Running in Hungary: the ’winner’ of leisure sport

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assistant professor
- Success in elite sport
- Low rates in sport participation
- 95% of funding goes to elite sport
HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

• Bronze medal at 1896 Olympics Kellner Gyula

• 1950s - Club registered athletes in track and field Iharos, Rózsavölgyi

• 1950s-1960s orienteering World Champion in 1972 Sarolta Monspart

• 1970s first runners on streets, first promotional programs in mass running

• 1984 first marathon run on the streets of Budapest
POPULARITY OF RUNNING

• Transition to market economy
• Power of marketing
• Example of other European running events
• Entrance of international companies into Eastern European markets
• Diversification of life-style habits
• From the capital to the country side
• Also winter, also night, all distances & relays
• Technology (timing, chip recording, warm-up, bands)
• Internet
GOVERNANCE OF RUNNING

Hungarian Athletics Federation

track competitions

mass running events

Private companies
City councils
Civil organizations

Budapest Marathon in 1990 exclusive rights given to a private company, 'BSI’
Growth in the number of

- Organisers
- Events
- Races/distances
- Participants
- Regions

40 event organisers by 2012
500% growth in the number of events since 2000

Source: Perényi, 2013, Data from www.futoversenyek.hu
Distribution of running event organisers by number of events in 2012 (n=40).

Source: Perényi, 2013, Data from www.futoversenyek.hu
Participants on marathon race

Source: Perényi, 2013, Data from www.futanet.hu
Profile of participants on five recent Budapest Marathon between 2008-2012

n=63,543
Number of participants
Budapest Marathon event 2008-2012 (n=63,543)

8 096
10 961
11 507
14 808
18 171

Growth of 224%

8 races per event

Source: Perényi, 2013, Data from BSI.
Distribution by races (%)
Budapest Marathon event 2008-2012.

Source: Perényi, 2013, Data from BSI.
Distribution by gender (%) in ALL races of the Budapest Marathon 2008-2012 (n=63,543).

2008

- Male: 63.5%
- Female: 36.3%

2012

- Male: 55.0%
- Female: 45.0%

Source: Perényi, 2013, Data from BSI.
Distribution by age groups (%)
Budapest Marathon event 2008-2012.

Mostly people from the work force

Source: Data from Budapest Marathon organisers (BSI).
Distribution by occupation (%) Budapest Marathon event 2008-2012 (N=39,983).

Source: Data from Budapest Marathon organisers (BSI).
Distribution by residence (%)
Budapest Marathon event 2008-2012.

2012
- Budapest: 42.7%
- Countryside: 42.1%
- Foreigners: 15.2%

2011
- Budapest: 44.7%
- Countryside: 39.7%
- Foreigners: 15.6%

2010
- Budapest: 47%
- Countryside: 38.3%
- Foreigners: 14.7%

2009
- Budapest: 44.1%
- Countryside: 39.2%
- Foreigners: 16.7%

2008
- Budapest: 40.3%
- Countryside: 34.2%
- Foreigners: 25.5%

Source: Data from Budapest Marathon organisers (BSI).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distance</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30k</td>
<td>29.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marathon relay</td>
<td>30.1% (company clubs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marathon distance</td>
<td>30.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- 19.9% of runners are members of any clubs
- Gender: male: 22.4%; female: 16.4%
- Growth among marathon runners since 2008: 31.9%

Source: Perényi, 2013, Data from BSI.
SUMMARY

• In controversial leisure sport, the winner is running
  – it is integrated to consumer marketing
  – it is trendy
  – it is popular

• Growing in numbers
  – events, distances, locations, organisers, participants

• Options for development
  – more females to participate
  – running tourism in expansion

• Waiting for GO action and NGO cooperation
Thank you for your attention!

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