures in this field, this involves an amount of approx. 1.5 billion Guilders on an annual basis.

The local authority has an important facilitating role in optimising the positive social effects and reinforcing the social sports infrastructure. In many local authorities this is translated into limited support for organized sport and depending on the sport available locally implementing (additional) sports activities within the framework of stimulating sport.

The local authority is also (jointly) responsible for the availability of sports and recreation facilities in its territory and stimulating and monitoring the accessibility and reachability of sports facilities and organizations for all its residents. Local authority spending on sport that largely consists of the operation and construction of all sorts of sports facilities amounts to approximately 1.3 billion Guilders on an annual basis.

By means of savings and a review of the understanding of the task of the local authorities pressure has come to bear on local authority spending for sport. In the Coalition Agreement of August 1998 local authorities were called upon again to become more active in the field of sport and in particular from an integrated approach.

HOOP DREAMS IN DELFSHAVEN

She must be about seven years old. A slip of a thing about eighty centimetres high. Goldilocks curls blow around her face. In her little hands a basketball that she can scarcely lift, bigger than her head. The basket looks like a skyscraper. When she throws she almost flies into the air with the ball. The thing hardly shoots a few decimetres high. The ring remains unreachable. But what does it matter? Hoop Dreams in Rotterdam.

To promote integration in the old neighbourhoods and to counteract the lack of exercise, in 1994 Delfshaven started a project to familiarise children with a variety of sports during their gym lessons. Trainers and players from Rotterdam clubs in turn give lessons in their own sport at the primary schools. Basketball was so popular that they were asked where children could join a club in the area. 'But there wasn't one here,' says Joost van Nieuwenhuijzen, on behalf of the borough responsible for sports introduction projects. 'So together with Gunco Rotterdam we started giving basketball clinics in four locations in the neighbourhood. Children were thus able to learn to play sports, train, travel and pay a subscription in an organized way.'

With a subsidy from the borough in 1998 the satellite club Gunco Delfshaven was started. Divided into five teams, they have been playing since September 1998 in the regular league. The sports hall of the community building serves as their home base. Children are thus able to go through a whole basketball development: from primary school they go on to the satellite club and if they are really talented to the Thorbecke basketball class. Then to the juniors and seniors of Gunco Rotterdam. It would be fantastic if one or two of the children starting here could ultimately play for Gunco 1!

Sport International, July 1999

Far too little attention has been paid to the role of the province in recent years. Provincial organizations have nevertheless provided considerable support for local sports organizations. Also the function aimed at policy advice to local authorities, and in particular the smaller local authorities, is very important because often with their limited policy capacity they are not in a position to implement programmes in the field of sport.

The contribution of most provinces to sport has fallen in recent years. They are at present spending approximately 11 million Guilders per year on subsidies for the provincial sports councils and/or supporting organizations which includes sports advice. In view of the possibilities there are in the field of regional cooperation, the position of the smaller local authorities, the development of the countryside and the relationship with the recreation, welfare and youth policy in the provinces there are clearly opportunities to further extend the provincial involvement in sport for all.

The national sports associations in addition to organizing competitions and promoting their branch of sport have important functions in supporting clubs. That relates in any case to sports-specific matters but because of their social responsibility also includes other matters such as anti-discrimination, integration of handicapped people and the promotion of tolerance and fair play. With the help of service-providing and support organizations at national and regional level, local sports providers are given guidelines, advice, support and tools in this field.

The associations are in turn supported by sport through the national sports umbrella organizations and in particular by NOC*NSF. NOC*NSF also fulfils the function of representing interests and direction for organized sport. In this role the relationship with developments outside organized sport such as those surrounding health, recreation, education, sports management and unorganized sport are also promoted at local level.

The own responsibility of the national sports organizations for sport for all is not only apparent from the policy carried out and the memorandum 'Ruimte voor Ontwikkeling' (Space for Development) but also from the use of own income and the annual payments from the SNS (National Sports Totalisator Association) that are allocated on the advice of organized sport itself. Approximately 15 million of this is allocated for support for sport for all in particular in the form of club support.

Government policy relating to sport for all is of a supporting and facilitating nature and aimed at additions and renovation in the field.

That has already been the case for some decades. In addition it should be pointed out that the term sport for all was not the explicit denominator for the policy.

So at the end of the Seventies and in the early Eighties in addition to the national sports organizations for competitive sport the local authorities were also supported in particular for recreational sport and sports recreation.

Because of the importance of organized sport, but also for budget reasons, the policy later focussed more on just the national sports organizations and the support structure in sport.

