

Manifesto

Integration through Sport for an active living together in our towns and cities

Challenges:

In our urban community, we are experiencing a diverse change process on a daily basis. The momentum of these changes is essentially a consequence of four major challenges:

- Globalisation
- Demographic change
- Technological developments
- Change in shared common values

1. **Globalisation** is increasingly altering our professional and day-to-day life, as well as the structure of our population.

Globalisation opens borders for goods, services, capital and information, as well as for people from all over the world. The population profile of our towns and cities is thus becoming increasingly international.

Consequently, we are faced with the challenge of integrating the people who are moving to our urban communities and, at the same time, of giving them fair opportunities in our community. A variety of joint measures are necessary, particularly through sports, if different nations are to live together in harmony.

2. The **demographic change** means that we all have the chance to live longer whilst remaining fit and healthy. However, at the same time, fewer children are being born.

One of the consequences of demographic change is that it alters the demand for services, particularly in sports. The growing numbers of people who are “young at heart” want to lead an independent life for as long as possible. At the same time, in view of the decreasing number of children, each child must be given the encouragement and education that will provide them with the basis for a fair and equal future. Our towns and cities have to offer our children the facilities to play and to become involved in sports. Both conventional forms of sports and new forms of movement should promote the health of young and old alike. At the same time, sport can open up many opportunities for bringing together the different generations.

3. **Technological developments** are accelerating professional and private life and are leading to growing media consumption.

The new media technologies in particular open the floodgates to vast quantities of information, entertainment, games, films and networks of communications. This greatly changes the way people, especially children and young people, behave. The daily use of these media for hours often leads to poor concentration, postural problems, passivity and aggression, as well as to social isolation. To encourage

children and young people away from the television and computer, sport has to offer a sense of community and sensational shared experiences.

In order to overcome anonymity and isolation in front of the television, various sport programmes in the neighbourhoods must be made available to older citizens to enable them to grow old together whilst remaining active. At the same time, such sports programmes could also provide opportunities for young and old to come together.

4. **The change in shared common values** in our society gives rise to an increasingly variety of lifestyles.

One consequence of the change in shared values in the direction of greater individualism is also that fewer and fewer people are prepared to make long-term commitments. This affects not only marriage and the family, but also non-profit organisations, such as sports clubs. Many cocoon themselves in their own sphere of interest and live “in their own world”. More than half of the households in cities are “single households”. Complete families with children have become a small minority.

However, individual freedom and social responsibility go hand in hand. Sport can make an important contribution to this living together and to the sense of solidarity, and this also applies for the weaker members of our society, namely the disabled, children and old people. This is particularly true if people use their personal freedom for voluntary and unpaid work in clubs and associations in order to encourage the living together at both sporting and social level.

Objectives:

We see our towns and cities as communities of young and old, healthy and sick, disabled and able-bodied and of people of all nationalities. Even though our urban communities are becoming increasingly international and multicultural, older, more individual and with increasing media networks, our aim is still to develop our towns

and cities as communities. This is why it is more important than ever that the different generations and nations live together. Sport can make a major contribution to this, since sport can communicate values that are essential for our successful living together.

“Like music, sport is something universal that is understood globally, regardless of social, ethnic and religious differences. It’s not sport but its values that are universal.” (IOC President Dr. Jacques Rogge).

Similarly to the way in which the Olympic rings are joined together, the five values that sport can communicate so effectively are also bound together. These values are respect, tolerance, peace, solidarity and justice. They are of central importance for integration in our urban communities. The communication of these values to children and young people in particular will not be successful if they learn them as abstract values in isolation, rather they have to have a shared experience of these values and see them translated into specific actions. Sport can bring these values to life in a variety of different ways.

1. Respect

Respect for another person and for the individual’s character, commitment, skills and achievements makes it easier to respect oneself.

As a result of the different kinds of sport and differentiation according to age and whether an individual is disabled or able-bodied, everyone can experience respect for the efforts and application of others, regardless of nationality or social status. According to the motto of Pierre Baron de Coubertin:

“It’s not winning that’s important but taking part, not victory but that which has been achieved.”

