

THE EUROPEAN MODEL OF SPORT ALSO THROUGH THE PRISM OF UNIVERSITY SPORT

Jamnik Matej

Faculty of Chemistry and Chemical Technology, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia

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Abstract: *At the end of 2021, at a meeting of the Council of the European Union, the Ministers for Sport of the European Union adopted a resolution on the European model of sport. The key dilemma of the European model of sport is to what extent to enable such professionalization that it does not become just a pure economic activity. Among the main features identified in the resolution are a pyramid structure, organized sport structured at the national level and with one federation for the sports disciplin, solidarity with lower sports levels and the promotion of open competitions. Regarding the impact of the European model of sport on university sport, we can point out two key conclusions in the context of the European Union council meeting: the Ministers of Sport adopted a decision on the promotion of lifelong physical activity (special emphasis is placed on sports education), the Ministers for Sport also discussed the dual professional paths of athletes (dual careers of athletes - during and after the end of the sports career).*

Key words: *European model of sport, resolution, university sport.*

INTRODUCTION

The European model of sport serves as a guide on how sports should be organized within the European Union in the broadest sense. The key points of the European model of sport are defined by the resolution of the European model of sport, adopted by the EU Ministers of Sport at the end of 2021. Two important documents that formed the basis for this resolution are:

- The European Commission's White Paper on Sport (2007)
- The Resolution on the EU Work Plan for Sport (2020).

The key dilemma of the European model of sport is the extent to which professionalization should be allowed so that it does not become merely a pure economic activity, as is the case in the United States. Such an approach would make sport solely a profit-driven activity, which Europe does not desire. Sport should be part of the public interest of states, encouraging every resident to lead an active lifestyle practically from cradle to grave. This encouragement should be financially supported by the state, including through the educational process in schools, support for recreation, and sports for the elderly and disabled.

CHARACTERISTICS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE EUROPEAN MODEL OF SPORT RELATED TO THE RESOLUTION OF THE EUROPEAN MODEL OF SPORT

The purpose of the resolution of the European model of sport is to promote the advantages of the values and traditions of European sport for European society. The resolution highlights the key characteristics of the European model of sport, focusing primarily on organized sport based on values. Some key characteristics and recommendations of the European model of sport are:

- Member States, the European Commission, and sports organizations are called upon to support the key characteristics of the European model of sport:
 - Freedom of association.
 - Pyramid structure - structured at the national level with one federation for each sport.
 - Open system of promotion and relegation.
 - Fundamental approach and solidarity.
 - Community building.
- Recommendations for Member States, in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity, include:
 - Promoting values in sports and sports organizations governed by fundamental principles such as gender equality, solidarity, and respect for human rights.

- Recognizing and preserving the unique nature of sport and its structures based on voluntary activity.
- Recognizing and supporting, where appropriate, the contribution of volunteers, mass sports clubs, families, and local communities.
- Recommendations for the European Commission include:
 - Supporting the role of sport and its educational dimension, such as dual careers for athletes.
 - Promoting cooperation and structured dialogue with the sports movement, groups of athletes, commercial organizers, and other stakeholders.
 - Highlighting the consequences of closed sports competitions on organized sport in the EU.
- Recommendations for sports organizations include:
 - Promoting solidarity among sports organizations at all levels to help recover from the COVID-19 pandemic and ensure sustainability and further development of the sports sector.
 - Committing to financial solidarity between professional and mass sports.
 - Encouraging and facilitating access for young athletes and underrepresented groups to participate and be involved in decision-making in sports where appropriate.

STUDY ON THE EUROPEAN MODEL OF SPORT

In August 2021, the Directorate-General for Education, Youth, Sport, and Culture (DG EAC) decided to conduct a study on the proposed European model of sport. The findings of this study are based on extensive documentary research, interviews with stakeholders, and survey results. The study identifies the main characteristics of the European model of sport and examines key trends influencing the evolving understanding of the model.

The European model of sport is a key topic in the EU Work Plan for Sport (2021-2024). The work plan mandates the European Commission to explore the impact of closed sports competitions on the organized sports system, considering the unique characteristics of sport and examining possible challenges faced by European sports organizations and federations.