Funds have now been made available to these organizations to develop new methods, to develop incentive programmes and to support sports organizations and local authorities in the development and implementation of the policy.

The national government has as a result of the publication of the memorandum 'What moves sport' in the last two years directed an initial quality incentive at the national sports organizations and support structure. To a lesser degree direct support was given to local governments.

In the fields of management policy (development of volunteer policy and

professionalization), the sports support structure (Dutch Institute for Sport and Exercise (NISB) and the Sports Infrastructure in the Netherlands (SPIN) project), exercise and health promotion (the Netherlands on the Move), stimulation of participation by the handicapped (Nebas, NSG) and youth (Youth on the Move), the creation of a sports climate of tolerance and fair play (Netherlands Association for Sport, Tolerance and Fair Play), and environmental management, important steps have been taken together with the national sports organizations and policy partners.

Approximately 25 million Guilders of the sports budget of the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport (VWS) in 1998 was allocated for supporting activities at national, regional and local level, classed as sport for all⁹.

9 The finance for the maintenance of the national sports organization structure is not taken into account here.



6 The sport for all incentive

The changing circumstances and the questions put to the sports sector by the sportsmen and -women, social organizations and authorities, make a further deepening and broadening of the present sport for all policy necessary. Certainly if sport is to go on fulfilling its social function as an integral part of the local social infrastructure, supplementary policy is necessary.

This supplement will above all be put into effect at local executive level.

This is not the only place where the key problems are most succinct, the local level also forms the basis for the practice of sport, however regional or national the nature and impact of the activities may sometimes be. It is also the level where it is possible to respond well to the wishes of the people themselves, the specific target groups that require additional attention and social developments which have their own particular colour everywhere. In addition links can be made with other types of work, such as the work with youth and young people, preventive health care, facilities for the handicapped and education.

An important task is set aside here for the local authorities. The sports clubs have a great need for support and cooperation from the local authorities. Local authorities play an important part in improving quality and maintaining the range of sport available and creating conditions for the practice of (un)organized and differently organized sport.

Local authorities also need an active club structure and sports sector necessary to fully exploit the importance of sport for example within the framework of participation of specific target groups and tackling key social problems, such as criminality and violence and the promotion of employment and health.

'THEY CAN GET RID OF THEIR AGGRESSION'

Arnhem local authority has a number of disadvantaged neighbourhoods. In order to meet the young people in these neighbourhoods, the Keumgang association set up a sports project on its own initiative. This proved to be so successful that the association organised more projects for a growing number of participants and target groups.

Initiative-taker Arie Ruysch commented: "These young people demand a different approach. They want sports like fitness training, street dance or tae-kwondo. They can get rid of their aggression in these. So it seemed to me to be a good starting point to go and give a few tae-kwondo lessons at school."

Landelijk contact (National contact), February 1999

Incentives will be given for further addressing the strength of the local authorities in the field of sport and the local authority sports policy will be intensified from an integrated perspective.

The object of the sport for all incentive is that local authorities and local organizations develop (further) initiatives that contribute to a lasting improvement in the range of local sport available, if possible in cooperation with other sectors. Encouragement is also given to sports activities being utilised to the optimum within the framework of other types of social projects.

The sport for all incentive is therefore aimed at:

- reinforcing the local sports infrastructure, in particular that of the sports clubs, in order to exploit to the optimum the double nature of sport, focussing on both the intrinsic and social aims;
- using sport on the basis of an integrated approach as a means of contributing to solutions to local social 'problems' and of reinforcing the general local social infrastructure;
- making local cross-links between various sports providers and with other sports-related sectors, such as education, recreation, welfare work and health care. This will create win-win situations for sport and other sectors.

Activities in local authorities must contribute to achieving targets at sports provider, community or local authority level. Sportsmen and -women must be able to practice their sport in a socially safe way, whether organized or unorganized. A well-equipped local sports sector must in the end be in a better position to make a lasting contribution to quality of life, health, promotion of exercise, economic activity, employment and social participation. The objectives of the sport for all incentive and its scope can be explained as follows.

6.1 THE REINFORCEMENT OF THE LOCAL SPORTS INFRASTRUCTURE

The reinforcement of the sports infrastructure can be achieved by sports and recreation facilities and opportunities close to home, renewal of the range of sport available where necessary, an intensive local framework policy and good support for sports providers.

Sports and recreational facilities

Local authority policy has in the past led to a finely spread network of sports facilities for organized sport for all throughout the whole of the Netherlands that does not require any further attention within the framework of this sport for all incentive.

