



CONTEMPORARY ADMINISTRATION OF GREEK OLYMPIC AND ATHLETIC SPORTS ORGANIZATIONS

Sports Management

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to describe the contemporary management characteristics of the Greek Olympic and athletic sports organizations during the economic crisis. In order to achieve this goal, a comprehensive literature review was organized and carried out on the organizational model of the Greek Olympic committee, the function of the Greek sports federations and existing clubs, the local sports associations, the sports law and the role of the General Secretariat for Sports. The literature review revealed that there was a decline in the funding of the mentioned athletic organizations and paid staff. The present study showed that the Ministry of culture and General Secretariat for Sports continued to be the main institutions that contribute to the management of the Olympic and athletic sports organizations. If the Greek sports administration system wants to survive during the next years, they should find other funding sources rather than being supported only by the government.

KEYWORDS:

Sports organizations, management, Olympic sports organizations

Introduction

Greece is the 97th in the ranking of the countries of the world according to their extent and, according to the United Nations official estimates in 2015, the population of the country is 10.815.197. Greece is the European country with an area of 131.957 km² [10]. The population is generally very interested in sports, but this shows mostly in the high viewership of sporting broadcasts [8, 17]. There are many national television and radio stations devoted entirely to sports [9]. However, there is much room for improvement in the participation rate of the general public in sports, which has shown a decreasing trend across all age groups, according to government sources [17]. Greece's most popular sport is soccer; this is evident in the Greek's national team winning of the European Cup in football 2004 [15]. The second sport is basketball where the national team had many awards. In the years 1987 and 2005, they won the European championship [14]. Polo is another popular sport which is distinguished in the National Team [16]. Greece has hosted the Olympics on two occasions so far. Once with the revival of Olympic Games in the Summer of 1896, in Athens Greece got 46 medals and twice after 100 years later (Athens 2004) they got 16 medals with a total of medals (30 gold, 42 silver, and 38 bronze [12,13].

Although there was an increase in the elite levels in the 1990's with national distinctions, the present economic crisis and the reduction in funding the Greek sports federations, has generally declined the sports interest of the Greek population [20, 40].

The purpose of this study is to assess the management of the Greek Olympic and sports organizations which include the following topics: (i) the Ministry of culture and the general secretariat of sports structure and the main institutions, (ii) the characteristics of sports clubs and (iii) funding.

Table 1. Highlights of the Greece sports scene.

Population of Greece	10.815.197
Club members	11 %
People exercise or play sport at least 1 to 2 times a week	41 %
People do some form of other physical activity (such as cycling, dancing or gardening) 1 to 3 times a month	49 %
People engage in other physical activity at least 5 times a week;	8 %
Number of clubs	11.846
National sport federations	25

The Greek sports administration system

The administrative model of Greek sports includes (Figure 1): The Ministry of Culture and Sports, the General Secretariat for Sport which is one of the four Secretariats of the Ministry (the other three are the Secretariats of Tourism, Culture, and Infrastructure), the sports federations, the sports associations, the sports clubs, the organizations involved in the Olympic movement, the sports facilities, the Municipal Sports Organizations, the Greek Organisation of Football Prognostics, the Philippo association, the private health and fitness sports clubs and

the sports schools [1-4, 35-40].

Figure 1. Summary of the governance structure of Greek sports today.



Ministry of Culture and General Secretariat of Sport

The first governmental body related to the sport was the General Secretariat of Sport (G.S.S.) established in 1958. This sports office was under the management of the Ministry of Culture and Sport. The first missions of the G.S.S. were to monitor, organize and coordinate out-of-school sport. The financial support of the Olympic Games Commitment and recognized federations and sports clubs [32-34].

The state contributes to the development of the country's sport through the G.S.S.

The G.S.S. cooperates with the federations and scientific sports centers and supports scientific material-technical infrastructure and economical sports at every level. It also works with the municipal sports organizations and supports "sports for all" at the peripheral and central levels [33].

The next years voted the laws 91/1967, 397/1968, 75/1975 and 77/1985, which regulated the G.S.S. activities. Today the institutional framework that governs the relationship between the state and the sports are the laws 2725/1999, 2858/2000, 2947/2001. 3057/2002. 3262/2004 and 3372/2005 [23]. Today the G.S.S. is responsible for allocating funds for sports facility development and the money is transferred not only to the sports federations, athletic unions, and athletic clubs but also to the municipal sports organization as well.

The work of the General Secretariat of Sports (G.S.S.) is the strategic planning and implementation of the country's sports policy, within the framework of the State's constitutional obligation to protect, maximize supervision and financial support for the sport. In particular, the General Secretariat General is [19]:

- To promote the Olympic values in the national and international levels.
- To promote the sports culture within the society.
- To identify the sports needs of the country and develop the appropriate sport policy strategies.
- To evaluate the national sports policy and take correct actions.
- To supervise the sports federations and the national sports bodies in order to ensure the implementation of the national sports policy.

