

PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2019-2021

Dear ISCA members

It is a pleasure for me to report on the period from the last General Assembly in Budapest, October 2019, until today. The President's Report consists of different elements. Here you will find a written report which, in a short format, covers a number of the areas we have worked on at ISCA and, not least, what we all worked against over the last couple of years – Covid-19.

Additionally, we have published two ISCA Annual Reports (2019 & 2020) since the last General Assembly – both of which can be found online. You can as well see a Presidents Report 2021 in a video version.

Finally, I will present an oral report at the General Assembly in Brussels on 20 November.

ISCA's 25th Anniversary, 10 February 2020

After a very successful and well-attended MOVE Congress and General Assembly in Budapest, Hungary, in October 2019, we were very much ready to enter the 25th anniversary year of ISCA. We planned to celebrate this milestone at all of our events in 2020. We would like to honour the founding members and those who contributed to the first 25 years of ISCA.

But we were not aware of an uninvited guest – Covid-19!

At the beginning of 2020, Covid-19 was spreading and was declared a pandemic. Within a few months it created a new reality, not only for our sector, but for all sectors and societies across the world. Covid-19 came with many restrictions on movement and on being together and it therefore made a lot of your activities impossible.

At the beginning of 2020, countries and regions started to lockdown and nobody knew when things would change for the better. I think many of us wished that this situation would only last a couple of months. But months turned into years. Despite the Covid-19 restrictions we experienced a strong wish and need to connect internationally, and while ISCA members did their utmost to provide physical activities nationally, we tried to carry out as many activities internationally as possible – mostly online, of course.

Covid-19 disruption – what happens?

The restrictions that followed Covid-19 created a lot of uncertainty. Each ISCA member organisation followed the rapidly changing situation and its impact on their ability to perform their core activities. We felt a strong desire to know about the situation in other countries, and quickly set up an information system where we could share what happened in more than 50 countries: We published regular updates in an article mapping Covid-19 restrictions on sports activities in over 50 countries and held webinars with our members and NowWeMOVE coordinators to keep them connected as a support network. It gave the clear impression on the reach of the pandemic, but as well the understanding that we are 'all in the same boat'. A boat with the name 'Covid-19 pandemic'.

First consequence of Covid-19

Our online activities included many meetings and seminars where challenges were discussed. There were naturally many consequences and we have probably not seen them all yet. Some of the most severe consequences were:

- **Drop in participation of sport and physical activity**
We have now reports from ISCA members which range from a 5% to 50% loss of members.
- **Severe financial and organisational challenges**
This loss of members and restriction of activities resulted in major financial and organisational challenges for many of our member organisations. We can also see a huge difference in the capacity of the national financial support programmes directed towards sport and sport organisations. These

differences range from 'almost full compensation' to 'no support at all'. This clearly left many organisations in a very difficult situation.

- **Sport lost its position on important political agendas**

Physical inactivity ranks as the fourth leading death risk by the World Health Organisation. This dramatic position is well recognised by different public sectors – among them the public health sector. It is well documented that physical activity has a very strong positive impact on our personal health, including strengthening our immune system. But despite this knowledge, it was clear that, in most countries, recreational sport and physical activity dropped away from all major political agendas. Everything was about how to limit the spread of Covid-19.

- **Fear became a negative factor in social activities**

On the individual level, and from a social and psychological perspective, the uncertainty of Covid-19 created fear among many people – not least about being social – and the term 'social distancing' was introduced. This actually meant physical distancing, but it came with social distancing as a negative consequence.

Sport and recreational physical activity are in many ways social activities that involve being together with others, so fear of being together physically can have severe personal and social consequences. The question is, will our wish to be together with others beat the fear? Or, in other words, what will win: Social Hunger or Fear?

