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## Side events in European Youth Olympic

**Festival 2022**



**EYOF**  
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**Abstract****Authors:** Kumpulainen Noora & Pulkkinen Riikka**Title of the Publication:** Side events in EYOF 2022**Degree Title:** Bachelor of Sports and Leisure Management**Keywords:** sport, EYOF, side events, event management, sustainability

This thesis was a practice-based thesis concerning the event management in European Youth Olympic Festival (EYOF) in Vuokatti, Sotkamo. It was commissioned by the main event organizer Kainuun Liikunta (Regional sport association). The purpose of EYOF is to bring young elite athletes together and to promote the international relations between the European youth in the celebration of sports.

The purpose of this thesis was to create two different side event categories: for the athletes participating in the games and elementary school students coming to spectate the sport events. The side events were created to obtain additional value to the event and compose a festive atmosphere. As the event domain belongs under the Olympic brand such services in the event area are important increasing the quality and professionalism of the event service supply.

As the world of planned events is huge, the typologies of sport events were researched to form a sense of the nature of EYOF. Event management was studied through literature review and a suitable event management model was used in determining the operational and strategic functions of the side events for EYOF. The developmental task was approached in a holistic sense since customer experiences were examined through theoretical framework to understand the creation of suitable side event programme. It was also studied how free time activities and socializing with fellow youngsters affect commitment in sport.

The objectives were also to consider sustainable principles in event management of the side events since the commissioning party practices sustainable values in their events. At the present time sustainability issues have become a big trend that penetrates nearly all fields of business.

As the covid-19-pandemic caused postponements for the event, the outcome of this thesis was a side event manual which includes an activity description and instructions for side event implementation. Unfortunately, the implementation in practice was not possible in the schedule of this thesis.

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## 1 Introduction

European Youth Olympic Festival (later referred as EYOF 2022) is a multisport event for 14-18-year-old athletes. In October of 2016 the representatives of The European Olympic Committee (later referred as EOC) signed a host city contract with the representatives of The Finnish National Olympic Committee and Sotkamo municipality. Sotkamo municipality is the executive organizer of the event and it has given the responsibilities of the organization of the event to Kainuun Liikunta. The authors of this document are a part in the organizing committee of EYOF 2021 and commissioned by Kainuun Liikunta through secretary general Marita Kaipainen. (Host city contract for the XV winter European youth Olympic festival, 2016).

The event was supposed to take place in February 2021. Due to covid-19-pandemic the date of EYOF 2021 has changed twice. First it was delayed to December of 2021 yet considering uncertain weather conditions of Finland at that time of the year, other dates were set to March of 2022 to guarantee the arrangement of alpine sports. (Heikkonen & Kähkönen 2020).

The form of this academic work is a functional thesis. It examines the theories concerning the topic, includes a written documentation about the process and presents the outcome in fulfilling the development task of the commissioning party (Vilka & Airaksinen 2003, 9). The purpose of this thesis is to create a side-event program that serves the young athletes and the public audience. The main and most important target group are the athletes. The objectives of this thesis are using event management theories and practices to design enjoyable side-event program that brings entertainment and relaxation for the target group.

Thesis could be a possible source or manual for future sport event organizers. Also, it is the documentation required by the EOC about different reports of event management process in Vuokatti, and in this case, the planning book of side event production for Kainuun Liikunta.

## 1.1 Commissioning party

The commissioning party Kainuun Liikunta is one of the fifteen regional sports associations in Finland. Their operations cover eight municipalities. Work field has separate operational priorities which are sport interest representation, sport tourism, promoting sporty way of life, sport club activities and top-level sport. The goal for Kainuun Liikunta is to develop and build partnerships towards sports and physical activity in Kainuu region. The vision is to support and enable sports and physical activities at all stages of life by starting it from the adolescence because the belief is that the physical lifestyle adopted in early stages of life is fundamental factor for health and well-being in the future. They foster the sporty way of life through development, training, influence, guidance and events. Their mission is to be active developer of sports and partnership in the Kainuu region. They have about 100 member associations of which 95% are sport clubs. (Kainuun Liikunta ry n.d.)

Kainuun Liikunta started to operate in 1995. It was founded to develop and promote the sport and physical activities in Kainuu region. From the beginning, Kainuun Liikunta has introduced new areas in the field of sport to the public. At the constitutive meeting, sport tourism and health-promoting sport were chosen as new strategies of the association. It was the first regional sports association in Finland showing example for following ones in other regions of Finland. (Heikkinen 2019.)

Kainuun Liikunta has organized winter EYOF event already once in 2001 in Vuokatti. It was the first time they entered into international level of interaction and co-operation in the field of event management. Finland has also had the summer EYOF in 2009 in Tampere. Finland has had a team competing in every event and the decisions regarding athletes and Finnish team are made by the Finnish Olympic Committee on the proposal of the sport federations. Goal for the Youth Multi-disciplinary Competitions under the responsibility of the Olympic Committee is to support growth into a top athlete, provide multidisciplinary value experience in international top-level sports and prepare athletes for the Olympics and other major competitions. (Heikkinen 2019; Suomen Olympiakomitea n.d.)

### 1.1.1 Children and youth

The main operational priority of Kainuun Liikunta in 2018-2021 strategy has been focusing on children and young people. Kainuun Liikunta is the main organizer of all the practicalities in the EYOF and in the strategy it was mentioned that the Olympic theme would be reflected within youth sports during the operational year 2021. During the EYOF event the plan is to transport all 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> graders from Kainuu region elementary school's to Sotkamo for one day to spectate the competition events. The goal is to motivate children to move as well as grow them into an athletic lifestyle by offering an experience to visit major international sport event. (Kainuun Liikunta ry 2021.)

Kainuun Liikunta has a project Erasmus+ Sport. It is strongly connected with the operational priorities and strategy. The main goal of the project is to increase the social involvement of young people to prevent exclusion. In addition, it will answer to the current problems of young people in Kainuu area which are exclusion, decrease in social involvement and volunteering within sports and physical inactivity. The project utilizes the EYOF event to meet the goals. It will offer experience and contacts for the youth to utilize later in studies and in working life. (Erasmus+ Sport n.d.)

