

International Sporting Events

- Involving Sweden as a Whole

**THE STRATEGY OF THE SPORTS MOVEMENT AND TOURISM INDUSTRY FOR STAGING INTERNATIONAL EVENTS**

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## The Strategy of the Sports Movement and Tourism Industry for Staging International Events

This publication describes the common strategy of the sports movement and tourism industry for ensuring that Sweden is given the opportunity to organize more international sporting events in the future.

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# Introduction

Sweden is mobilizing its forces to reinforce the Sweden trademark, give the country greater appeal and attract more visitors. The tourism industry and sports movement are making a real effort to increase their international competitiveness and thus also contribute to Sweden's growth and create more jobs. Their vision is to involve Sweden as a whole in international sporting events.

An international sporting event is an experience that attracts foreign visitors. More events would mean more visitors and therefore also more revenue brought in by tourism. The media coverage often attached to an event with great appeal helps raise awareness about Sweden. It creates the preconditions for visitors to experience Sweden in other contexts as well. A major event also enhances the feeling of identity and pride in the destination or region in question, and has long-term positive effects for the entire country.

This is the *common* strategy of the sports movement and the tourism industry for ensuring that Sweden is given the opportunity to organize more international sporting events in the future too.

This strategy has one overriding goal:

- Sweden should have doubled the number of viable international sporting events and sports meetings by the year 2025

and three interim goals:

1. The Special Sports Federations should have doubled the number of viable bids by the year 2020
2. Provide more destinations for staging sporting events
3. The revenue from tourism by staging international sporting events should increase up to 2025

### Why a common strategy for sports and tourism?

“Sweden has the potential to develop as a tourist destination.” This is the statement made in the tourism industry's national strategy for Swedish tourism. By 2020 the tourism industry should have doubled the turnover of foreign visitors compared to the year 2010. In order to achieve this, we need to develop products and provide experiences at Swedish destinations and improve collaboration between the private and public sectors, and we need more marketing at international level.

Both the tourism industry and the Swedish sports movement have strong incentives to organize more international sporting events. Competition to gain an opportunity to organize major international sporting events has been much more keen in recent years. There is no sign that this will change. Reducing the risks and maximizing the gains for the individual parties involved will require greater collaboration between the host destinations and Special Sports Federations in particular, and also viable applications/bids together with their implementation, greater collaboration between the actors at the Swedish host destinations, more marketing of Sweden at international level, and greater collaboration with the Swedish public sector at all levels.

When it comes to Swedish sports, the advantages of organizing international sporting events are many. The major championships are the “crown jewels” - the ultimate goal for both active sportsmen and women and those around them. That said, the major championships can also offer very real advantages. These events draw attention to sports in general and also to the sport in question. In many cases they generate immediate financial profit that can be used for nurturing private businesses, and they also have great significance as an investment in the future.

The Swedish sports sector and tourism industry have now devised a common approach they can adopt in attracting more international sporting events to Sweden. The aim is to produce a cross-boundary strategy and, with this as the basis, pursue discussion on collaborating with politicians at local, regional and national level.

The strategy describes the common priorities and areas where both Swedish sports and Swedish tourism benefit from collaboration.

# Definitions

This strategy focuses on *financially viable international sporting events and sports meetings.* Definitions of the key terms are given below.

The term *international sporting events* refers to events for which a Special Sports Federation (SF), in conjunction sometimes with, say, a municipality/host destination, seeks an organizer by approaching an international sports federation.

This means first and foremost the world championships, the European championships, the World Cup and similar events. Not all sports, however, offer these types of combined championships. Some, such as tennis, offer competition series instead where the aim is to ensure that one's own sport is given the highest possible status. A number of sports such as athletics contain both types of events. These also come under the term 'international sporting events'.

The term *sports meetings* refers to international sports conventions and conferences.

In many cases these are organized in conjunction with championships. They can, however, also be organized separately and should in that case also be regarded as sporting events.

Many sports also hold international championships for different age categories, young and old. These are included in this strategy and are regarded as being the same as senior championships in terms of follow up/measuring of goals set.

There are also events organized by other actors. These can be big cups, single competitions or marathons that are organized either by or in collaboration with the sports movement, such as the classic races and major international youth tournaments. Moreover, new trend-driven events are being developed all the time for both spectators and participants, which often become incorporated in the more organized sports after a time. All of these events are important for both sport and the tourism industry. At present they are not covered by this strategy but could be of interest for this to be done in the future. They can often have great significance for the tourism industry and host destinations, which means they should still be included in the strategies drawn up by the host destinations.