Unfortunately in the bigger cities in particular and above all in the old inner city neighbourhoods, sports and recreational facilities have been pushed further and further aside by all sorts of other developments. This development demands more local attention for the (re)construction of neighbourhoods, parks and squares and multifunctional use of school and community facilities. Also changes because of new forms of sport such as inline skating may also be involved in this.

A number of local authorities already have good experience with recreational joint use of multifunctional facilities and the fact that halls are being used for physical education under local authority responsibility and can be used more easily for club and neighbourhood sports activities. There are also opportunities here for other local authorities.

New local organization forms in sport

With the disappearance of sports facilities from the inner city and partly because of demographic developments the range of organized sport available there has often been considerably reduced. In addition there is a growing need for alternative forms of organization because the range available from the branch of sport bound to the traditional sports club is not always sufficient. Schools are becoming a cradle for the development of school sports and/or youth sports clubs, where several sports are practised and where the young people themselves take joint responsibility for the decisions and coaching. Sometimes this leads to new clubs in a neighbourhood, in other cases such an initiative is adopted by local clubs.

GALM PROJECT STARTS UP IN ZOETERMEER AND DELFT

After a preparation period of four months a GALM project, a sports incentive project for older people aged from 55-65 years not engaged in active sport has been started in both Zoetermeer and Delft. The findings and results are so far positive for all those involved. The GALM project consists of various components. In January the letters were sent out with the questionnaires and the invitations to the fitness test. In early March the fitness test was carried out organized by the South-Holland Sports Council in cooperation with the GGD, with a number of volunteers leading the tests.

After the test the participants were invited to the sports introduction programme of 12 varied sports lessons. The sports groups were in the initial period accommodated by the Stichting Welzijn Ouderen Zoetermeer (Senior Citizens Welfare Association in Zoetermeer) and the Stichting Ouderenwerk Delft (Delft Senior Citizens Work Association). The aim is however to accommodate the groups after the project period with the local gymnastics clubs.

Groups are also formed around 'More Exercise for Older People', the 'GALM'-project and 'Club-extra'¹⁰, that are slowly growing into their own clubs or organizations.

Initiatives of the community sports work, the playground association, the self-help organization for the ethnic minorities or cooperation projects with commercial sports providers also deserve attention in this respect. The sport for all incentive aims to offer scope for the support of this and other initiatives to renew the range of sport available, provided they lead to a viable and lasting range of sport in a neighbourhood or community where that range is missing.

Management policy

Initiatives aimed at the management deserve an important incentive. The existing policy aimed at maintaining the volunteer nature in sport that is carried out with several actors, also outside sport, deserves attention at local authority level. The aim is that within clubs volunteer policy is carried out, so that the sports clubs give more systematic and organized attention to the acquisition, maintenance and functioning of volunteers. Additional attention is also necessary to stimulate youth participation and volunteer work. The sports sector can also be regarded as a low-threshold facility in which volunteer work is relatively easy to implement, in the extension of school or the membership of the sports club.

Limited professionalization at local level can, with a sufficient base, also be part of this. This must then focus on supporting and carrying out specific tasks of the volunteer sports organization (such as recruiting members and management, financial and membership records, training and events, management, involvement in school, welfare and assistance and health projects) in such a way that the pressure is actually relieved.

The limited professionalization will for example be able to take shape through club managers¹¹ or similar officers, who strengthen the internal organization of clubs from the inside out and improve the use of club sport for social purposes. Of course it depends on the local situation whether such an officer is tied to just one club or several clubs, or he has to be used as an incentive for more cooperation between clubs and organizations outside sport or for the development of a new range of sport.

The experience with these projects must lead to more understanding of the

10 GALM groups focus on sport and exercise for older people; Club extra groups focus on young people with impaired motor skills

11 NOC*NSF has within the framework of the PrinS-project developed a plan to reach 5,000 club managers in organized sport.

financial base, the feasibility, the actual demand for and the social importance of such workers at local level.

The professionalization here is not an end in itself, but must be seen as an instrument to improve the quality and the cohesion in the range of sport available.

Focussed expertise promotion in the field of environment, facility management, financial management and social hygiene in canteens is also an opportunity to equip sports providers better. Sports providers must after all be able to at least meet the regulations laid down for them by the (local) government.

Local Support structure

Within the framework of this sport for all incentive the aim is for a transparent support structure in sport at local level. This relates to various functions such as advice, stimulation, support and (joint) execution of tasks on a sports, management-organizational and administrative level.