By mapping the development of legislation on sports governance, finance, and practices across different fields and organized sports over time, the study aims to provide more informed evidence and background on what is happening to the European model of sport as a whole. It also sought to determine how the European model of sport adapts to different situations and contexts affecting organized sports in various EU Member States.

Findings of the study:

- Overall, the research showed broad support for the European model of sport, including its key features of open competition, solidarity, and autonomy.
- The fact that functions in different sports are applied differently emphasizes a certain degree of flexibility in applying the model.
- This review of the research indicates that the application of key characteristics of the European model of sport evolves with a continuous range, reflecting best practice principles in gender equality, sustainability, and digitalization development, and includes additional elements such as increased transparency, strengthened solidarity mechanisms, and better integration of fundamental EU values.

The European Commission's White Paper on Sport also defines that the European model of sport has the following key characteristics:

- Hierarchical organization following a pyramid structure from domestic to elite competitions.
- Top-down approach and cooperation, with members adhering to organizational rules and having the opportunity to elect governing bodies.
- The principle of promotion and relegation.
- "Financial solidarity," allowing financial transfers between different levels and operators, especially from the top to the bottom of the pyramid.
- Dependence on voluntary work.

- Autonomy and independence of sports organizations and representative bodies, governed by principles and practices of good governance.

SUPPORT FOR THE EUROPEAN MODEL OF SPORT

Support for the European model of sport has also come from prominent members involved in Slovenian politics and international sports organizations.

- The Minister of Economy, Tourism, and Sport Matjaž Han publicly emphasized the importance of the European model of sport, and the State Secretary at the Ministry of Economy, Tourism, and Sport (SLO) Dejan Židan highlighted the European model of sport as a counterbalance to the "Americanization in sport."
- The European model of sport has also been supported by UEFA President Aleksander Čeferin, who firmly rejected the introduction of the "SUPER LEAGUE." Čeferin stressed that the European model of sport must be based on solidarity, sustainability, and fundamental values - this is the only way for sport to survive. The fundamental guideline is that the motive should not be profit alone.

IMPACT OF THE EUROPEAN MODEL OF SPORT ON UNIVERSITY SPORTS

Upon adopting the resolution on the European model of sport, two bases directly impacting university sports were highlighted:

- EU Ministers of Sport adopted a decision to promote lifelong physical activity (with a special focus on sports education from kindergarten to university).
- EU Ministers of Sport also discussed dual career paths for athletes (dual careers for athletes during and after their sports careers).

CONCLUSION

The European model of sport is a fundamental document adopted by the EU Ministers of Sport in 2021 through the resolution of the European model of sport. This resolution lists all the characteristics and recommendations of the European model of sport. A study conducted in 2022 also listed the effects on the characteristics and recommendations of the European model of sport. The European model of sport has received public support from prominent members of Slovenian politics (Matjaž Han, Dejan Židan) as well as UEFA President Aleksander Čeferin. The European model of sport also has a direct impact on university sports, as EU Ministers of Sport have placed special emphasis on sports education from kindergarten to university and dual careers for athletes during and after their sports careers.

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EUROPSKI MODEL SPORTA TAKOŽE KROZ PRIZMU UNIVERZITETSKOG SPORTA

Jamnik Matej

Sažetak: Krajem 2021 godine na sastanku Vijeća Europske unije ministri za sport Europske unije usvojili su resoluciju o europskom modelu sporta. Ključna dilema europskog modela sporta je u kojoj mjeri omogućiti takvu profesionalizaciju da ona ne postane samo čista ekonomska djelatnost. Među glavnim karakteristikama koji su

identificirane u resoluciji su piramidalna struktura, organizirani sport strukturiran na nacionalnoj razini i s jednim savezom za sportsku disciplinu, solidarnost s nižim nivoima sporta i promicanje otvorenih natjecanja. Što se tiče utjecaja europskog modela sporta na univerzitetski sport, možemo istaknuti dva ključna zaključka u kontekstu sastanka Vijeća Europske unije: ministri za sport su donijeli odluku o unapređenju cjeloživotne fizičke aktivnosti (posebana pažnja je stavljena na sportsko obrazovanje), ministri za sport razgovarali su i o dvojnim profesionalnim putevima sportista (dvostruke karijere sportista - tokom i nakon završetka sportske karijere).

Ključne riječi: europski model sporta, rezolucija, univerzitetski sport.