

## **Sport and tourism for local development**

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### *Abstract*

The relationship between sport and tourism is extremely important. Starting from the literature on sport tourism, we examine the impact of a sporting event in terms of tourist flow in relation to the provision of sporting facilities in the Italian regions. The sport tourism, as argued by Charles Pigeassou, constitutes in fact an original product, taking into account both relations between tourism and sport, but also a real osmosis of sport activities with the touristic ones.

Mega events, like the Olympics, or local events as city marathons exert an increasingly significant role in positioning the resort in the tourist market, but also in improving the local image, amenities and infrastructures from a more general point of view.

Sports tourism could be a driving force for local development, community cohesiveness, economics benefits, social incentives, positioning the localities in the touristic market, improving their image.

Furthermore, the relationship between sport and tourism has implications related to the theme of cultural identity. Traditional games and sports, as evidence of an intangible cultural heritage, are not just elements that, in a variety of ways, hide traditions and links with past games, but recall a tourist flow in search of the peculiar elements of a territory. A world-wide event such as the Military World Games represents for the Aosta Valley a general test for the realization of sporting events such as the finals of the World Ski Championships.