In the case of renewal and reinforcement of the local support structure desired by a local authority it must be made clear how this reinforcement relates to the supporting tasks of the provincial sports councils and/or the sports associations at regional level. There is no need to create more overlapping functions. In addition account must be taken of further discussions about the national and regional sports support structure in the Netherlands that is conducted within the framework of the SPIN-project¹². But depending on the size of the local authority it is of course quite predictable that within the framework of for example having specific club tasks carried out outside such as membership records or the employer function of club managers and I/D employees (Instroom/Doorstroombaan - Inflow/Transfer job) such local reinforcement will be requested. Of course local authorities can come up with joint proposals within the framework of regional cooperation.

12 To promote an efficient, effective and above all transparent organization of the support structure the SPIN (SPort Infrastructuur Nederland - Sports Infrastructure in the Netherlands) project has been started. The project is a joint initiative of the four sports policy partners, Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport (VWS), NOC*NSF, IPO, LC and VNG. In the coming phase (1999-2001) experiments are being carried out with new regional and local support forms. Sports organizations, provinces and local authorities will be involved in a few pilot projects.

6.2 SPORT AS A MEANS IN A LOCAL INTEGRATED APPROACH

In the sport for all incentive, in addition to the reinforcement of clubs, attention is at the same time paid to initiatives that contribute to solving key local social problems or reinforcing the social infrastructure. The role of sports and exercise activities can after all be of great value for education, after-school care, crime prevention, assistance, rehabilitation and health care.

Although the attention paid to sports activities by other sectors is still small the understanding that sports activities can contribute to different policy fields at local level is growing.

That certainly applies for health promotion. When promoting healthy behaviour the importance of more exercise is increasingly being recognised, because it contributes to the prevention of disease and physical and mental complaints. In the long term the number of people that have to call upon health care is hence reduced. In particular vulnerable groups such as young people, older people, chronically sick and people with a low social-economic status must be reached. Sport in the neighbourhood can be an important pretext here for working on health promotion.

Also the towns that have carried out sports projects with support from the big cities policy and social renewal have acquired positive experience in improving the quality of life in neighbourhoods and communities.

Besides the social infrastructure and quality of life, the recreational function can also be improved by paying attention to (in particular unorganized forms of) sport for all. Initiatives aimed at recreation close to home and green spaces in the living environment (Groen Impuls - Green space Incentive), in which sport plays a part, are worth copying¹³.

In the countryside the problems as regards the quality of life are often of a different type to those in the big cities. But there too sport for all can fulfil an important function as a form of social cement.

Within the framework of the fight against unemployment the sports sector at present plays a modest role. It is expected that this role will increase due to the process of professionalization that is now taking place within sport and the opportunities that sport offers for routine and simple work as a step into the labour market. Within sport there is room for workers with a WIW contract (Wet inschakeling werkzoekenden - Jobseekers employment act) or with an I/D job.

13 See also progress report on big cities policies presented recently to the Lower House by the Minister for Big City and Integration Policy.



Application of these labour market measures in the sports sector has potential. With the help of an information centre for jobs in sport, attached to the National Contact Council, the use of subsidised workers in the sports sector is at present being facilitated and encouraged.

IF NECESSARY ANNEKE WORKS BEHIND THE BAR

Football club EV&AV De Tubanters from Enschede has appointed two employees via the 40,000-jobs plan. Anneke is one of the two, she was taken on to work in the clubhouse. She looks after the cleaning, maintenance, getting things ready and can, if necessary, assist the volunteers serving behind the bar.

At Celeritas Donor the duties of one of the job-sharers lie mainly in coaching over a hundred mini-basketball players: contact with parents, planning matches, managing the equipment and supervision in the halls.

Sport- Werk in uitvoering (Sport - Work in progress), a publication from the Landelijke contactraad (National contact council), January 1998

Within the education field in recent years there has been discussion about the social and teaching task of education. Education is increasingly expected to make more contribution to the social integration of young people. The educational disadvantage policy also links up with this. The importance of physical education and school sport within the framework of this policy, but also within the extended school day and out-of-school care is increasingly subscribed to, partly as a result of the Youth on the Move project.

The growing concern in society for groups of 'vulnerable' or problem young people and families has also led to discussions in education about the fight against mindless violence by young people, the care for early school leavers and safety at school and in the neighbourhood. Sports activities can play a part in this, as shown among other things by projects such as 'Veilig op Straat' (Safe on the Street). Also the further development of the 'community school' offers a starting point. The community school can after all not only be seen as a network surrounding young people and family, but, like a kingpin in the neighbourhood, also contributes to the quality of life and social coherence at neighbourhood and community level. Because of the multifunctional use of the facilities for example, the sports club or the community sports work can be accommodated there.