This strategy uses the terms *export-ready or purpose-built destinations* for sporting events and sports meetings. By 'export-ready destination' we mean a town/region with an infrastructure in the form of sports arenas, hotels, good access and logistics capacity, and where well-established collaboration is already well established between the municipality, business sector and sports movement whose aim is to succeed in attracting and hosting major international sporting events. The terms are the same as those used in the tourism industry's strategy for doubling visitor numbers by 2020.

# Limitations

The scale of an event influences the way in which it is set up and implemented. This strategy covers both the really big international events of national interest, that are few in number, and those events that can be carried out primarily at regional and local level.

The basic principle is that the decision to be made when looking to stage an international sporting event is done most effectively at the lowest possible level. The vast majority of these events involves decision-making and implementation at local level; larger scale events require decisions and measures at regional level, while a few others require decisions and measures at national level. Decision-making is therefore best done in accordance with the so-called principle of subsidiarity.

The principle of subsidiarity

– Decisions are made at the lowest possible level

Decisions at

national level

Regional decisions

Local decisions (municipality)

# Background

### The preconditions for Sweden in the international market

Many nations fight for attention in the global arena. It is both time-consuming and costly to embark on competing internationally, but in Sweden's case the international market is nonetheless very important.

There is an international target group that would be interested in coming to Sweden. If we succeed in attracting international sporting events and the international visitors in conjunction with these, we will generate export revenue through the consumption of accommodation, transport, shopping, food, drink and experiences. International visitors account for approx SEK 100 billion in annual turnover in the Swedish tourism industry today.

Sweden has a good reputation as a host country for international sporting events. From an international perspective, a country's political and economic stability constitute important reasons, as does a well-functioning physical and technical infrastructure.

Sweden is a well-organized country, and this applies to both its sports movement and society at large. From an environmental point of view, Sweden lies at the forefront and, apart from the fact that its citizens live in a “clean environment”, it is able to show

greater consideration to the environment in hosting sporting events. Our different seasons of the year create opportunities for both winter and summer events. Technology and IT are other areas where Sweden lies at the forefront, and can be exploited further in the form of a competitive advantage as regards international sporting events.

# Target groups

The target groups for implementing this strategy are:

* The sports movement's national Sports Confederation in the form of its Special Sports Federations (SF).

SF have the prerogative of dealing with applications and passing them on to the international sports federations in the hope of receiving the opportunity to organize events in Sweden. This strategy also seeks to inspire and raise awareness in the relevant districts and associations.

* Regional and local public-sector operators and private interested parties at the host destinations who can/would like to act as hosts for international sporting events at all levels.
* National public-sector bodies (Government, Parliament and local authorities) and private interested parties at national level.

# Vision

### International Sporting Events - Involving Sweden as a Whole

Sweden is a sporting country and an obvious choice for hosting international sporting events. These events bring happiness, instil a feeling of community and pride, stimulate growth, and reinforce Sweden's image abroad. An event or sports meeting is always organized so as to be financially viable at locations where the sports movement, tourism industry, inhabitants and public sector work in collaboration. Collaboration means that we optimize the opportunities of securing and hosting successful events and reap the best possible benefits for all parties. International sporting events are therefore a national concern.

# Goals

In order to realize our vision, we have one overriding goal and three interim goals attached to it:

The overriding goal:

### In 2025 Sweden will be organizing twice as many viable international sporting events and sports meetings compared to 2013.

Interim goals:

### 1. Double the number of viable bids by the year 2020

Applications/bids that are more socially, financially and environmentally viable for staging international events means that more events will be held.

### Create more purpose-built host destinations for sporting events

More destinations are needed that can receive and act as hosts for a greater number of viable international sporting events. Developing so-called export-ready destinations for sporting events that are focused and prepared to host one or more specific sports will increase our competitive power in securing further events.

### Increase the tourism revenue generated by staging international sporting events and sports meetings up to the year 2025

International sporting events have a positive effect on tourism revenue at large in terms of, say, tourism turnover, increased employment and the worth of the Sweden trademark. The initial step suggested in working to achieve this goal is to define which aspects need measuring and the value of the proportion of revenue generated today through international sporting events and sports meetings.

# Strategy

### Collaboration between the sports sector, the tourism industry and the political sector

One important precondition if Sweden is to attract more international sporting events is in practice greater collaboration between three parties: the sports movement, the tourism industry and political decision-makers at all levels.