- To efficiently and effectively manage sports services and facilities.
- To direct and supervise the sports federations and national sports bodies, and ensure the adherence to the laws and regulations [19].

Hellenic Olympic committee

Hellenic Olympic Committee (H.O.C.) is the governing Olympic organization of Greece, it is one of the oldest National Olympic Committees in the world, being founded in 1894 and recognized in 1895. The H.O.C. was founded in Athens on February 3, 1894, in the name of the Committee of the Olympic Games (C.O.G.) with the first President Crown Prince Constantine in Greece. On the same day, the committee met in order to organize the first modern Olympic Games. These revival games after many problems, finally, was held in 1896 in Athens from March 25th, the opening day and closed on April 15th. The Olympic Games were carried out at the Panathenian Stadium in Athens which was restored with white marble, by the donation of the magnanimous Georgios Averoff. In 2000, for the organization of the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens, the C.O.G. revised his name to the H.O.C. This change had to be done because until the year 2000, the name of the HOC in Greek, had been Committee for Organizing the Olympic Games as the purpose of its foundation was the organizing of the first International Olympic Games [12-13]. The mission of the HOC is to guide and work to guaranty the promotion, development, and protection of the modern Olympic Movement, the spirit of fair play and out-of-school physical activity, in accordance with the concepts of the Olympic Ideal and the traditions of the Hellenic sport. The H.O.C.'s role is:

- To supervise the Olympic Sports and cooperate with the State as well as with the public and private bodies for the promotion of healthy sports policies.
- To encourage a love for sports and respect for the spirit of sportsmanship among the young.
- To organize in cooperation with the National Federations and the Olympic preparation of athletes.
- To proceed, on its sole responsibility, to the final selection of athletes who will represent Greece at the Olympic and Mediterranean Games.

H.O.C.'s operates as an independent, apolitical sports organization that is largely autonomous from the government.

Athletic clubs

A sports club is the union of individuals established and operating in accordance with the law 2725/1999 (article 78). It is a nonprofit athletic organization and have as a goal to (www.e-nomothesia.gr, 2017): (a) to provide training services to improve the quality of life, preventing and safeguarding the health of the athletes and sportswomen, (b) to promoting sporting ideals. (c) systematically cultivate and develop its athletes' opportunities to participate in sports events, and (d) to develop and promote the sport they cultivate. The sports club is the primary sporting organization of amateur sport and may carry out other activities that are consistent with its constitutional purpose, as well as have any other, secondary, statutory purpose, provided that the nonprofit speculative character. The statute of the sports club defines the specific sectors or categories of sport, the culture, and development of which it seeks, as well as the process of establishing new sporting disciplines or sector abolition. The minimum number of members in the sports club is set at twenty (20). These individuals are required to meet and sign the articles of the union, which define the guidelines under which the club will operate. These 20 individuals have to also select a committee, who will be in charge of the following legal requirements. When a club is recognized by law, it can apply to become a member of the sports federation. As can be observed from the analysis of the geographical distribution of sports clubs in Greece by the department of sports documentation statistics of the General Secretariat of Sports and the department of informatics and the Hellenic Statistical Authority, most of the clubs are in Attica [19, 33-34].

Table 2. The largest number of clubs in Greece (G.S.S., 2017).

Prefecture	No of clubs
Attica	2,536
Thessalonica	961
Achaia	415
Larissa	396
Serres	300
Kozani	249

Sports associations

The sports association is the local, nonprofit organization of sporting associations which cultivate the same sport or sports sector which is established and operates as an association in accordance with the law 2725/1999 (article 78). The main purpose is developing the home sport within the geographical limits that it operates. It is a local body of the relevant sports federation, which assists in organizing and conducting its sporting activities [11].

The sports association shall include sporting associations which have their headquarters in one or more regional units, in accordance with its statutes and the statutes of the relevant sports federation. Only one sporting association for each sport is allowed in each regional unit.

If a sporting association is not established in a regional unit and the relevant sports federation deems it necessary to carry out its sporting activities locally, it may decide to establish and operate a local committee whose members are elected by the representatives of the sporting associations concerned, which cultivate the same sport.

The minimum number of individuals of each sports association is set at ten (10). Discrimination is not allowed in the regular, probationary or outdated members of the association or the like. If the number of members is reduced to less than ten (10), the sports association shall be dissolved.

The establishment of a sports association requires a prior decision of the assembly after a decision by the governing council of the unions concerned. The registration of a member in a sports association is made by decision of its board of directors and the deletion by a decision of its general meeting, which is taken by a majority of three-quarters (3/4) of its members [11].

Table 3. Classification of main institutions in Greek sports organizations today.