For the use of sports and exercise activities in other spheres of action a qualified (sports) executive is often necessary if one wants to achieve good execution. If possible it is preferable for sports clubs, sports building work, differently organized sports providers and sports and exercise centres to be called in. That after all increases the chance of cross-links that lead to the desired win-win situations.

6.3 CROSS-LINKS

Local authorities can ensure there is such harmonisation between policy sectors that added value is created. Sport at local level can on the one hand profit from different policy impulses but at the same time contribute to positive results in these policy fields.

Platform and consultation situations often still offer insufficient guarantees to actually arrive at good cooperation.

Coupling framework

Some local authorities have good experience with cooperation from welfare workers, specialist teachers, club managers and trainers, but the policy fields often remain too isolated from one another.

For this reason the appointment of officers comparable with the exercise consultants initiated at present by the Youth on the Move project group is being advocated. Exercise consultants¹⁴ promote cooperation between local sectors such as education, welfare, health care and sport that are related to one another. In addition to the youth category given attention in the Youth on the Move project, other target groups and other sectors can also be reached. The linking of sports groups for older people, the handicapped or chronically sick to existing sports or community clubs should be facilitated by this. In precisely determining the profile of such an official one must take into account the experience acquired in the Youth on the Move project. The appointment of an exercise consultant can be seen as an example of a mixed appointment as the function serves school and club sport. Following experiments in Belgium such appointments could perhaps first be made at local authority level.

14 Within the framework of the sport for all incentive there is support for the exercise consultant also being active at executive level and not having consultancy as his main task.

In ten local authorities exercise consultants have been at work for some time. At the end of 1997 the Stichting Jeugd in Beweging (Youth on the Move Association) started up this project to give an incentive at local level to sport and exercise opportunities for 4 to 18 year olds. Veendam is one of these ten local authorities:

'Veendam has around 2600 young people aged from 12 to 18 years old. To motivate this group to do more sport, in association with the seventeen sports clubs we are organising sports introduction courses, varying from diving to basketball. In five lessons the young people get to know all the facets of the sport. We are enthusiastic and so are the teachers. We only hope the students are too', Anko van der Veen and Eisse Holstein, exercise consultants.

For the Stichting Mobiel (Mobile Association) Van der Veen and Holstein are organising the sports afternoon. This association looks after problem young people who for all sorts of reasons (drugs, vandalism, disadvantage), have gone off the rails in regular education. The association tries to bring these young people back into regular education, or via work experience places help them find a job.

Landelijk contact (National contact), April 1999

Another possible cross-link between the school and sports sector is the appointment of qualified club trainers as educational assistants to the specialist teaching staff for physical education. At present no experience has yet been acquired in this but local sports providers can also be used in this way to cover the extended school day, the community school and multi-service schools. Good developments regarding the involvement of the sports club in homework coaching, job application training for unemployed young people and the involvement of the young people themselves in the setting up of sports programmes are thus given an (additional) incentive.

Finally successful initiatives within the framework of subsidised work in sport, where various sports providers such as schools, sports clubs and other organizations that are linked together, can benefit from employing one person, deserve to be followed up. The local authority can be an important initiative-taker here.

Sport, environment, regional development and recreation

In the field of regional development, environment and recreation cross-links are also possible with sport for all. In the area-oriented approach to the environment a balanced weighing up of values such as sport and environment for the living environment is stimulated. By looking at sports activities and environmental matters in context during planning, construction and management of sports

facilities great progress can be made. Specific attention is requested for the accessibility of sports facilities, the combination of these facilities with other functions such as education or economic activity, for compliance with the regulations of the Resolution on hotel and restaurant, sports and recreation facilities (Besluit horeca-, sport- en recreatie-inrichtingen) and environmental management. In this light encouragement of sport to participate in local policy formation and regional development is also important. Information on compliance of environmental measures and raising awareness of the sports sector about its task in regional equipment processes is still necessary¹⁵. Innovative projects in this field fit into the environmental and sport for all policy. Initiatives aimed at recreation close to home and green spaces in the living environment within the framework of the 'Groen Impuls' (Green Space Incentive), from which sport for all and the living environment can benefit, are another good example. Activities in the sport and recreation sectors can, if they are related to one another, reinforce one another by defending joint interests to maintain or increase/ improve green space and by joint 'use' of one another's' volunteers and (subsidised) workers, sites and facilities. Local initiatives with this objective are recommended.

