The trickle down effect revisited
Who find elite sports inspirational?

Sports participation in Denmark

Elite event effects on mass participation?

Mass event effects on participation?

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(work in progress)

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Sports participation in Denmark

• Data on participation and choice of sport dating back to 1964
• Latest survey: Fall of 2011
• Almost 6,000 respondents: 2035 children (aged 7-15) and 3957 adults (16+)
• Comprehensive questionnaires touching a wide range of fields
• Carried out with financial aid from all major Danish sports organizations
Sports participation in Denmark

General participation: ‘Normally do sport/exercise’

General rise in participation over the last 50 years

Children

0 % | 20 % | 40 % | 60 % | 80 % | 100 %
---|---|---|---|---|---
2007 | 84 % | 1964 | 15 % | 2011 | 86 %
1975 | 29 % | 1987 | 42 % | 1993 | 47 %
1998 | 50 % | 1998 | 50 % | 2007 | 56 %
2011 | 64 %

Adults

0 % | 20 % | 40 % | 60 % | 80 % | 100 %
---|---|---|---|---|---
2007 | 42 % | 1975 | 29 % | 2011 | 64 %
1987 | 47 % | 1993 | 50 % | 2007 | 56 %
1998 | 50 % | 2007 | 56 % | 2011 | 64 %
Sports participation in Denmark

Specific sport/organisation of sport: ‘Regularly last 12 months’

Change with life phases

- Active in club
- Active on their own
- Active in commercial centre

[Graph showing participation rates across different age groups]
Sports participation in Denmark

Participation in all ages

Because of elite events or international success?
Sports participation in Denmark

Mainly adults interested in elite sports

Participate in sports
Interested in elite sports

Age 7-9  Age 10-12  Age 13-15  Age 16-19  Age 20-29  Age 30-39  Age 40-49  Age 50-59  Age 60-69  Age 70+
Mainly children/young people inspired by elite sports

‘Inspiration from sports stars in the media has contributed to me being active within a specific sport’
Who find elite sports inspirational?

Teenage girls and boys/men aged 7 to 29

Which sports?

Proportion elite inspired athletes among: Girls (13-19) Boys/men (7-29)
Preliminary conclusions

Elite event effects on mass participation?

- It seems elite sports does to some extent inspire certain groups
  - Particularly within the most popular and best media covered sports

However:

- Effects are dubious, short term and seemingly based solely on media coverage
- New sports participants or activating the already active in new sports?
- A better explanation/more relevant focus?
Inspiration and motivation from mass events

Participate in sports [2011]
Inspiration and motivation from mass events

Major increase in 30-60 demographic

*Predominantly runners – particular rise in run event participation*

![Graph showing participation in sports from 2007 to 2011 across different age groups.](image-url)
Inspiration and motivation from mass events

Running in Denmark inspires mass participation

Source: Danish Athletics Federation’s ‘Motionstæller’
Inspiration and motivation from mass events

Running in Denmark inspires mass participation …*rather than elite events?*

Thank you for your attention!