## 1.2 European Youth Olympic Festival

European Youth Olympic Festival is a multisport event for 14 to 18 years old athletes. It is the first Olympic level event created for the European youth athletes. It promotes physical activity and sports for youths and offers an Olympic state of chance for young athletes. EYOF brings together over 50 European countries and it is organized every other year. The games have both summer and winter edition. The first summer games were held in Belgium 1991 by the name of European Youth Olympic Days. Vuokatti will be the 15th edition of the Winter EYOF since it was held for the first time in Aosta in Italy in 1993. (About: EOC and European Youth Olympic Festival n.d.)

Vuokatti is hosting the winter edition EYOF which means that the sports are winter sports. EYOF 2021 will include 9 different sports in boys' and girls' categories which are alpine skiing, biathlon, cross country skiing, figure skating, ice hockey, short track, snowboarding, Nordic combined and ski jumping. In Vuokatti EYOF makes history as women will compete for the first time in ice hockey and in Nordic combined. (EYOF 2021 sports n.d.)

## 2 Developmental task

The topic of this thesis arises from the need of the commissioner as the requirements from the EOC state in the host city contract including guidelines for the side event program:

“During the EYOF, the Host City, the NOC and the Organizing Committee should organize a social and entertainment programme for both the NOC delegations and the Olympic Family and invited guests. The EOC must be informed and consulted about such programme. It is recommended to prepare an entertainment area in the Athletes’ village, where athletes can spend their free time, socialize and relax. Some educational activities may be included (information about Olympism, anti-doping, about the history and traditions of the host country etc.)” (Host city contract for the XV winter European youth Olympic festival, 2016.)

Therefore, the developmental task of side event task group is to create a schedule of educational, entertaining, and energizing content that meet the guidelines of European Olympic Committee and follows sustainable and responsible values set by the commissioner, Kainuun Liikunta. Goal for the side events is to create meaningful experiences for the audience and the participants in sports. Experience pyramid presents suitable framework theory for the design process of side events. It helps to analyse and view the product and find areas needing development. Three main objectives for side event production are following:

- a) How to design, create and implement such a programme?
- b) What is a suitable side event programme according to target group and from the view of the commissioner?
- c) How to take sustainable event management into consideration on behalf of the side events?

### 3 Theory of event management

The academic field of planned events is called event studies. It includes meanings attached to events and the essential phenomenon is the experience of planned events. It is typical to have different knowledge domains which of some can be mastered through formal study and some through practical experience. The three dimensions of event management can be recognized: the first and the most basic level being event design and production (skills in creating the desired experience, knowledge of the theme, practical production skills), second being event management (managerial knowledge and theory applied to events) and third event studies (theories and knowledge applied to understand the planned events). (Getz 2007, 2-4.)

Events have a unique characteristic that separate them from everyday life. They can be classified as unique in a sense that they cannot be repeated in exactly same way therefore they contain many uncontrolled variables, such as the venue, audience, participants, and timeline. Donald Getz describes event as a *"an occurrence at a given place and time; a special set of circumstances; a noteworthy occurrence."* (Getz 2007, 18). The world of events is remarkably broad whereas the typology of events varies in different definitions and frameworks. Some authors have emphasized the celebratory aspect of events, when others have highlighted the participants and their experiences in the event. It is necessary to consider the spectrum of events is not fixed but ever-changing and there are constant overlaps. (Shone & Parry 2010, 4-5.)

The European Youth Olympic Festival is an international leisure and a sporting event, an Olympic level phenomenon that sure meets the classifications of special circumstances and is notable both locally and internationally whereas it can be classified as an international major event. Such events need high level of managerial expertise and an intensive amount of workforce to be implemented correctly. Events usually are intangible, and they are rather a set of activities that can be experienced and remembered afterwards, and uniqueness is relatable to the attendee's motives to participate into the event. The athletes have their unique motives for competing and audience their own in arriving to the venue and spectating the competitions. Mostly, the event format of EYOF is conducted recognizably all over again. It is practiced following the rules of the sport federations and it includes traditional routines that create consistency for the event. (Shone & Parry 2010, 15-17; Getz 2007, 160; Lorne & Adams 2008, 2.)



### 3.1 Sport events

There are many typologies of sport events, and the classifications vary of many different factors such as size, scope, or level of professionalism. However, generally sport events include the actual games or are centered around physical activities. In short, some sort of physical occurrence has to be involved so the event can be classified as a sport event. The format of sport events determines how they can be classified. One of the typologies are sport festivals and multi-sport events. Sport festivals are often associated with the celebration of sport and often targeted for youth. Multi-sport events are often mega events, usually at international level and they tend to be traditional. It is very common for such events to have a schedule of ceremonies and have a programme of festival or special event around the main event for enhancing the event appeal (Getz 2007, 42-43). Traditional sport events defined by Lorne & Adams include two main characteristics: a) the event has a governing body that establishes standardized rules or regulations for the event b) the activity is recognized and time-honored sport. (Lorne & Adams 2008, 2-3.)

Sport events in particular are competitive by their nature and different level sport events are produced by sport federations, organizations, clubs and such as. Either scheduled or one-time occurrences in sport require production and marketing of events. They include an interest in human resources, organizational structure, financial management, facilitating, policy development and both internal and external communications. These operations are part of sport management as it includes the management of sport organizations, venues and events. (Getz 2007, 160.)

#### 3.1.1 Major and mega events

It is typical for mega events to have large scale management functions. The organizational structure usually consists of an executive board and organizing committee. But as always, it is a matter of scale whether the event can be identified as mega event (Shone & Parry 2010, 74-77). Müller discusses in his article (2015) different definitions for mega events and proposes mega events to have a fixed duration and fulfill four different requirements in order to be called "mega-events". Firstly, they attract a significant number of visitors, have large media coverage, come with large costs and have great impact on the built environment and population. Events smaller in scale but having significance can be classified as major. The EYOF would fall in the category of major events according to this definition tool. (Müller 2015, 629, 634.)

### 3.2 Sport tourism

Already in 2007, Donald Getz has written that sport tourism will grow in popularity and later the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) has announced that sports tourism is one of the fastest growing sectors in tourism. This includes spectators, tourists who are interested in sport activities and those who participate and compete in sport events. Major sporting events have become important tourism attractions and they offer a great change for host destinations for example to contribute to branding. Major sport events can work as activator for tourism development of the destination. (Getz 2007, 162; Sport Tourism n.d.)