Name of athletic organization	Number of members	Board of directors	Number of Board members	Length of service
Athletic clubs	20	Yes	5-9	2-4 y
Sports associations ¹	10	Yes	5-7	4 y
Sports Federations ²	20	Yes	5-9	4 y

¹ Seven (7) to nine (9) members, if thirty-one (31) to one hundred (100) clubs, c) nine (9) to eleven (11) One (101) or more clubs.

² (a) from five (5) to nine (9) members if the federation has twenty (20) to one hundred (100) clubs; (b) from nine (9) to eleven members (11), if the federation has in its strength a hundred (100) to three hundred (300) clubs; and (c) eleven (11) to fifteen (15) members, if the federation has three hundred (300) or more clubs.

Sports federations

A Sports Federation is the secondary, nonprofit organization of sports clubs that cultivate the same sport or sports industry. It was established and it operates in accordance with the law 2725/1999 (article 78) and its purpose is to cultivate and develop the sport that it cultivates at the national level [10-11].

Only one federation for the whole country is allowed for each sport or sports industry. The federation represents the sport internationally in accordance with the regulations of the International Olympic Committee and its relevant international sports federation and it has the oversight of the sporting competitions under it. The Sports and sports industry are determined by a decision of the federal assembly.

For the formation of a federation, the decisions of the general assemblies shall be made by at least twenty (20) athletic clubs that cultivate the same sport or the same sports industry that exhibit racing activity [10-11].

The members of the sports federation are only sporting associations which have been granted the special sporting recognition referred to in Article 28 hereof and have not been revoked or have expired. The Board of Directors decides on the registration of a member in the sports federation and for the deletion of its General Assembly. Discrimination is not allowed in the regular, probate, or outdated, or similar.

The provisions of Article 27 of this Law shall apply mutatis mutandis to the instruments provided for in this Act, the statutes, and regulations

of the sporting federations.

The sports federation is the superior sports organization, to which all clubs regularly engaged in the same sport. The sports Federation is a non-profit sports organization and aims to create the right conditions for the development of sport represented at the national level. Each sport is allowed to create only one federation for the whole country. The Federation is the expressor of the sports at the international level, in accordance with the regulations of the International Olympic Committee and the respective international sports Federation and is the official supervisor of sporting events contained therein.

There are 25 sports Federations in Greece operating at the national level who are members of the main umbrella organization 'H.O.C.'. The majority of Greek's 11.846 clubs are distributed between them. They handle the elite level responsibilities of their sport, for example, the management of the national teams. They vary greatly in size; the Greek Football Federation (G.F.F.) is by far the largest one in term of a number of clubs which is 2.438 in number. In the second place is the basketball federation with 737 clubs and in the third place the volleyball Federation (table 5).

Table 4. Largest sports Federation by the number of clubs (G.S.S., 2017).

Sports Federation	No of clubs
1. Football	2.438
2. Basketball	737
3. Volleyball	376
4. Tae kwo do	344
5. Swimming	326
6. Track and field	230

Funding

As mentioned the Hellenic Ministry of Culture and Sports is responsible for evolving the central government's sports policy in Greece. This is achieved through the cooperation with the General Secretariat of Sports, which is one of the four Secretariats of the Ministry, National Investment Program, the Central Government Budget, the Greek Organisation of Football Prognostics and the Hellenic Horse Racing Organisation finance the General Secretariat of Sports.

In a recent study, we found a 35 % decrease in the Greek sports federations funding between before the crisis and after the first memorandum, 87 % between the first and second memorandum and 25 % between the second and third memoranda [18-31, 35-40].

Table 5. Numbers of medals during the last six Olympic games.

Year	Hosting	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Bronze
1996	Atlanta	4	4	0	8
2000	Sidney	4	6	3	13
2004	Athens	6	6	4	16
2008	Beijing	0	2	2	4
2012	London	0	0	2	2
2016	Rio	3	1	2	6

Greece in the year 1996 was elected to organize the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens. This decision of the I.O.C. and its rapid growth after joining the Eurozone had resulted in the Greek Government to finance all the levels of sports in both the sports for all and the elite level. This began to appear in the Atlanta Olympic Games, in which Greece earned a total of 8 medals, followed by Sidney 13 medals and culminated in the Athens with 16 medals (Table 6).

Then, with the reduction of state funding, there will be a decline in the successes of the Greeks elite athletes in the next Olympic Games such as Beijing and London. In the latter, the worst medal harvest in the modern Olympic Games, showed the effects of funding reductions during the austerity years [5-7, 20, 39-40].

Conclusion

The Minister of culture and G.S.S. continued to be the main institutions that contribute to the management of the Olympic and athletic sports organizations. The sports clubs contribute to the management of sports for all and elite sports. The funding of G.S.S. to the national sports federations has decreased dramatically because of the economic crisis during the austerity years. If the Greek athletic system wants to survive during the next years, they should find other

funding sources rather than being supported only by the government.

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