15 Goud voor groen, Beleidskader sport en milieu (Gold for green, Sport and the environment policy framework 1999-2002), (The Hague, May 1999).



7 The role of national organizations

This local incentive for sport for all also requires a direct involvement of the various national and regional sports partners. It is very important that the national sports and support organizations are not only involved in its monitoring, but also in its execution. That certainly applies for the reinforcement of the local sports infrastructure of organized sport, but it is just as obvious when making cross-links with adjoining sectors such as recreation, health care and education, with which the support organizations in sport have already built up good contacts. There are also starting points for cohesion with sectors such as care for older people, care for teenagers and children, regional development, environment and crime prevention.

Such involvement is in line with the present efforts of the national and provincial sports organizations with the local level. In a number of cases measures must after all be taken at regional or national level. Already existing examples of this are a help-desk for "Sport and environment" and a consultant within the framework of application of labour market measures in sport. Also national booster or research projects are sensible, such as projects in the field of volunteers in sport and limited professionalization.

So in response to the management problems in clubs mentioned NOC*NSF and the NFWS (National Federation for Workers in Sport) within the framework of the Volunteer policy In the Sports club (VIS) project have developed a national multi-annual plan under the title "Tijd voor vrijwilligersbeleid" (Time for volunteers policy). For the implementation of the plan partners are sought such as for example other sports associations, provincial sports councils and local authorities. Products and services are offered under the motto "Hart voor sport, oog voor vrijwilligers" (Heart for sport, eye for volunteers).

The Netherlands Organizations Volunteer work (NOV) is preparing on behalf of the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport (VWS) a Plan of Approach aimed at youth participation and volunteer work¹⁶. The implementation of the Plan of Approach will mainly be at local level.

NOC*NSF has had further research activities carried out within the framework of the PrinS project. Studies show that there is a clear need within organized sport for workers for club management. Also overall profiles have been developed¹⁷. In addition further research is being carried out into the quantitative need for such

16 For sport this is carried out in cooperation with among others NOC*NSF, Youth on the Move, the Netherlands Institute for Care and Welfare (NIZW), the Netherlands Youth Group (NJG) and other key organizations.

17 NOC*NSF and Chionis, Professionalisering in de sport, Een voorzet voor beleid (Professionalization in sport, A first move for policy) (Arnhem and Gouda, June 1998).

workers and into the financial base in the sector itself for the related wage costs. Also important are the many products and services for the local level developed in recent years by Youth on the Move and by the various support and sports incentive organizations aimed at specific target groups and social matters in sport. Finally the new understanding in expertise promotion that in a number of associations has led to modulation and remote learning on the one hand and club and practice-related training on the other, cannot be left unmentioned.

Incentives will be given for local authorities to profit from the good services and products of national and regional sports organizations that may be helpful at local level and work together with these organizations.

The Netherlands Institute for Sport and Exercise (NISB), that has sprung from the national sports incentive organizations, can play an important part in this. With the start of this institute an important step has been taken for the further development and integrated support of sport for all. Via the administrative control by the policy partners NOC*NSF, IPO, VNG and National Contact Council and the new structure of this organization guarantees are built in that this support will tie up with local developments and will be demand-oriented in nature¹⁸.

For support of projects of national sports organizations aimed at local sport development in the years to come the existing resources in the sports budget of the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport (VWS) will be used more specifically for the desired objectives within sport for all. To this end, though limited, additional resources will be employed from intensifying the policy. This financial support can be applied for independently by the sports organizations from the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport (VWS). Conditions that such projects must meet are included in the annual circular 'subsidy application for national and special sports organizations'.

In 1999 the additional resources that have become available will largely be employed via the SPIN route. After 1999 national sports organizations can within the framework of the annual subsidy applications ask for support for the execution of programmes in the field of local sport for all development. Such applications must fit within the policy framework set out in this letter. With NOC*NSF further harmonisation will be carried out on the use of the SNS resources for the development of sport for all.

18 It is of course up to the local authority itself to make use of the various products and services of the various organizations

8 A regulation to stimulate local sport for all

To implement the local sport for all incentive for local authorities a temporary incentive scheme has been selected. With this programmes can be supported with projects. Partly in view of the development nature of the programmes and the cohesion with initiatives from other sectors that is a suitable instrument. In addition applications can be assessed specifically and selectively and honoured using specific content and formal criteria.

