

Sport mobility: global dimensions

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Resume

The *basic objective of our paper* is to contribute to the debate on essential nature of sport and to practical discussion on fundamental features of contemporary sport in the context of global sport mobility. Sport is an integral part of modern way of life. Modern sport is bound up in a global network of interdependency. Sport involvement in a changing Europe is integral part of a process: We can face an evident grow of popularity of sport events and leisure clothing and intensification of a process of mutual relations of sports and mass media. In the emergence and diffusion of global sport, we face cultural structured process of sophistication, rationalization and valorization of human expressiveness enhancing sport ethics associated with success and ultimate performance. The emergence of inequalities within and out the Europe produces global sport power elite.

Top elite sports generate and represent specific way of criterions of achievements, fortune and prestige. A common denominator of top sportsmen a sportswomen are success, prosperity, luck, and top revenue and physical beauty. Such values are an integral part of the marketing strategy of sports. Sport today is evaluated in terms of gate receipts and revenues from sales of concessions, licensing fees, merchandise, media rights and Internet hits. The names of transnational corporations have become synonymous with the athletes, events, and sports that provide pleasure in people's lives.

At that period of European history we have to remark an occurrence of sport labour migration and remind related problems of production of indigenous sporting talent and respective exploitation of people from non-EU societies. This movement of people changing their professional place or even position of their place of residence involves athletes, but also included coaches, officials, administrators and sport scientists. We can postulate questions about attractiveness of given component sports for migrants, what professional athlete mostly experience along their journeys, what is an impact on host and donor countries. For most sport migrants their status and market value is derived from the ethos of hard work, differential rewards and win-at-all-costs approach.

Sports ,Commercialization, Globalization, Mobility, Sport migration, Global sporting scene, Mass culture, Post-modern society.

An Introduction

In today's world, people's perceptions of various individuals, countries, races, genders, schools and even companies, are often affected by the sport they watch, read, or listen too. We know very well, sport worlds are contested arenas shaped by struggles both on and off the field. Established and outsider groups use a variety of means to complete over the character and meaning of sport: "Sport worlds are contested terrain. Sociologists of sport must examine the co-existence of co-operation and confrontation, power and control, in order to understand struggles that shape sport worlds and their permeable boundaries" (1, xix). The *basic objective of our paper* is to contribute to the debate on essential nature of sport and to practical discussion on fundamental features of contemporary sport in the context of global sport mobility.

Contemporary dynamics of changes in style of life is indisputable. It reflects manifold and often inconsistent development of today's technology, structure of values and models of consumption. Sport, particularly in a form presented in mass mediated form as spectator experience, likewise in active recreational or performance activities, is an integral part of modern way of life. It carries – with no exaggeration – pleasure as well as sadness for millions of people. Supreme tournaments in ice hockey or in football are just the case of globally illustrated impact of elite sports on people and society. Children all around the world grow up with vivid images of televised sports and sport figures, they play video games on these sports, and they are encouraged to participate in sports by their parents, teachers, and the elite athletes who often are presented in their lives as a new sort of admired *celebrity*.

At the present time – in Europe likewise in the North America – we can observe an increase in the number of elite sport training facilities, which are dedicated to producing highly skilled and specialized athletes who can move up through increasingly difficult levels of competition. *Fascination of sports* as an unique form of gaining high social status and extraordinary prestige is a part of contemporary commercialized sport in general (2, 1-13).

Modern technologies enable people, images, ideas and money to cross the globe with immense rapidity. Globalization is leading not only to a greater degree of interdependence but also to an increased awareness of the world as a whole. Also modern sport is bound in a global network of interdependence. We can face evident growth of the popularity of sport events and leisure clothing and an intensification of the process of mutual relations between sport and mass media (3, 135-160).

Sport is a social product: it is an integral part of cultural heritage and genuine sort of collective activity. As a *cultural phenomenon*, sport is the subject of sociological examination of its role in society. Sociologists of sport seek critically to discover the function and meaning of sport in the lives of people and in the societies they form. Sociology must therefore describe and explain the emergence and diffusion of sport over time and across

different societies. In so doing, sociologists identify the process of socialization into, through, and out of modern sport.