Mutual respect means respecting the achievements of others; however, respect is also important for oneself. Self-esteem grows, for example, as a result of personal

discipline and personal responsibility, such as develops when improving one's own health through sport.

Sport thus contributes to a **culture of respect for others and for one's own individual responsibility.**

2. Tolerance

The complexity of lifestyles and of the moral concepts of different nationalities, as well as the dynamics of change leading to the pressure to adapt and perform, can result in an aversion and defensive attitude towards others, towards difference and towards foreigners. Sport as a joint experience brings together people with different social and national backgrounds and also helps to break down prejudices towards foreigners. This encourages respect for others, for their different life stories and cultural histories, their different experiences and lifestyles. Both the social and the sporting aspects of our sports clubs encourage mutual understanding.

Sport thus contributes to a **culture of understanding of foreigners and the acceptance of difference.**

3. Peace

Young people tend quiet often to solve conflicts via violence. To a great extent, this is due to the thousands of "role models" in the media who exhibit aggression and violence.

Sport offers an outstanding opportunity to break down potential aggression by means of physical activity. At the same time, sporting competition is an important example of how the other team is not an evil enemy but a fair opponent with whom one comes into contact according to a system of definite rules. Since players come from different nations and different social backgrounds, team games contribute to a peaceful living together.

Sport thus contributes to a **culture of social peace and peaceful coexistence.**

4. Solidarity

Team sports in particular create a sense of team spirit that transcends all social strata and nationalities. This joint experience is also an important response to the danger of becoming cocooned in one's own private world and to the isolation that can develop as a result of the extensive use of media.

The joint struggle for victory, the joint effort to achieve a specific goal encourages team spirit and a sense of responsibility for others.

Sport thus contributes to a **culture of mutual help and trust.**

5. Justice

Observing common rules is an essential prerequisite for living together in peace and fairness. The basic rules include equality, i.e. the same rules for all and an equal right to participate in sport, regardless of social status and nationality.

As the rules apply to all, the equal opportunity to participate is also a rejection of marginalisation and discrimination.

Sport thus contributes to a **culture of fair play and of social participation for all.**

Tasks:

Sport can and should offer a feeling at home for all. Therefore it is important that those in positions of responsibility in politics, society and sports organisations provide long-term support for the integrative role of sport.

1. In accordance with the **principle of subsidiarity**, it is not the state and the municipalities that should receive direct support for their work but the non-profit sports organisations and clubs. These are largely carried by the commitment of the citizens. Clubs and associations offer comprehensive, value-oriented programmes. However, sport can also make an important contribution towards integration in our kindergartens, schools, businesses, youth clubs and centres offering facilities for all age groups.
2. **Towns and cities** are thus required to support the work of sports clubs and other non-profit-making sports providers, particularly by establishing a sports infrastructure, especially sports halls, sports fields and swimming pools, as well as public areas for physical activities, such as school playgrounds, football areas, jogging and walking routes, etc.

Public grants are also necessary to ensure that sports programmes are of high quality from both a sports and a social aspect and to take account of a variety of different sports and physical activities according to demand. These include differentiated, programmes in the neighbourhoods of popular sports according to the age of participants, especially fitness, leisure and adventure sports, as well as differentiated programmes for everything from competitive to professional sports.

3. Integration through sport remains a **dynamic learning process**. Sports clubs and associations, as well as national politics and in particular towns and cities, are required to contribute to the future-oriented development of sports. This is especially important in view of changing leisure habits and new types of sport and against a background of the growing professionalisation and commercialisation of sport.

To ensure the success of integration through sport, sport may not be regarded as an isolated social subsystem, rather as an integral part of the development of our

urban community. Thus, in future, in addition to the further development of the infrastructure and financial support of sport, it will be even more important to intensify the exchange of experiences, to learn from one another by means of best-practice examples, and to continue to find new ways of achieving an active living together, and thus integration, in our towns and cities.

Dr. Wolfgang Schuster