The incentive scheme is open to any local authority in the Netherlands. Also the submission of programmes via a joint venture of local authorities is one of the options. Local authorities with fewer than 10,000 inhabitants can only submit an application in cooperation with one or more other local authorities.

In view of the limited scope of the available budget at the start of the scheme and gradual growth in four years it is necessary that it is introduced in phases. The available budget is not sufficient, even in 2002, to be able to support all the local authorities in the Netherlands at the same time. For this reason it is anticipated that not all the applications of local authorities, even if they fit within the criteria of the scheme, can be honoured.

Each year a decision will be taken simultaneously on the basis of a comparison of the applications as to their suitability to contribute to the objectives of the policy. In addition no uniform distribution of the available subsidy amount is made, but applications are selected on the basis of quality and added value for the policy. The selection also takes into account the regional spread, diversity between the programmes, their innovative nature and size of the local authority. These must after all provide various insights and experience that may be important for other local authorities.

A BETTER STREET LIFE

Although Thuis op Straat (TOS) (Home on the Street) is still reasonably young (the first project started in 1996) it is already often called the example of an integrated preventive approach aimed at young people by both residents and by professionals and politicians. TOS aims at children and young people aged from 2 to 19 years and is intended to increase the quality of life in the squares and streets. It is a continuous investment in the future: 365 days per year. Even in the evenings. At the weekend and in the holidays. TOS aims for a clearer, more agreeable, more respectable and more sporty climate in squares and streets. That means more young people, children playing and doing sport and even young girls on the street and less trouble and vandalism.

Thuis op straat (At home on the street), a publication of the Stichting Werken aan de stad (Working on the town Association) and the Stichting Program (Program Association), May 1998

The scheme will provisionally apply for 8 years. That offers the opportunity to reach the majority of all local authorities in the Netherlands. The scheme comes into effect as of 1 October 1999. A progressive evaluation must make clear whether the scheme must be adjusted during its course.

With the temporary nature of the incentive scheme the innovative nature of the scheme is accentuated. It is also stressed that the responsibility for local sports policy lies at local authority level and that of the sportsmen and -women themselves. The local authorities may then also be expected to make a clearly distinguished own contribution. That also promotes the multiplier-effect of the scheme that is also desired by the policy partners VNG and LC.

To increase the durability of the temporary sport for all incentive local authorities are encouraged to submit multi-annual applications with a term that may vary from 3 to 6 years.

A national monitor, geared to the already present (local) monitors, options for support prior to and during the implementation phase and evaluations form the flanking policy for the incentive scheme.

A sounding board committee consisting of representatives on behalf of the policy partners in sport and interested sectors will be involved in the monitoring and give advice on the progress of the incentive scheme local sport for all incentive.

The principles for the incentive scheme are formed by content and formal conditions.

Content conditions

The programmes must on the basis of an integrated vision be aimed at a lasting reinforcement of (parts of) sport for all and/or the improvement of participation of local educationally disadvantaged groups and the quality of life in neighbourhoods, communities or local authorities¹⁹. Joint initiatives with national, regional and local sports organizations are positively assessed. Programmes, in which utilisation of the social importance of sport and integrality of the policy are aimed for by cooperation between various sports providers and/or sectors, are also positively assessed. It is after all expected that something like this will lead to a win-win situation for the various partners in the local range of sport available or a more local authority-, neighbourhood- and community-oriented approach.

Local authorities can also apply for support for sports-specific parts of a programme covering more than sport. In that case only the activities related to sport are considered for financial support.

Formal conditions

Activities can be developed by sportsmen and -women, organizations and local authorities. To promote cohesion in local authority policy an application within the framework of this incentive scheme must always be submitted by the local authority. Very important here is the base within the local (sports) sector involved. Within the framework of social participation it is recommended that the directly involved target group be called in to prepare and carry out the activities.

In the first tranche in 1999 local authorities with more than 50,000 inhabitants plus the provincial capitals that do not fall under these can submit applications. The submission of applications must be carried out by 1 November 1999.

The G-25 local authorities must include the sport for all programmes within the framework of the urban development plans, that are used in the big cities policy, and submitted to the Minister for Big City and Integration Policy. This ties in with the letter of the Minister for Big City and Integration Policy to your House of 3 June 1999 on the progress of the big cities policy. In assessing the sport for all programmes the conditions and criteria of the incentive scheme local sport for all for local authorities apply.

In 2000 all the local authorities in the Netherlands can submit an application. The submission periods for this will be announced separately.