Sports are institutional kinetic activities that involve rigorous physical exertion or the use of relatively complex physical skills by recreational participant motivation, by personal enjoyment and or because of external rewards, such as winning or breaking records. We are aware of the fact that any definition of sport reflects the structure and organization of relationships and social life in a particular society at particular point in time. Sport from this point of view is a part of social and cultural life and helps us to describe and understand social issues in a given cultural, social and political context. This means that ideas about sports vary over time and from one place to another. In cultures that emphasize cooperative relationships, the idea that people should compete with each other for reward might be defined as rather disruptive, if not immoral. For people in cultures that emphasize competition, kinetic sport activities and games that have no winners may seem pointless.

The nature of contemporary sports

One of the most important feature of contemporary sport reflects its position in general process of globalization. Mutual relations between sport and globalization are not reflected directly, linearly and well balanced. An emergence of global sport reflects scientification, rationalization and valorization of human expressiveness: Athletes are more and more enhanced to be "efficient machine" adhering to the sports ethic associated with success and ultimate performance and producing global sport power elite as a part of mass mediated "sportainment" (4, 353). Given processes have been permeating modern sport since sport became a medium for and a barometer of national identification and competitive community struggle. The last quarter of 19th century, for example - witnessed the emergence and spread of sport – achieved the establishment of international sport organizations (4, 66-78., 2, 75-86). So we face *the growth of competition* between national teams, the worldwide acceptance of rules governing specific – that is, mostly Western – sport forms, and the establishment of global competitions as the Olympic games and soccer or ice hockey World championship. Sport can be seen in this respect as a *global idiom*, a form of international communication, a language readily adopted and understood across the world.

Commercial aspects of *sport globalisation* reflect intensive endeavor to present elite popular sports (soccer, basketball, baseball, ice-hockey, tennis, golf, truck and field, F-1 etc.) through mass media world-widely using advertisement and sponsorship to expand their markets and maximization profits. Transnational corporations with production and distribution operations in multiple countries can use sports as a vehicles for introducing their products and services around the world. The sporting goods manufacturing industry, for example, is largely composed of *multinational firms* that not only aim at growing shares of a world market but also adopt global strategies of production, such as delocalization. As a result, growing portion of population in developing countries is engaged in the production of goods for the reproduction of the life styles of those living in developed countries. Mass culture sport mediated spectacle and sporting goods are in such a way an important mediator of globally shared values and lifestyles.

Global sport also entailed a specific type of Western masculine culture. Sport is thus arguably one of the most powerful transfer mechanism for *culture* and *values* ever known to humankind. Existing Western domination in the field of global sport reflects from one point of view spreading of masculine top sports and growing endeavor to win and to break records, from another point of view promotes mass popularity of sport itself.

Sport is one of the most exciting phenomenon of contemporary world. Athletes and fans are affected through sport by emotionally stimulate incentive of personally strong sensations of an enthusiasm, an adoration, a chance, as well as feelings of disappointment and despair. We can in this context postulate a question: Why sports fascinate and captive us? Ellis Cashmore responds to this problem by thesis on the separation of private life and public sphere. Mutual tensions and frustrations in both spheres are compensated by sport. Sport as symbolic expressions of an impelling force of our survival instincts responds the fact, that while we avoid risks lie outside our control, we are quite prepared to take voluntary risks: "Humans are bored – they yearn for the uncertainty, and danger, life lived on the basis of instinct and passion. Sport provides an occasion for exhibiting the excesses that are prohibited in other aspects of life." (2, 9). Sports respond to fact that our postmodern life is too predictable, too safe, too civil.

But – as we believe – for overwhelming majority of fans and amateur players, sports still means to enjoy physical activity and friendly competing as the main pleasure. Their function lies in avoiding what we do during the routine life, compensating one-sided working and civic activities. Sports release from other, less pleasurable, facts of life: "Sports has become a defining part of our life and culture, infusing a range of events, activities and institutions... professional sports have taken the role of a common cultural currency" (5, 142).

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In most countries of contemporary globally tied world sport as social phenomenon is mostly associate with attributes of *high-profile organized sports*. In this respect we can conclude, that today competitive and mass media attracting sports are characterized with following dominant features:

1. *Secularism*: Today's dominant sport forms are played for personal gains, not for the appeasement of gods.
2. *Equality*: All contestants in a sporting event should face the same competitive conditions, regardless of who they are and where they come from.
3. *Specialization*: Athletes often dedicate themselves exclusively to

the participation in a single event or position within an event. Equipment, such as shoes and clothing, is specialized to meet the demands of particular activities.

4. *Rationalization*: Today, dominant sport forms consist of complex sets of rules and strategies, specifying goals and how athletes should pursue goals. Rules also regulate equipment, playing techniques, and conditions of participation. Strategies are inspired rationally controlled training methods, which affect the experience of sport participation and the evaluation of athletes.
5. *Bureaucratization*: Sports are controlled by complex organizations on the international, national and local levels. The people in these organizations oversee and sanction athletes, teams, and events. They make up and enforce rules, organize events, and certify records.
6. *Quantification*: Today's performance sports feature an abundance of measurements and statistics. Standards of achievements are discussed in measurable terms, and statistics are used as a proof of achievements.
7. *Records*: Contemporary sports emphasize setting and breaking records. Performances are compared with one another, and records are published for individuals, teams, leagues, events, communities, provinces, states, and continents. Most important records of course, are world and Olympic records.

The interrelationship between sport and society is strongly modified by the fact that societies have not been sealed off from each other for some time. Ties of trade, mass media, market, warfare, migration and culture are of long standing in human history. Today, global processes have unleashed new sets of interdependence chains that connect people in distant parts of the world. And this fact alone facilitates and sustains the practice and consumption of elite modern sport. But interrelationship between sport and globalization is not reflected directly or linearly, and it is not well balanced. In the emergence and diffusion of global sport, several structured processes can thus be identified:

- The emergence and diffusion of a specifically gendered ideology, content, meaning, *practice and control* of global sport.
- The *scientification*, rationalization and valorization of top elite sports.
- Athletes are more and more enhanced to be "efficient machines" adhering to the *sports ethic* associated with success and ultimate performance.
- The emergence of a *global sport power elite* and the reinforcement and enhancement of global inequalities within the West and between the West and "non-Western countries".

In these given processes we have experienced the growth of competition between national teams, the worldwide acceptance of rules governing specific sport forms, and the establishment of global competitions such as the Olympic games and men's soccer or hockey World Cup. Sport in this respect can be seen as a global idiom, a form of specific international communication, a language readily adopted and understood throughout the world. Mass spectator sport is in this way an important mediator of globally shared values and lifestyles.

Global sport as a mediator of global values

Global sport is arguably one of the most powerful transfer mechanism for culture and values ever known to humankind. The global nexus of sport of sport consists of the following dimensions of sport globalization:

- Technological – pursued by big corporations and governmental agencies.
- Migratory – encompassing international sport tourism oriented to sporting events and recreational sport opportunities and playing host to immigrant athletes.
- Economic – orientation to rapid flows of money and sport products and their equivalents on global level.
- Media – reflecting the rapid transmission of information and ideas created and mediated through radio, television, video, the Internet and via globally interconnected communication cables.
- Ideological – spreading identical ideas and values (mostly oriented on success and victory and embodied in admired careers of sport celebrities) across the boundaries of states and nations.

Practical implications of sport globalization are reflected for example, in the fact that the best players in European Champions League matches – from Europe, South America and Africa – use equipment – boots, balls, sporting costumes, and the like – that is designed in the West, financed by multinational corporations such as Adidas and Nike and hand-stitched, in Asia, using child labour.

Sport products are associated – mostly among young and working-class people – with globally spread and shared images of becoming successful and being "in". Television, movies, and even education institutions have been for couple of decades parts of a changing cultural configuration in which sports became more glamorous than at any stage in their history. Some products could be sold merely by associating them with sports: which is why endorsement contracts became so lucrative.

Sociology of sport is more and more concerned itself also with the effects of the "global mélange" exhibiting by young people wearing Nike shoes, collecting NBA cards, and idealizing African-American sport heroes

(Coakley, Cashmore, Foley, Harvey, Houle, Klein). It has correctly reminded us that the mere consumption of American commodity-signs by “peripherally located consumers” cannot be directly equated with the Americanization (or even Cocacolonization or Disneyfication) of local cultures. In stead, it could be a way of recognizing differences through with the local (national) cultural self can be constructed (6, 447-470). The flow of global cultural products and practices could also lead to the re-articulation of national and local cultural identities in the sense of their respective global valorization.