The long-term effects of these severe consequences are still unknown. But it seems obvious that our main challenge in the coming years will be: **To get sport and physical activity back onto people's personal and political agendas.**

MOVING PEOPLE - Online

The lockdowns clearly affected ISCA's work. However, as an international organisation we were already experienced in working online. Therefore, we switched as many activities as possible to the online universe. In our Annual Reports from 2019 and 2020 many of ISCA's initiatives and projects are well described, and in the video version of the President's Report I also touch upon some of these initiatives:

- **MOVE Transfer EU-China**

Exchanges between 42 sport entities in China, Hong Kong, Macau and 12 European countries with focus on the themes Active Schools, Outdoor Activities and Active Ageing.

- **European Mile**

Low barrier activity campaign – running, walking, rolling a mile distance (1.6 kilometres). 1600+ events in 30 countries were implemented by our members and MOVE Agents. This exceeded our goals and expectations. Very well done!

- **Integration of Refugees Through Sport Networking Platform**

Establishing a Networking Platform of 75+ stakeholders who have all implemented integration of refugees through sport activities supported by the European Union's Erasmus+ Sport programme. The Networking Platform has four main elements: Mentoring Programme, Awards scheme to highlight good examples, Events and Online learning. More than 100 representatives from the Networking Platform will join the MOVE Congress in Brussels from 17-19 November 2021.

- **MOVE Week – Europe & Latin America**

One of the Flagship events of ISCA's Now We MOVE Campaign is the MOVE Week. Or we should more precisely say MOVE Weeks. Due to the amazing engagement of European and Latin American ISCA members and MOVE Agents, thousands of events were carried out during two MOVE Weeks. The European MOVE Week took place in May 2021 and in Latin America MOVE Week (Muevela Semana) took place in September. To see the engagement of MOVE Agents, please dig further into this Delegate File.

- **Physical Literacy for Life**

Physical Literacy is the term and concept that covers the physical, social, emotional and cognitive elements of physical activity. The term and concept Physical Literacy is now included in the basic document of the Council of Europe's European Sport Charter.

It is also used by UNESCO and the World Health Organisation – and I foresee it will be referred to more and more. Together with good partners, we developed resources for you to dig into the concept of physical literacy and utilise it in your activities and your promotion. See more at the website dedicated to Physical Literacy for Life, where you can find everything from a one-minute intro video to self-assessment tools and podcasts.

- **Move For Fun**

Together with our Danish member DGI and with the support from the health care company Novo Nordisk, we developed a programme to deliver physical activity to less privileged children around the world. The initiatives are currently being kicked off in the UK and Poland.

Sport in Europe – What are the models and what are the stories?

Over the last two years, ISCA has been strongly involved in describing the reality of how sport is organised in Europe. One could ask: How difficult can it be to describe this reality? It should not be difficult to conclude that European sport is organised by a variety of organisations and with a huge diversity of stakeholders ranging from civil society to public and commercial sectors.

This diversity is very good in my opinion. It extends our collective reach and positive impact from our efforts to assist more people to become MOVING PEOPLE.

But some organisations see this differently. Very differently. Led by Olympic Committees and some sports federations, many organisations claim that sport in Europe is organised within a so-called Pyramid Model. This model has one federation per sport and one multisport organisation per country that is recognised by public authorities. The claim is also that this model provides a huge amount of resources to grassroots sport. The promotion of this incorrect narrative about sport in Europe is contested by ISCA and other organisations, as well as sports researchers.

We need a narrative of sport that reflects the reality and the principle of Freedom of Association, not a narrative of an outdated pyramid model that actually excludes most sports organisations. That is the message we have promoted in sessions with the Council of Europe, the European Union, the Presidency of the Council of the European Union and the European Parliament.

RECONNECT. REBUILD. RESTART.

After almost two years with many limitations and restrictions, we are finally able to meet. We are able to live the slogan of the MOVE Congress. To RECONNECT. REBUILD. RESTART. It is definitely very much needed!

Thank you members of ISCA and supporters. Thank you to ISCA's Executive Committee. And a big THANK YOU to our staff for showing so much devotion and creativity over the last two years.