¹⁹ For big cities that may also be the urban development plan already produced within the framework of the big cities policy

The scheme relates to a temporary quality incentive for which ultimately local authorities, organizations and/or participants must (gradually) bear the costs themselves. To encourage that process a support route will be agreed with each local authority. Local authorities must undertake to continue this.

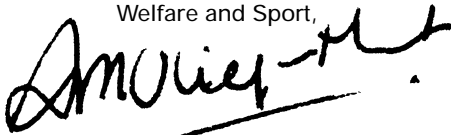
The contribution amounts over the whole project period to 50% of the actually incurred and subsidisable costs and amounts on an annual basis to between around NLG 50,000 / € 22.689,01 and a maximum of NLG 750,000 / € 340.335,16. When determining the level of the contribution in addition to the anticipated costs the number of inhabitants of the local authority must also be taken into account. In the case of a joint application from neighbouring local authorities the contribution amounts to 55% of the actually incurred and subsidisable costs.

9 Financing

The local sport for all incentive is financed from the additional resources made available via the coalition agreement. At the same time the budget previously made available for national organizations in sport will be used more specifically and each year supplemented to a limited degree to achieve optimum results. The phased intensification of resources for sport for all incentive is translated in the financing of the local authority sport for all that amounts to over 30 million / € 13.613.406,48 in 2002.

In the annex a statement is given of the financing of the local sport for all incentive which also indicates how this relates to the total intensification of the sports budget.

The Secretary of State for Health,
Welfare and Sport,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'M. Vliegenthart', written over a horizontal line.

Margo Vliegenthart

Annex: Financial statement sport for all incentive and total for the intensification of sports policy 1999 - 2002

Intensification Sport for all incentive		1999	2000	2001	2002
National facilitation • Management policy • Support • Intregrated local policy	NLG	1.400.000	2.800.000	4.900.000	7.850.000
	€	635.292,30	1.270.584,61	2.223.523,06	3.562.174,70
Municipal scheme • Management policy • Support • Intregrated local policy	NLG	5.500.000	11.000.000	19.250.000	30.150.000
	€	2.495.791,19	4.991.582,38	8.735.269,16	13.681.473,52
Separate policy frameworks • Sport en enviroment ¹ • Sport en development cooperation ²	NLG	600.000	1.200.000	2.100.000	3.300.000
	€	272.268,13	544.536,26	952.938,45	1.497.474,71
Intensification of sport for all incentive	NLG	7.500.000	15.000.000	26.250.000	41.300.000
	€	3.403.351,62	6.806.703,24	11.911.730,67	18.741.122,92
Intensification of top-class sport ³	NLG	2.500.000	5.000.000	8.750.000	13.700.000
	€	1.134.450,54	2.268.901,08	3.970.576,89	6.216.788,96
Total intensification	NLG	10.000.000	20.000.000	35.000.000	55.000.000
	€	4.537.802,16	9.075.604,32	15.882.307,56	24.957.911,88

1 Beleidskader Sport en milieu "Goud voor groen" (Sport and the environment Policy framework "Gold for green")

2 Beleidsnotitie "Sport in ontwikkeling: samenspel scoort!" (Policy memorandum "Sport in development: combined action scores!") (April 1998)

3 See memorandum "Kansen voor topsport" (Opportunities for topsport)

Publisher:
Ministry of Health, Welfare
and Sport (VWS)

Address for visitors:
Parnassusplein 5
The Hague

Postal address:
PO Box 20350
NL – 2500 EJ The Hague
Phone +31 70 340 79 11

Public information:
Phone +31 70 340 78 90

Internet: www.minvws.nl

December 2000

In the Sport for All Incentive policy letter presented to the Lower House on 18 June 1999, government policy relating to the reinforcement of Sport for All was explained. The basic assumption is the value of Sport for All at local level, both within sport and outside it.

The various key problems of local sports providers and the new demands that sportsmen and -women are making on them are the starting point for the policy: sports providers must be equipped or supported so that they can cope with these new requirements and so that the social opportunities that sport offers can actually be realized.

In addition to the already existing attention paid to the development of mass sport, which is mainly aimed at the national sports organizations, this policy letter gives a major incentive to the reinforcement of the local sports policy of local authorities. This makes it possible to reinforce the range of sport available locally, for this to be better bedded into the local social infrastructure and for links to be made with other sectors such as education, community management and preventive health care. Local authorities are encouraged in the reinforcement of the local mass sport infrastructure to use the products and services already developed by sports support organizations.

To implement the local Sport for All incentive in local authorities, a temporary incentive scheme has been chosen that makes it possible for the local authorities to support innovative multi-annual sports programs.

Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport