



Good practices in Promoting Physical Activity; Hamburg, Germany

Overall

Hamburg, Germany

Socio-demographic indicators:

Municipality/City Population: 1,841,179 (2018)

Gender ratio: 51 % women, 49 % men

Age distribution: 0-10 (9.88%); 11-20 (8.64%); 21-30 (14.15%); 31-40 (16.03%); 41-50 (13.49%); 51-60 (14.40%); 61-70 (9.58%); 71-80 (8.23%); 81-90 (4.68%); 90+ (0.92%)

GDP per capita:

2017: 64,567€; 2018: 65,603€

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Health and Physical Activity Issues:

- Sport is important as an economic factor;
- It has value for city marketing;
- It supports integration and inclusion;
- Health promotion and maintenance of mobility are undisputed.

Why did you start an activity / a project?

After a failed referendum to host Olympic Games, the decision was to make proper use of the 12 million EURO that the application process cost. Key questions were: Which of the sports facilities and projects planned for the

Games should still be realised for the benefit of the city, even without the mega event? How could Hamburg gain something positive from the Olympic disappointment and transfer the enthusiasm for sports from the application period to the time after the Olympics?

It turned out to be the right decision for Hamburg to have long-term sports policy plans. The possibility to apply for the Olympics was a means to an end, but never the sole purpose of sports policy considerations. Consequently, the measures pushed by the city in the course of the candidacy process could still be implemented without the Olympic and Paralympic Games. They were thus also in line with the aspect of sustainability, which always has to be taken into account. The outcome of these considerations was the 160-sided “Master Plan Active City”, a selection and description of 32 individual measures designed to upgrade Hamburg’s sports infrastructure significantly until 2024. With this master plan, Hamburg has developed a concept that not only focusses on the consistent development of sport, but also regards physical activity as a connecting element for metropolitan and social development.

The projects range from small supplementary furnishings to new developments such as the federal centre of excellence for handball and judo, for which Hamburg will spend a good 10 million Euros. Unpopular clay courts will be replaced by artificial grass courts in order to be able to use the constantly decreasing space in the city more efficiently for sport. Traditional facilities like the tennis stadium „Rothenbaum“, or the rowing regatta course Allermöhe will be modernised in accordance with the latest requirements of competitive and mass sport.

The “Master Plan Active City” (MPAC) is thus Hamburg’s Olympic heritage even without the opportunity to host the Games in the city.

How do you do it?

In addition, the ongoing investments emphasise the importance of sport in Hamburg. From 2011 to 2020, Hamburg will have invested a good 610 million Euros in sports facilities and grounds. In the long term, the city also supports organised sport, which plays an important role within the Active City Strategy. In 2019/2020, the largest increase in support is for organised sport.

At an early stage and based on the “Master Plan Active City” the intensive, inter-agency cooperation and the socio-political meaning of sport have led to the creation of the “Active City Strategy”. It was triggered by the political debate on the challenges of urbanisation and influx - more people, more traffic, more housing and higher population density. Bottom line: The city sees growth as an opportunity, not a threat to property, lifestyle or the quality of life. Not only sports halls, fitness centres, sports facilities and indoor swimming pools, but also the entire city is a place for physical activity, fitness and sport. Therefore, the entire city is suitable for the enhancement of people’s quality of life and physical performance through sport and physical activity - “low-threshold”, i.e. without requiring a tracksuit or sport shoes.

A good example for Hamburg’s invitation to do sports are the so-called exercise islands or fitness stops, which are currently being built in or on the edge of green areas around the city, where a variety of people - even those who are first-time users of such exercise equipment - meet in accordance with the motto “sport unites people”.

The most outstanding example for the appreciation of sport and physical activity in urban planning though is Oberbillwerder. It will be Hamburg’s 105th district by the mid-2020s with almost 20,000 inhabitants. Located in southeast Hamburg, just fifteen minutes from the main station, this modern district has been designed to be an Active City model district where sport, physical activity and health play central roles.

The pragmatic approach of the “Master Plan Active City” has turned into more than just a sports facilities expansion program. The master plan as well as the Senate’s commitment to the mission “Active City” further emphasise the socio-political meaning of sport, which has been increasing in

recent years any-way, even beyond keywords as integration, mobility and health promotion. The “Active City Strategy” sharpens Hamburg’s profile as an active city, a city in motion, a city that defines itself more and more by sport - from leisure sport to mass sport and professional sport.

What are your expected outcomes?

The Sport Strategy for the Decade, based on the sportsmanship declaration of 2011, as well as the Active City Strategy, based on the Olympic candidacy, have turned sport in Hamburg into a strong, politically and socially important force. The master plan and the Active City Strategy are relevant political issues in the large city of Hamburg, whose population is constantly growing in times of global urbanisation, similarly to other major cities of international importance.

By accepting this growth, one of the core aims of the “Active City Strategy” is to improve the quality of life for the inhabitants of Hamburg. Thus, sport - in all its facets - plays a decisive role: from leisure and mass sports, to school sports and competitive and professional sports.

Based on the “Master Plan Active City” alone, over 30 projects with a total volume of some 50 million Euros will be realised until 2024. These investments will have a positive effect on the requirements of sport. At the same time, Hamburg’s current sports policy orientation enables the city to achieve a fundamental understanding of the significance of sport at all levels - the entire city, all areas of sport and all political departments. Certainly a compelling vision for the upcoming 20s of the 21st century.

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