Media-led developments have been closely connected to the global flow of sport. The media sport complex regularly transmits images of individual sports labour migrants, leisure forms and specific cultural messages to large global audiences – consider, for instance, the worldwide medial audience for the last Olympic Games or the Soccer World or European Championships. The power of this media sport complex has forced a range of sports to align themselves to this global model, which emphasizes spectacle, personality and excitement. At the level of structure of values and ideas, global sport festivals such as the Olympics have come to serve as vehicles for the expression of ideologies that are transnational in character. Spectacular opening and closing ceremonies at the Olympic Games are mostly designed to project images and messages about the host country to a global audience. So we are currently witnessing the *homogenization of specific body cultures* (3, 143-147) – trough competitive elite sports, the Olympic sport movement and sport science programming – and simultaneously the increase in the diversity of sport at alternative subculture levels (6, 395-440).

Sport migration: Up-to date topic

The new millennium brings with it new topics on the sport scene. We are confronted by the seemingly insoluble problem of identifying the “winners” and “losers” of the globalization of sport. Who is profiting most from the global linkage of sport? What is profiting most from the global linkage of sport? What is real impact of globally mediated elite sports on local mass recreational kinetic activities? Where are the limits of the deep gulf between elite high performance professional sports versus recreational sport? Where are the limits of the obsession with setting new records and challenging the limits of the human body? And where are the proper yardsticks for the remuneration of popular athletes? Questions concerning the regulation, control, licensing and administration of sport policy and practice also arise. Global sport policy questions also occur in the areas of violence, drugs, pain, injury and health (2, 189-244., 4, 174-200., 6, 357-374., 7, 85-95). But at this particular juncture in European history we have to note the existence of sports labour migration and remind ourselves of related problems concerning the production of indigenous sporting talents and the exploitation of people from non-EU societies. We have to take into account in terms of hosting events or in making decisions to them that the West dominates in international recognition, respectability, status and prestige. The more high tech and commonplace the sport (for example Formula One motor racing or polo), the more success is depended on elements of the global sport process. As result, the West tends to win out. Indeed, the last decade has witnessed the recruitment by western nations not only of sport scientists and coaches from former “communist block” but also, in sport such a soccer, the drain of athletic talents from Africa and South America to the economically more powerful clubs of Europe. Non-core leagues remain in a dependent relationships with the dominant European core. In other sports, such a track and field and baseball, this drain of talent flows to the United States.

Labour migration is an integral and established feature of the sporting global scene. This movement of people on the more or even changing their place of residence involves athletes and also includes coaches, officials, administrators and sport scientists. This accelerating phenomenon reflects a movement of sport people both within and between nations and continents. It is a phenomenon that has been studied mostly in American and British sociology. Social scientists have concentrated on a number of sports: most notably, soccer (Bromberg, Lanfranchi, Maguire, Pearton, Stead), ice-hockey (Maguire), cricket (Maguire and Stead), baseball (Klein), basketball (Andrews, Jackson, Maguire). The centre of attention are mostly questions tracing the patterns in sport migration, how and why these patterns occur, and what meaning and significance this migration has for those involved – either as “host” or “migrants”. In this context we discern the following problems:

- Which sports are most attractive for sport migrants?
- What cultural changes are related to the sport migration processes?
- Does generally work global exact patterns of global migration?
- What is the impact on host and donor countries?
- What are the most appealing reasons for sport migration?
- What do professional athletes experience along their career path?
- Why is sport mobility mostly a phenomenon of men’s sports, and what prevents women from being part of sport migration?

The migration of “sport people” involved in the “sport industry” occurs at different levels: within nations or countries located in the same continents and between nations or states located in different continents. In the past decade we witnessed strong recruitment and subsequent influx of athletes to sports such soccer, American Football, basketball, ice-hockey, cricket and track and field. From the American perspective the example of intra-continental movement of athletes from Dominican Republic to the North American baseball teams is mostly mentioned, as well as a specific relations of the global and local in sport are discussed (8., 6,461-466).

The European perspective is just coming to grips with sport migration within Western Europe and between the EU and Eastern Europe in sports as a soccer, ice-hockey, basketball and truck and field. Very specific incentives have played an important role in some headline-grabbing cases of transfers of Czech football and ice-hockey players to

wealthy English, Russian or Italian teams. In sociological literature, owing to sport migration after people's revolutions of 1989, creating a "talent pipeline" and process of multi-ethnicity in sport labour is mentioned (1, 13). The *westward movement* of Bosnian and Croatian athletes during the civil wars in the former Yugoslavia is also part of this broader picture. It is highly feasible that the enlargement of the EU eastwards may accelerate these processes even more.

Movement of labour also occurs in such sports as American Football, basketball and soccer between North America, Europe, South America and Asia. By the mid 1990s, for example, more than 4000 Americans were playing in Europe's professional men's basketball leagues, mostly in Italy and Spain (1, 27). And North American ice-hockey clubs have been recruiting players from Scandinavia, Russia, Czech Republic and Slovakia. Most of them are at that time going back to their home clubs or searching new place for future sport career: They have - unlike Americans and Canadians - better chance to find compensatory position during interruption of North American ice hockey league 2004-2005. Sport migration in the opposite directions has generally enabled Anglo-Canadians and French-Canadians to demonstrate their skills in Britain, Germany, France and Switzerland.

American universities have also actively recruited European men and women in sports such truck and fields, soccer, rugby, basketball and swimming, and African athletes are part of the American university scholarship schemes, too. Australian, Afro-Caribbean, South-Asian and South African players figure prominently in English cricket, and they have done for many decades. The experience of European, American and African athletes on the European truck and field Grand Prix circuit or European and American skiers on the World Cup alpine skiing is very typical for sport migration too. Other examples include cycling and motor racing, ranging from formula One to professional internationally composed cycle teams.

In some sports, stars occasionally reside in to stay "attached" to specific country for a sufficient period of time in order to qualify for national status. Sometimes, such as in European basketball or in American university truck and fields or baseball, individuals begin to play for the country in which they have become resident and for which they subsequently claim nationality.

In the field of sport labour migration we can also notice other dimension worth of considering. Sometimes, *seasonal and transitory migration* patterns interweave, as in the case of golf and tennis players. Tennis stars such as Venus Williams or André Agassi cross the globe in search of world ranking points and Grand Slam titles. These migratory circuits tend to last all the season, but the each tournament venue take usually no more than eight days. Tennis players, along with golfers or F-1 pilots, are arguably the *nomads* of the sport migration process, with constantly shifting workplaces and places of residence.

Sport migrants in general have to perform in various locations and copy with colourful spectrum of cultural settings. As a group, they could be subject of experienced degrees of exploitation, dislocation and cultural adjustment. Even so, popular, wealthy and admired sport stars, as for example Czech ice hockey idol Jaromír Jágr, do not have complete control over their professional life (and as a consequence over their personal life too). They could be "sold" from team to team even without their explicit approval!

Although women now travel on the global sporting scene more frequently than ever before, the dominant trend is still that sportsmen moving more freely and in greater numbers between countries. Gender roles and gender relations play a crucial part in contouring a migrants life. National identity and ethnic affiliation also play important roles (9, 25-40).

Tracing the sense of sport labour migration, it would appear that economic analysis offers a necessary but not always sufficient explanation. Individual reasons for sport migration are rather multi-layered and reflect given economic, political, historical, geographical, social and cultural factors. These issues and pressures vary among the sports played in different continents. They interweave in fashion where not only one factor dominates, despite the fact that in post-communist bloc countries, people mostly believe in the "power of money" as the most significant incentive for sport migration. This is not surprising in view of the fairytale incomes of some ice hockey and soccer players. We can therefore generally agree with the statement that "sport migration is bound up in a complex political economy that is embedded in series of power struggles characterizing the global sport system" (1, 32).

It is worth reminding ourselves that alongside financial reasons the desire to test their ability against "the best" and to need to experience life in different countries is an important factor in sport migration (10, 36-40). In the case of soccer, relative status and reputation in different countries as defined by international playing success, quality and styles of play, the characteristics of players, and the economic prowess of clubs and leagues also play a part. Czech soccer stars such as Nedvěd or Rosický are well aware of this. The cosmopolitan nature of specific leagues and clubs and the intention of some clubs to seek success by fostering inward migration must also be considered important.

The removal of the "Iron Curtain" in the late 1980s accelerated migration patterns in sport. The lure of financial gain derived from a move to the West has provided a strong incentive. But geographical proximity, and with it, a history of shared ethnicity, culture, language and religion, style of life, structure of values, also play a part in migration developments, as do the glamour, the fanatical supporters and excellent facilities of clubs such as Barcelona, AC Milan or real Madrid (not to mention plenty of British ones) for most soccer stars. Their ascribed status is generated also through high educational standards, language competencies and respect for new surroundings and cultures. The ability to adapt to local playing styles is also appreciated by top clubs. The ability to be integral part of the host culture also plays a very important role. Southern European and Latin America players may in this context be considered by coaches, fellow players and fans as too volatile emotionally and unlikely to respect fully their new cultural setting, for example in Nordic soccer leagues (1, 32-40).

The phenomenon of sport migration involves – among many others – the issue of employment rights too. There are great differences between team and individual sports. European soccer offer its players minimal freedoms compared with, for example, individual sports, particularly tennis or golf. Lindsay Davenport, John McEnroy or Tiger Woods enjoy greater control over the respective exploitation of their professional talent than David Beckham or

other soccer stars. But not all the participants in individual sports enjoy the advantages of tennis players or golfers, of course. Young female gymnasts also experience specific forms of exploitation regarding the control of their bodies, training, diet and performance (11). Team sports vary in this respect in different countries and across given sports. Some of them are unionized (e.g. ice-hockey, basketball, baseball). College athletes are still drafted or assigned to specific professional North American Football and basketball teams. In contrast, the free movement of labour is now part of EU law agenda, while individuals from countries outside the EU are subject to a selection and approval procedure.

Large-scale and prolonged migration of athletic labour can amount, in specific instances, to the *de-skilling of donor countries*. Latin and central American countries, for example, regularly experience the loss of basketball stars and soccer players thanks to their move to the United States and Europe. Less developed countries invest in the production of athletic talents, but those talented and highly sport skilled athletes are often absorbed into more economically developed leagues, such as major league baseball. Rich countries, leagues and teams recruit the best available talents: African sport (and many others national sport, too) loses some of its quality performers when the demands of European clubs clash with international matches involving African countries. The other side of the coin is that the increasing number of foreign players means reduced opportunities for young (and perspective) local ones. But, of course, major European soccer clubs are always seeking to improve their position at every opportunity, because, as Sylvio Berlusconi, the owner of AC Milan, has "argued": "The concept of the national team will, gradually, become less and less important. It is the clubs with which the fans associate" (1, 43).

The reaction of sport labour migrants to the host culture is sociologically and psychologically interesting, too. The constant back and forth between different cultures and ethnical or racial settings requires *specific qualities in migrants*: flexibility, adaptability, a new kind of conduct and responses. Migrant sports people such as tennis players, golfers or Formula 1 pilots face specific problems of *intercultural communication*. Major global sport festivals and tournaments involve a multi-layered form of cultural communication involving interaction with other players, coaches, officials, the fans and the various media personnel. Such forms of adjustment can also generate degrees of hostility in the host country. There are also questions concerning national identity and identity politics. Issues of attachment to place, notions of self-identity and allegiance to a specific country are as significant in this respect, and such complex phenomena have produced a new category of professionals that include international lawyers, corporate tax accountants, financial advisers and management consultants.

Sport migrants may mostly have little sense of attachment to a specific space or local community. Their status and market value is derived mostly from the ethos of hard work, differential rewards and a win-at-all-costs approach. They reflect a situation, when the game or performance become the subject of economic goals, in which success is tied to its market value. In other words, the viability of clubs and individual athletes have become more and more dependent on income derived from spectators, sponsors and the media. The struggle between those seeking to develop sport as media entertainment (or even "sportainment") and those seeking to promote it as a participant game has led to a situation reflecting another exciting sociological theme: the relationship between elite sports and mass culture (2, 273-297.,4, 350-383.,3, 135-160).

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The Global Mobility Report 2017 (GMR) is the first-ever attempt to examine performance of the transport sector globally, and its capacity to support the mobility of goods and people, in a sustainable way. The GMR is built around three components: (i) four global objectives that define "sustainable mobility"; (ii) quantitative and qualitative targets for those objectives, drawn from international agreements; and (iii) indicators to track country-level progress towards those objectives. It covers all modes of transport, including road, air, waterborne and rail. Both dimensions are typically thought of as externalities of the transport system that individuals, shippers and carriers do not take into consideration when making their transport choices. Mobility Sports of Fort Wayne, Indiana, has quickly become a premier supplier of sleds and sticks across the globe. From Europe to Asia; Canada to New Mexico, sled hockey products from Mobility Sports are being used by some of the best in the game. [READ MORE](#). Manufacturer of the finest sleds anywhere. The Stick Instead of just one stick, players use two sticks to pass and shoot the puck, as well as propel themselves down the ice. The Sled Typically, sled frames are made of aluminum with varying lengths depending on the player's size. [About Mobility Sports](#). Founded in Sweden in early 1960s and introduced at the 1994 Lillehammer, Norway, winter Paralympics, sled hockey; or sledge, as it is called in most of the world has quickly become a favorite sport of many.