#### State involvement

At international level, it is the rule rather than the exception that the state plays a prominent role in seeking to host major sporting events. State involvement begins even earlier than the initial bidding processes in having to consider and calculate in terms of strategy which events Sweden would be interested in seeking to host.

Sweden needs a model at national level for state involvement in international sporting events, above all in the case of the truly major events. In marketing Sweden, extra resources might need to be provided for those responsible for creating Sweden's image abroad. Moreover, it is personal involvement and not simply funding from political quarters that is crucial.

This strategy emphasizes the importance of viable events and the way these can be staged through there being collaboration at all levels between the political, public and sports sectors, the tourism industry and business in general. For the vast majority of events, local or regional measures will suffice, which will also benefit the inhabitants of the municipality or region. However, creating the preconditions necessary to ensure that the very biggest events too can be held on the basis that they are viable means that state involvement is essential. Essential investment in areas such as infrastructure will need to be calculated on the basis of both short-term gain; i.e. the event itself, and a socio-economic, long-term perspective.

Bringing about collaboration between the sports sector, tourism industry and political sector means it is essential to create at the outset a forum for discussion on the preconditions for attracting more international events and finding ways in which the three parties can help achieve this.

#### Regions and municipalities

More regions and municipalities need to take a strategic approach in seeking to host sporting events in the form of, say, reasons to travel and measures for creating jobs and stimulating growth. Regional and local development strategies and other similar long-term political target documents should set out the ways in which the regions/municipalities regard international sporting events by taking this approach.

Another important aspect, apart from the tourism industry, is business in general. This could mean a number of different commercial operators, sponsors and other partners who make the events possible. This particular strategy does not cover that area of the business sector.

### Three areas of focus

The strategy focuses on three areas where the tourism industry and sports movement together need to increase their input. The focus areas given priority in terms of strategy are: *destination development, staging viable events and collaboration at national level for reinforcing Sweden's image internationally.*

Destination development

Staging viable events

Marketing communications - collaboration at national level to reinforce Sweden's image internationally

### Destination development

More purpose-built destinations for sporting events and sports meetings are to be created.

Natural destinations already exist today for certain specific sports at local, regional and national level, and these could be seen as suitable destinations for hosting sporting events. A number of sports have national arenas, while others offer a natural home to the events they host. In the latter case collaboration between regional/municipal bodies and private business is usually well established.

*List the demands and requirements*

The tourism industry and sports movement have a common interest in creating so-called export-ready destinations for sporting events. To begin with, a list based on the needs and demands of an international sporting event must be drawn up so as to see where the type of destination suitable for sporting this event might be developed.

Today, purpose-built destinations are created using established evaluation and calculation models for assessing whether or not to take part in the application process for hosting an international event. Analysis is based on a number of variables covering everything from cost, accessibility, infrastructure in terms of transport, accommodation and facility and arena capacity, to revenue and how much the event is worth to the destination. These experiences can be drawn on so that the sports movement and tourism industry can identify clearer areas of collaboration and carry out a joint analysis of the preconditions if they are to succeed in staging a specific sporting event. Which strengths and weaknesses does the destination have? What needs to be put in place in order to be successful in hosting events in a specific sport or sports in general? This might, for instance, be accommodation blocks, other facilities and infrastructure.

Success in creating export-ready sports destinations requires close collaboration between the sports movement, tourism industry and public sector. The sports movement has set up the Centre for Sporting Events (CIE) which is located at the Swedish Sports Confederation's premises, and which together with the various destination development companies has an important role to play in developing a general model for joint use by the sports organizations and the destination. A common model of this type must take account of the various criteria and demands on the part of the political decision-makers, tourism industry and sports movement, with the aim of ensuring destination development that is viable.

### Staging viable events

An overriding financial model for joint investment is to be developed for hosting viable events. No reliable figure at aggregate level exists today for measuring the value of the revenue generated by tourism through hosting international sporting events. Further analyses are required here in order to present facts that are reliable and accepted by all those affected.

For an application to host an event to be financially viable, the different interests and incentives of the different interested parties need to overlap each other if the event is to help benefit everyone. A clear-cut model, such as a so-called *score card*, can show the various interested parties early on in the process what benefit they will reap. We need to create a common basis for evaluation and calculation so that the interested parties can carry out a joint analysis of the bid in question and stage the event in a viable way. Such quality assurance is also important for the ability to say no when the preconditions do not exist. Analysis models of this kind have already been developed in the case of several successfully developed destinations, and lend themselves well to being designed for use at all levels. The Centre for International Sporting Events (CIE) plays a central role in this work.

Network model for viable events

The tourism industry

The Swedish Sports Confederation

The event

The destination

Political decision-makers

International special sports federations

*Financial allocation model*

The tourism industry today is already based on a clear-cut network economy. More interested parties and actors will be dependent on each other if they are to succeed both jointly and individually in generating jobs, businesses and profits. These types of network economies are often run by the municipality and/or region. It is natural for different parts of the tourism industry to collaborate and work alongside each other. Adding the sports movement to this network economy can make clear what role is played by a sporting event to constitute a reason to travel.

The work involved in providing a destination lies primarily in long-term investment in communications, facilities and arenas, and in enabling private investment in hotels, shopping centres etc. The destination often has the responsibility too of coordinating its marketing. An international sporting event can often be a reason for advance investment such as the building of accommodation facilities, roads and other types of infrastructure.

The sports movement's input covers everything from sporting competence and experience of staging events to resources in the form of money and voluntary work directly linked to the event.

The different interested parties at an event have different reasons for investing in it. A broader tax base, more investment, a better health record, a higher level of employment, a reinforced image, an increased number of guest nights, more shopping, greater interest in a sport etc.

Creating a common effects analysis model increases the chances of sharing the same view about the significance of a sporting event.

Effects model associated with an international sporting event

**Economic effects**

Socio-economic

Tourism

**Social effects:**

Greater integration, pride, sense of community, “this is where I want to live”

**Marketing effects**

Media value Trademark effects

(both sport and town/country)

The event

**Impact on sport**

More members Greater interest in sport

**Long-term effects**

Future visitors, Sweden's image

### Marketing communications - Collaboration at national level to reinforce Sweden's image internationally Three important aspects that need reinforcing.

* 1. A reinforced image of Sweden that is of greater appeal to the target groups and increased demand for Sweden as a destination.

The target group consists of decision-makers in international sports federations, elite sportsmen and women and potential visitors to Sweden who are very keen to experience an international sporting event or want to pursue a sport themselves in Sweden in the form of holiday activities.

In order to make Sweden more appealing and thereby boost future demand for it as a destination for international sporting events and sports-based experiences, we need to ensure greater collaboration with other organizations, businesses and sectors so that we together reinforce Sweden's image. Raising awareness of and arousing interest in a nation is an expensive business. By creating a national partnership, the sports movement and tourism industry are able to draw up a long-term strategic plan: one that is intended for private-sector input in the area of communications, whereby other businesses or sectors are invited to take part; and one

whereby the sports movement and tourism industry can collaborate in activities that boost Sweden's image. Each party would be able to benefit from the other in the work they do.

* 1. Strong representation on Sweden's part in international sports organisations.

It is the international special sports federations that determine where the major events should be organized. In order to influence the federations' decision-making bodies, strong Swedish representation is needed. The Swedish Sports Confederation has a special strategy for carrying out this work.

* 1. Increased competence in the way Sweden as a sports destination is marketed and communicated to others in the bids produced by the special sports federations, with the aim of gaining the opportunity to organize international sporting events.

A starting point in this work is the trademark strategy material that Visit Sweden has produced for promoting Sweden's image abroad. It is important that the federations' bids are consistent with trademark Sweden and that the communications plan for Sweden's image is used in all external communications.

* 1. Greater awareness of how Sweden as a nation could benefit more from broader international media coverage provided by certain international sporting events.

# Action plan

### What happens now?

The initial work in implementing this strategy; i.e. the strategic approach that the tourism industry and sports movement now adopt in working together, is in our eyes an important factor for success in ensuring there will be more international sporting events and sports meetings in the short and long term.

The sports movement, together with the Swedish Sports Confederation's Centre for Sporting Events, the special sports federations, associations and members working on a voluntary basis will be joining forces with actors in the tourism industry to find different ways of approaching their work on the basis of the preconditions applying to different locations and sports, yet with the same goal in mind: To stage viable international sporting events of maximum benefit for all parties. In order for us to succeed, it is also important that political decision-makers at all levels become involved and that we find models for collaboration.

The direction and goals of this strategy are to be evaluated on an ongoing basis. In order to measure the goals set, further analyses need to be made with the aim of developing a common, overriding evaluation model.

The key to the future now lies in areas such as creating the organizational platform and decision-making processes that can make this common strategy work, and ensuring it has the opportunity to become a unifying force nationally at all levels.

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Further information on the Swedish Sports Confederation can be found on ***www.rf.se***

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