The area of Vuokatti has specialized in training and educational services in sport already since 1945 when The Olympic Training Centre was established under the accreditation of Finnish Olympic Committee. Today it is the leading training centre for Nordic sports specializing in Finnish and international elite sport and thus being many international teams' training destination. They offer quality training services all-year round in continuously developing circumstances in cross-country skiing, biathlon, Nordic combined and ski jumping. One of their assets is top quality winter sport laboratory which offers various testing possibilities for the customers. These attributes make it an appropriate venue for hosting the European Youth Olympic Festivals winter edition. (Vuokatti Sport Olympic Training Center, 2020).

### 3.3 Experience Pyramid

A theoretical model for producing experiences created by Sanna Tarssanen and Mika Kylänen explains the analysis of experience presented in a pyramid model (figure 1). The model represents aspects of a tourism product which should be fulfilled in order to create an ideal experience. The model examines the tourist's experience from two perspectives: client's own experience and the elements of a product. The model can be analyzed also as three-dimensional. Third dimension would be the service providers point of view which helps to analyze how they can influence on the six different elements (mentioned below the pyramid) and thereby to customer satisfaction. (Tarssanen & Kylänen 2006.)

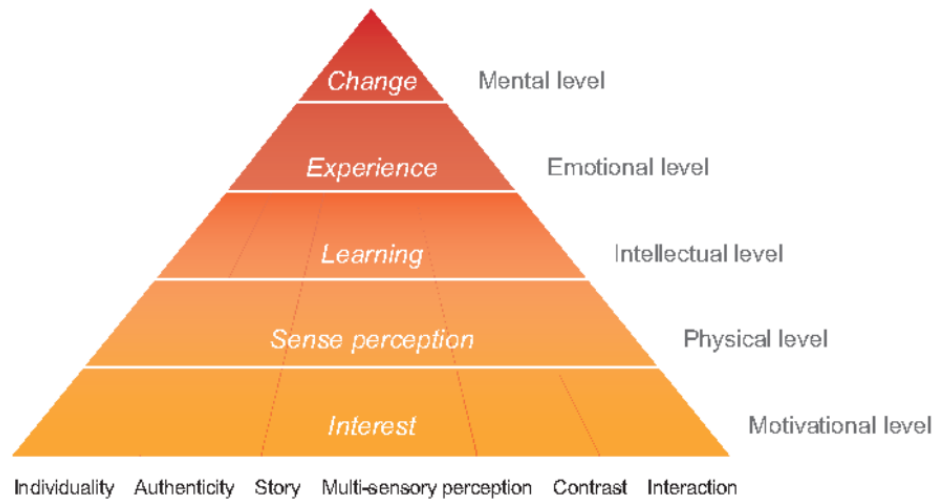


Figure 1. Experience Pyramid (Tarssanen & Kylänen, 2006)

### 3.3.1 Elements

Below the pyramid on the horizontal axis lies elements which are affecting to the customer experience. When affecting to these different elements which are individuality, authenticity, story, multi-sensory perception, contrast and interaction it is potential to offer guest something extraordinary and meaningful although guaranteeing meaningful experiences for everybody is impossible. (Tarssanen & Kylänen 2006.)

*Individuality* refers to uniqueness meaning that the product is different from all other similar products. Concretely this means customer orientation, flexibility and possibility to customize the product. There should be opportunity for customers to be able to fulfill their own preferences in activities like choosing the level of difficulty. (Tarssanen 2009) In addition, it is crucial to meet individual needs of the customers in communication before, during and after the product consumption. (Tarssanen & Kylänen 2006) Side events contain different options regarding the activities and the level of difficulty inside the activity. Participants are able to choose activities they prefer and create individual combinations of tasks. For example school visitors are offered multiple different sports to test and they can choose which they want to try. Additionally, for instance cross country skiing has track options for beginners, for those who want to test their skills and for disabled participants.

*Authenticity* means the credibility and the most important factor in proving the authenticity of a product is if the customer considers it genuine and credible. This means that the customers are

determining the authenticity by themselves. The simplest way to provide authentic experience is to use existing lifestyle and culture of the region or items made by the locals. The product should present the local culture so that the producers feel it as a part of their local identity. (Tarssanen & Kylänen 2006; Tarssanen 2009.) Side event activities for quests and athletes have been created to present Finnish activities. Especially for international group of athletes the side events are offering information about the local region and Finland altogether.

*Story* enables linking all the elements together making the experience coherent and adding significance. Story is closely linked to the authenticity of a product, and it justifies what is done. Good story is credible, appeals to the feelings and contains factual and fictional elements. Story and possible themes should be present from the marketing to the after sale. (Tarssanen 2009) Story is seen especially in the activities planned for the school visitors as they all go under a Olympic theme by offering them mini Olympics combined with other outdoor sports characteristic to Finland. In addition, stories are implemented inside individual activities such as orienteering.

*Multi-sensory perception* means that the product should support immersion by being capable of experiencing it with as many senses as possible. This means providing visual and audible stimuli as well as something to taste, touch and smell. All these elements should be in harmony and strengthen the theme and story. Both story and multi-sensory perception are strengthening the memorability of the experience. (Tarssanen & Kylänen 2006; Tarssanen 2009.) Activities provide multiple stimuli as the participants are actively performing the tasks themselves. Furthermore, both athletes and the school visitors are provided with some Finnish tastes in terms of food and snacks.

*Contrast* means providing something different for the customer from their point of view. This means that the product has a difference related to the client's everyday life. Experiencing something new enables the customer to view themselves from another perspective. When producing contrast, the cultural differences should be considered as customers nationality and own culture matters and affects to what is exotic for one and could be common to someone else. (Tarssanen & Kylänen 2006; Tarssanen 2009.) Events are by nature classified as unique experiences as previously mentioned in this thesis and therefore, they provide difference to everyday life's. Olympic themed events are following certain guidelines but there are still differences first of all at the venue and the program, but the side events are adding extra value and making it extraordinary.

*Interaction* refers to the communication between service provider, customers and other participants as well as the communication between the producers and the product. When there are

many participants, it is important to introduce participants to each other to create a feeling of and belonging to community. In terms of creating a meaningful experience personal interaction between service provider and customer is crucial. (Tarssanen & Kylänen 2006; Tarssanen 2009.) Athletes are given the opportunity to socialize with other athletes and meet new people during side event activities. In case of the school visitors this is not necessary because they come with their own groups and thus already know each other however the activities offer a chance for pair and group working where interaction is needed.

### 3.3.2 Levels of experience

Vertical axis of the pyramid describes how the experience is forming from the interest towards the actual experience and moreover to conscious process which leads to mental change. In a good product all the six elements described above are included on every level of the experience. (Tarssanen & Kylänen 2006; Tarssanen 2009.)

*Motivational level* is the on the bottom of the pyramid and reflects the arousal of customer interest. At this level expectations towards the product are made and they are based on the marketing tools. Already at this stage all possible basic elements should be fulfilled meaning that marketing should be individual, authentic, multisensory, interactive, have contrast and a story to tell. (Tarssanen 2009.)

On the *physical level* the customer is experiencing the product with all senses. Physical sensations enable customers to become aware where they are, what is happening and what they are doing. Good product ensures safe and pleasant experience unless the activity is supposed to be extreme and include risks. (Tarssanen & Kylänen 2006; Tarssanen 2009.)

After physical level comes *intellectual level*. At this level good product offers possibility to learn something new either consciously or unconsciously. Intellectual level is the last where the service provider can affect. Higher levels of the experience can be reached only by the customers themselves. At the intellectual level customers create their opinions of the product if they are satisfied or not. (Tarssanen 2009.)

Meaningful experiences are experienced on the *emotional level*. To reach the emotional level all the basic elements have to be taken into account and all the lower levels of the customer experience has to be fulfilled. Individual emotional experiences are hard to predict or control but it is

likely that the customer will have positive emotional experience if all the previously mentioned factors are considered. (Tarssanen & Kylänen 2006; Tarssanen 2009.)

The last level is *mental level* in which the positive experience might lead to personal change. This can be noticed in modifications of state of mind, physical being or lifestyle and these changes might be rather permanent. Examples of a personal change are that the customer finds a new hobby or adopts a new way of thinking. (Tarssanen & Kylänen 2006; Tarssanen 2009.)

From the experience levels event producers are able to influence only to the first three steps. This means the experience the audience can get is partly on their own hands. Although all the levels of the experience should be acknowledged as the implementation of the lower levels is affecting to the process of meeting the other levels and the top of the pyramid and creating change in people.

This means that the actions taken in the first three steps including creating the motivation, offering physical sensations and providing intellectual experience is highly important. From the perspective of the side events the physical level is well covered with the activities and the intellectual level is provided simultaneously. Motivational level is covered in the marketing of the whole event and separate actions for side events are taken in marketing campaigns directed only for the schools.

### 3.3.3 Participation & ambience

Pine and Gilmore (1999) has created a model that represents meaningful experience in two dimensions. Other dimension represents participation on active and passive scale and the other shows the mental or physical participation. Experiences can be analyzed by their position on the spectrum. Combinations of these dimensions are defining the four realms of an experience – entertainment, educational, esthetic and escapist. These are mutually compatible, and they form personal experiences. (Pine & Gilmore 1999, 31.) Guests have different objectives regarding the dimension they are engaged to as explained in Pine and Gilmore (1999, 35): “Guest of an educational experience might want to learn, of an escapist experience to do, of an entertainment experience to sense and of an esthetic experience just to be there.”

The horizontal axis in Pine & Gilmore’s theory correlates to the participation of the guests. This model of active and passive participation of experience is also researched by Graham Berridge

(2007, 68) in his study “Events Design and Experience”. Both Pine & Gilmore (1999, 30) and Berridge (2007, 68) describe the participation in the same way. In the active process participants are involved in the actual production of the experience when in the passive process participants are involved in the consumption of the experiences produced them by others. In the event this can be demonstrated as following; participants who are visiting the event and participants who are part of its content. In the EYOF event this would mean spectators who are only observing the sports and competitions and the athletes who are participating to the competitions and partly creating their own experience.

The vertical dimension describes connection or environmental relationship that connects the customer with the event or performance. Absorption at the one end defines how the experience is connected to the mind. Immersion at the other end expresses how deeply customers are taking part physically or virtually to the experience. (Pine & Gilmore 1999, 31.)

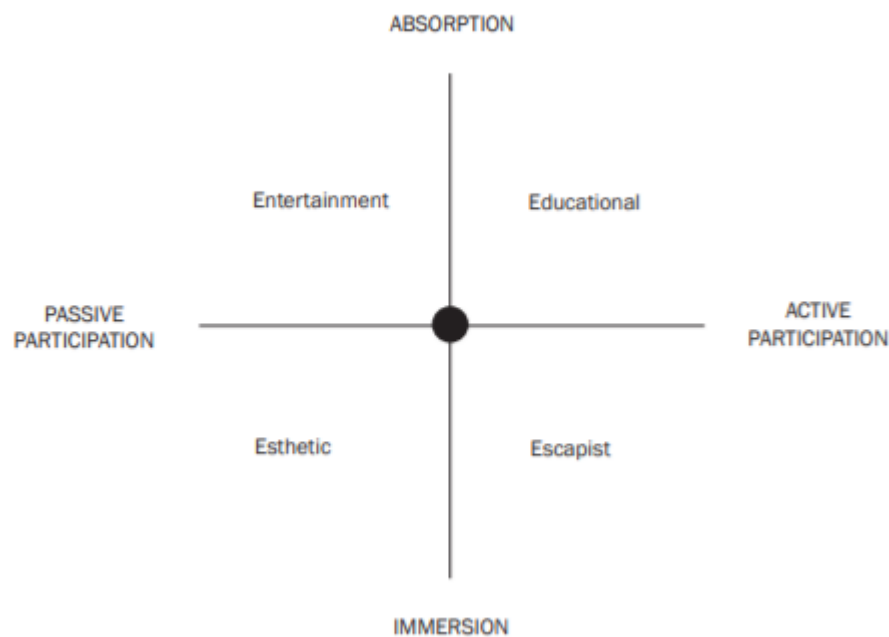


Figure 2. Four Experience Realms, The Sweet Spot (Pine & Gilmore 1999, 30.)

To make event successful ambience needs to be considered. The experience which clients receive is ensured by the event organizer. Clients themselves are helping to create the atmosphere and ambience themselves by their participation and involvement but part of it is created by putting effort on details and interlinked features. Observations are made with all senses which

encourages to focus on all elements of the event. (Shone & Parry 2010, 205-210.) Hereby it is important to take into consideration both conscious and unconscious levels of the customer as both of them have to be influenced. (Tarssanen & Kylänen, 2006.)

Experience of the event can vary between stakeholders. Attendees' own expectations and attitudes towards the event are forming partially the experience. In addition, the role of the client affects to the expectations and the final experience. Athletes are part of participants group and event would not exist without them. Hereby it is important to take note of their preferences. (Getz 2007, 190, 193.) In addition, it is important to pay attention how the guests are met. Research done by Häyrinen & Vallo (2016, 206) and Tarssanen & Kylänen (2006) are highlighting the importance on how the guests are met influences to the experience.



#### 4 Sustainability in event management

Today, more and more events have become environmentally friendly. As the awareness of sustainability has increased, so has the actions of minimizing negative environmental impacts. It has sparked a new field called green or sustainable event management and the characteristics are energy efficiency, waste minimization, decreased water consumption and ecological procurement chains, to name a few. Sustainable policies have also become a requirement or a standard in many industries, also in the events industry. (Ahmad et al. 2013.)

Events are strongly combined with social and cultural values, and they include a sense of belonging and a sense of identity, in other words, a dimension of social inclusion. Hosting an event creates social, environmental, and economic impacts, and are referred as “the three pillars of impacts”. The conceptual framework for sustainable event management has sparked several models and standards that include criteria for implementing sustainable philosophies to event industry. (Musgrave & Raj 2009, 5-9.)

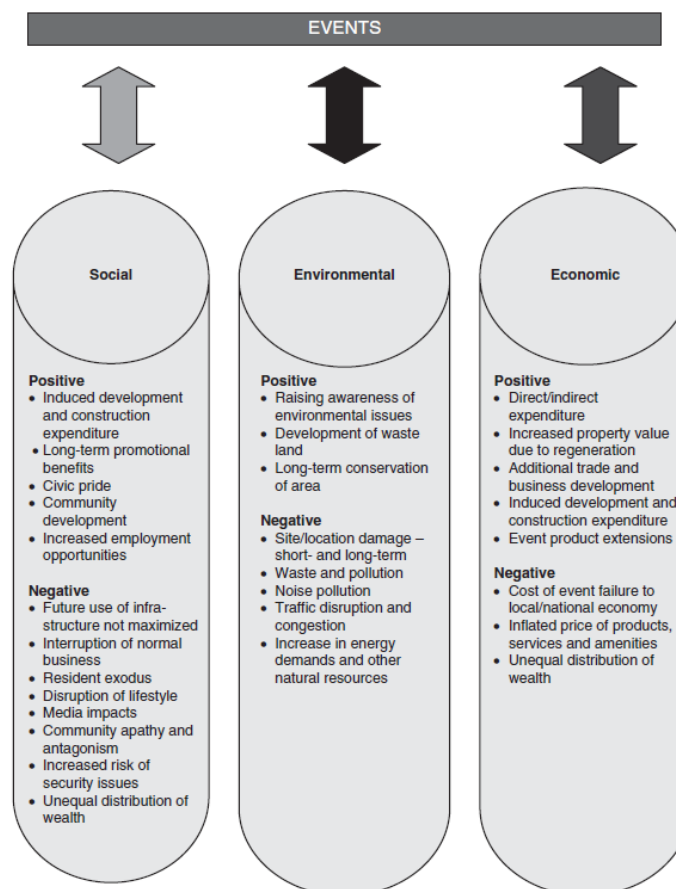


Figure 3. The three pillars of impacts. Musgrave & Raj 2009.

The environmental stress has grown over international sporting events as they are catalysts to tourism. Hence the International Olympic Committee has adopted sustainability as one of their key principles as a leader of the Olympic movement to “engage and assist Olympic Movement stakeholders in integrating sustainability within their own organizations and operations.” (Sustainability Management In Sports n.d, 2.)

#### 4.1 Ekosport Kainuu and responsibility program

The local organizing party Kainuun Liikunta has set a goal to create as sustainable and environmentally friendly event as possible. This is achieved through objectives and acts over the region of Kainuu. One of the main vanguards is the Ekosport Kainuu project. Its main goals are reducing the environmental and climate effects and increasing the competences of environmentally responsible event management in the region. The objectives are adapted from the United Nations sustainable development goals and some perspectives from National Olympic Committees guide for sport associations. Kainuun Liikunta has set objectives to reach these goals together with Suomussalmi and Sotkamo municipality, and City of Kajaani. However, Kainuun Liikunta is the administrative supervisor of the project and it is funded by the European Union regional development funds. The project includes several pilot events, training of organizers and creating new operating models. EYOF works as one of the pilot events and measurable actions has been created to show concrete data of the success. (Vastuullisuus n.d; Ekosport Kainuu n.d.)

The Ekosport-project was launched in the August of 2020. The main objective is to build a sustainable event management model that will reach far into the future. It aims to reduce the environmental stress of events that will be held in Kainuu region, develop tools for the event industry in Kainuu and uplift the positive image of events through increased environmental awareness and communicating about it to the public. Thus, the European Youth Olympic Festival will be organized according to the guidelines of Ekosport-project. The model includes minimizing the environmental stress already in the event planning phase, during the event and afterwards the event. Increasing the awareness of sustainability is one of the key objectives of the projects and mobilizing individuals to follow sustainable values. The actions are based by knowledge and one of the main plans is developing a mobile software for the event producers, helping to reach the event audience better. (Heikkinen 2020.)

Kainuun Liikunta aims for holistic approach of sustainability and responsibility in their operations. They have included objectives for social, ecological, and economic dimensions in their wide field of activities. Those are the same themes presented in three pillars of impact (Figure 3). Ekosport is one of the key objectives in the current operating strategy of Kainuun Liikunta. The opportunity of piloting sustainable event management in a large-scale environment at the EYOF is important as in keeping the Ecocompass-certificate earned in early 2021. (Kainuun Liikunta Ry. Vastuullisuusohjelma 2021, 5.)

In the view of side events in EYOF Vuokatti the program services have been planned to follow sustainable principles and such decisions have been made knowingly. The side events are organized near the athlete's village to avoid usage of motor vehicles and they will be reached by foot. It will also save time and expenses that would be otherwise wasted on traveling in different locations. As concerning the whole event the rubbish bins will have recycling sections for different waste and those containers will also be used at side event venues. The target is to avoid purchasing new equipment for the event and thus everything will be scouted by forming partnerships with different associations and when that is not possible, purchasing recycled and used goods. (A. Heikkinen, personal communications 14.9.2021.)

In the sustainable event management project for the EYOF it was confirmed there will be a mobile application that will offer a channel of information about different timetables concerning the event and reduce the use of printed materials. The application will include educative data about environmental awareness and sustainable values therefore it is one of the main objectives in managing the event. (A.Heikkinen, speaking in Organizing Committee Meeting 26.10.2021.)

## 5 Event development process

The event design concentrates on understanding the user needs and applies user-centric approach to create successful solutions to problem solving. It includes the level of audience involvement, participation and interaction with the service or product through their senses on cognitive and/or physical level. The programme planning process often starts with evaluation of possible existing programmes and options or new idea generation. It is the scripted activities for the participants and the audience. The most important thing is to come up with ideas that satisfy the target audience and are feasible; possible to implement. (Getz 2007, 208, 224.)

To make event memorable it should provoke emotions. In addition, event should contain something surprising (Getz 2007, 165). Surprise can simply be a matter of everyday effort and consideration in terms of genuine demonstration of caring that makes the participant feel important and welcome. (Häyrinen & Vallo 2016, 206.)

There are several event management models by different authors. Various of them differentiate the planning in different phase or step models. For example, Cunningham et al (2008, 26) introduces four event planning stages: (1) development, (2) operational planning, (3) implementation, monitoring and management phase and (4) evaluation and renewal phase. Overall, planning models give reasoning for what has to be done and how. Saeed-Khan & Clements (2009) state event management models have similarities with project management models, and they do have a lot in common. Without any model event management team members would not have clear idea what their objectives are and lack in measures which show what have been achieved. (Saeed-Khan & Clements 2009, 143-144). Event management models are good examples of ongoing process thinking and fine methods for event development. However, the event star model by Vallo & Häyrinen (2016) offers a comprehensive tool for initiating an event and separated strategic and operational levels in creditable manner and is suitable from our perspective for planning the side events for this functional thesis.

The successful event star model (Figure 4) by Vallo & Häyrinen (2016) presents essential guiding questions that are very fundamental in event developing process. By studying carefully different sections of the model and finding answers to the questions, it is possible to arrange a unique, one-off event. Creating a successful event is a combination of strategic and operational thinking. Strategic approach includes essential questions of why the event is organized, what are the objectives of the event and who are the target group. The operational aspects inspect how the event

is managed, what is the content of the event and who are hosting the event. (Vallo & Häyrinen 2016, 121,128.)

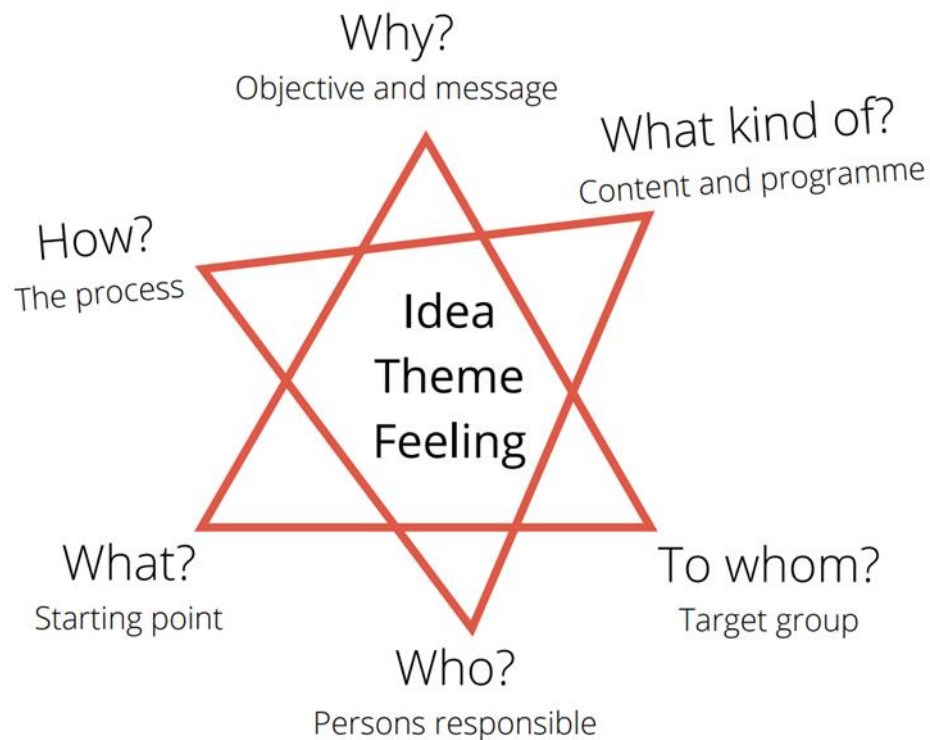


Figure 4. Successful Event Star Model. Vallo & Häyrinen 2016.

*Why?* The objective and the message of the event are crucial elements for the event organizer. If there are no answers or reasons for the event to exist, it may be better not to go further in the process. *To whom?* Knowing the target group is the next important theme as without them the event would not exist. *What (Where and When)?* The starting point must be determined in an exact way therefore it dictates much of the direction where the event management process proceeds. There is a difference whether the event is organized independently or under the mandate of an umbrella organization. Answering these strategic questions often yield an idea or even a concept for an event. (Vallo & Häyrinen 2016, 121-123.)

*How?* The process must be thought from the perspective of objectives. Events deliver messages and it is also important to discuss how they are made visible? The same questions apply to the event idea and/or the theme. *What kind of?* The content and the programme of the event depend on the objectives, target group and the agenda of the event. In the planning of the content, target group must be seen as the most important factor that affects the planning process as event

organizers should be responsible of knowing their audience. *Who?* The persons responsible and key personnel carry a lot of liability to many different directions in the event management process and no event should be arranged in vain. There should always be a need or a cause, or would any host be pleased with an event that attracts no interest or audience yet only exist for tradition? A meaningful event is creating an impact through acting as a host. These operational aspects are the main focus in the actual event management process. (Vallo & Häyrinen 2016, 123-127.)

In the event development process, planning is everything. The planning phase takes approximately 75% of the time before the actual event. The event itself takes only 10% of the process but tends to be intensive, as everything must be ready until the audience arrives. The post-marketing phase (15%) is also important as it concludes the whole process and extends the length of the event in social media and in people's minds. (Vallo & Häyrinen 2016, 189.)

### 5.1 Event star model in EYOF side events

The questions from the strategic point of view dictate the essential motives of organizing the event. *Why* the EYOF 2021 in Vuokatti is organized? The answer can be found from the European Youth Olympic Festival's core values: for the young athletes of Europe, for the development of youth sports, inspiring the youth all over Europe. *What* is the starting point, *where* is it and *when*? The starting point was created in the bidding process when the European Olympic Committee elected Vuokatti to host the winter EYOF 2021. There is no doubt *who is the target group* therefore the concept is major winter multisport event for youth that includes various operations and levels in sport event management. (European Youth Olympic Festival, n.d.)

The operational angle of organizing EYOF reveals the objectives that are brought on display by taking action and making selections in the event development process. Hence the organizers formed an organizing committee that brings all the event operations together and shows *who are the persons responsible*. The operations of the committee are reviewed regularly showing *how* the event management process is advancing on different operational areas. The main objective and the message for EYOF is giving an opportunity for young European talents and saluting the power and energy of youth which dictates *what kind of* content the event will consist of. The main function is undoubtedly the winter games but in amidst of the side events the creation of youth-oriented atmosphere is very important and serves the agenda of EYOF.

## 6 Conducting the event

The practical starting point of this functional thesis was when the secretary general of Kainuun Liikunta recruited students to volunteer in EYOF. The first organizing committee meeting was held in the autumn 2019 after positions and areas of responsibility were chosen. That was the starting point for the planning phase of the different areas. In case of the side events the planning phase included visiting the venues, gathering theory of event management, and starting to plan the activities.

The theoretical background was composed of relevancy to the thesis topic and the research problem. To understand the field of event management it was important to examine the basic event management theories and then proceed to more accurate theoretical approach concerning sport events in large scale international events. Theories were chosen based on the nature of EYOF in general and on the objectives of the commissioning party. Finally, some relevant theories were also chosen to understand our task as to create intangible experiences to our target groups.

Theoretical part of the thesis is based on multiple different valid sources which are giving a short overview of the event management theories, definition of sport events, explanation of how major and mega event differ, what is sport tourism, how experience is forming, why sustainability is more and more important to take into consideration and how it is seen in EYOF 2021 and how event development process forms. Finally, the Experience pyramid and experience realms were discussed to understand the customers point of view in our side event management.

Theory was researched from various relevant literature sources which covered the thesis topic. Databases of the libraries and Google Scholar were used to find credible literature material. Furthermore, previous studies and study materials on event management were utilized in the information seeking process. The sources used were chosen with consideration after reading the abstract and conclusion at the minimum. Use of various sources and careful consideration of the sources strengthens reliability of the theory part. Additionally, sources were chosen to answer to the research questions set for the thesis. For source criticism, the event management model do not give any specific information concerning side events and often side events are mentioned only concisely.

Nonetheless, theory background justified what needed to be done and was guiding the process. During the planning multiple meetings were held. Organizing committee meetings were once in

two months to gather together all the chiefs to share the current situation in each area. These meetings will continue until the event begins. In addition, side event team met occasionally together to brainstorm and discuss about different ideas.

Later in the process side events extended to cover school visitors from Kainuu region as before they were only planned for the participating athletes. Olympic theme was decided to be used in the side events for the school visitors. Therefore, side events shaped into mini-Olympics where students could try out the sports of the EYOF event. Side events for the athletes had guidelines from host city contract. These were guiding the planning.

Covid-19 pandemic changed the schedule of the event and affected to the implementation. The most significant change was postponement of the EYOF from March 2021 to March 2022. This has lengthened the planning time and prolonged the decision making. Some of the decisions such as side event venues are still in progress as a result of constantly changing Covid-19 restrictions. However, decision was made that current plans will be documented. Therefore, this thesis introduces the plans which are suitable for the current situation without knowing the usability in the future.



## 7 Side events

In EYOF 2021 side events are additional free time services for athletes of which the attendance is voluntary. The organizers responsibility is to offer and arrange such activities and programmatic services to enhance the events entity and inclusiveness as international youth event.

Side events are targeted to two different groups. One of them is formed from the competing athletes of the EYOF 2021 competitions. This includes youths age varying between 14-18 years old. The other group consists of the 11-13 years old 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> graders from Kainuu region elementary schools and other event audience.

Side events for the athletes are working as free time activity. To put it simply, youth in their adolescence are energetic and driven to relieve their stress by engaging in different activities and finding something interesting to do. Having possibility to mental and physical recovery during the event is highly important and encouraged for the young athletes. The entity of side events is planned in such way both aspects are covered for offering free time zones to the athletes to carry their thoughts away for a moment, and muscle care facilities to ease out the physical stress. The coordination commission from European Olympic Committee visited Vuokatti in the fall of 2019 and their greatest wish was to offer recovery and muscle care possibilities to athletes.

Side events for the 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> graders are planned offering knowledge about sports in Finland and testing possibilities of the sports part of the EYOF event. The main idea of bringing the young people to see the event is to fulfill the goal of the commissioning party of enhancing activity of youth within sports. It is also part of the operating strategy of Kainuun Liikunta to give olympic education to children in Kainuu region. (Toiminta ja taloussuunnitelma 2021).

Side events consists of three major parts: firstly, there is a weekly program schedule that serves the athletes in-between their trainings and competitions and secondly a weekly program schedule for the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders who are offered with mini-Olympics and possibility to spectate the competitions and thirdly a separate evening party during the snowboard competition. The schedules will be planned when the timetable of the winter games is confirmed. The evening get-together is targeted to public audience as well and it is hoped to attract as much audience as possible to create a sense of sport celebration. The evening party will also have a separate program timetable. In addition, there will be visitors from schools of Kainuu region via Erasmus-project and they will have their own separate side events.

## 7.1 Venues and activities

Venues and activities vary from the targeted audience. For the athletes there is a plan to have more venues inside and the rest of the activities for the school visitors and public audience will be mainly held outdoors. However, it is important to familiarize with the premises and facilities and perform a critical review about the applicability of the venue if it is suitable for such activities (Vallo & Häyrynen 2016, 170).

Sport activities for the school visitors are located about one kilometer from the Vuokatti sport center where the athletes are competing. This makes it easy and convenient for the school groups to move between the activities and spectating the competitions. Area of the side events is located outside a hotel Vuokatinhovi which is no longer serving customers. It gives a good opportunity to use its outdoor parking area and wide outdoor premises for children to have mini-Olympics.

Side event facilities for the athletes were planned to be indoors at hotel Vuokatinhovi as the activities are mainly focusing on socializing and body care but due to certain changes it is no longer valid place to use. Therefore, changes will be done with the location. In addition, coronavirus has brought restrictions during the planning process which are affecting to the use of the side event venues. These restrictions have caused a delay in the decision making and planning of the event venues. Therefore, implementation of the venue map of the side events is also postponed due the changes in locations. In the limits of this thesis process, the places for athlete side events could not be determined. The school visitor plans were not changed.

## 7.2 Youth athlete's leisure time as a motivational factor

Ristimäki has been doing research in her master's thesis "Nuorten urheilijoiden suhde liikuntaan" (2017) of young athletes and results show that joy and having fun are the most important factors to make athletes participate within sports. For young people physical activity is (the only) way of spending free time. Some of the participants has felt that without sports they would not have anything useful to do in their spare time.

Similar observations are found in a book "Essential Processes for Attaining Peak Performance" written by Dieter Hackfort and Gershon Tenebaum (2006). Recovery, both in physical and in mental level, is mentioned as one of the important factors in high level sports. In addition, leisure time

was mentioned as important for recovery and socializing outside of their sport. Visek et al (2018) discusses their fun integration theory in their article “Integrating fun in young athletes’ sport experiences” about fun-determinants that act as drivers for children and youth to engage in sports and fostering a fun social environment. It is important to note games and youth sport events are a by-product of planning and preparations by adults. Therefore, it is important to create such environments that promote fun, socializing and maintain quality relationships. (Visek et al 2018, 76.)

### 7.3 Students

The activities targeting elementary school students are promoting the EYOF sports and offer a way of trying different sports in guided manner in the theme of mini-Olympics. There will be various Olympic sports which will be implemented in a suitable way for children. For example, ice hockey will be implemented using a hockey radar. Besides mini-Olympics, kids will have other sport activities and possibilities to try out new outdoor activities. Activities are offered in two ways; firstly, with a personnel who are guiding and instructing at the activity point and secondly as self-employed activity point where are written instructions and possible equipment ready to be used. The objective is to offer kids full Olympic-level experience by bringing them spectate real athletes in competition and engage in sports in joyous way by attending the side event program.

Activity:	Description
<b>Ice hockey speed radar test</b>	Player shoots towards a goal from certain shooting platform. Radar measures the speed of the shot.
<b>Eco-shooting</b>	Shooting simulator. Completely bullet-free, laser-free and noise-free firearm.
<b>Cross country skiing</b>	Beginners track: Easy track for trying out the sport. Skill track: Different obstacles on the track. Tandem skis: Two people are attached to the same skis. Sit ski (para sport) track: Paraskiing possibility.
<b>Ski jumping simulator/device</b>	Customer jumps on a ski jumping machine to the mattress.
<b>Burton Kid’s</b>	Possibility to test snowboarding and alpine skiing

Figure 1. Mini-Olympic activities for school visitors that are organized with personnel.

Activity:	Description:
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<b>Orienteering</b>	Tracks: Short/Long/Disabled QR-coded orienteering track with information points about Finnish sport history and Olympics.
<b>Snow football</b>	Football in a deep snow.
<b>Fatbike track</b>	Possibility to test ride a fatbike on a snow track.
<b>Snowshoeing, backcountry ski</b>	Possibility to test snowshoes and backcountry skis.
<b>Sledging / tubing</b>	Sledging down on a hill.
<b>Precision shot</b>	Throwing objects to the goals and testing your accuracy.

Figure 2. Mini-Olympic activities for the school visitors that are organized without personnel

In addition to sport activities side events of the school visitors are containing entertaining factors such as music and commentator. This is creating the feeling of being in an international sporting event. Decorations of the venue are covered with EYOF advertisement and there will be a photo station where participants are able to take pictures of themselves showing that they have participated in the event. Furthermore, the mascot of the EYOF event will be visiting the venue and the event song will be played and the dance choreography taught for the visitors. Reinforcing the atmosphere of a sport event we offer to the school visitors a bonfire where they can grill sausages which is the most common food offered in sport events in Finland.

#### 7.4 Athletes

For athletes the objectives are different as the main purpose of side events is offering them leisure possibilities that enhance their recovery between official trainings and competitions. It is also a possibility to socialize with their peers and arrange a meeting place for international group of youth. As socializing with other athletes is considered a major stress-releasing factor. (Hackfort & Tenenbaum 2006, 82) of youth therefore it is important for the organizer to offer such possibilities. Another aspect is educational to boost the young athletes' journey to grow into a civilized and internationally oriented citizen. Therefore, there will be informative materials about the host city and host country and about the philosophy of Olympism and the values that go beyond the games itself. (Host city contract for the XV winter European youth Olympic festival, 2016).

Side events for the athletes are divided into three groups. These groups are called activity zone, game zone and chill out zone. This division is due to the theme of the activities. Activity zone offers knowledge and learning possibility through small tasks for the participants (Figure 3). Game zone gives has different games from playing cards to E-sports possibility (Figure 4). Chill out zone is meant for relaxation. There are equipment's for athletes to use for muscle care exercises. (Figure 5).

<b>ACTIVITY ZONE</b>
<b>Map of Finland &amp; Sotkamo / Get to know Finland</b>
<b>Map of Europe / Where are you from</b>
<b>Social media wall / "Follow me"</b>
<b>Community art work</b>
<b>Language wall</b>
<b>Quest book</b>
<b>Quiz of Finland / EYOF</b>
<b>History of Olympics</b>

Figure 3. Activities on activity zone of athletes.

<b>GAME ZONE</b>
<b>Board games</b>
<b>Playing cards</b>
<b>VR-goggles</b>
<b>Playstation 5</b>
<b>Computer</b>

Figure 4. Activities of game zone of athletes.

<b>CHILL OUT ZONE</b>
<b>Yoga mats</b>
<b>High rollers</b>
<b>Tennis balls</b>
<b>Fatboys</b>

Figure 5. Activities of chill out zone of athletes.

## 7.5 Evening party and snowboarding final

During the snowboarding finals there is a plan to organize simultaneously an evening party. This event is targeted to the public audience and for the competitors of EYOF. Goal for the activities is to entertain and reinforce the feeling of an international sport event. Atmosphere is created by DJ, event host and performances. Furthermore lights, open fire and candles are used to enhance the feeling. In addition, get together has sporty side events for young participants which include ice hockey radar, photo orienteering and different competitions organized by Tilkkutäkki, which is a Sotkamo municipal youth work function and activates local youth to volunteer in events.

## 7.6 Safety

Safety of the events in Finland is highly monitored by Finnish Safety and Chemicals Agency (Tukes) and other authorities. "Tukes is a licensing and supervisory authority that promotes the safety and reliability of products, services and industrial activities. It's main purpose of operations is to protect people, property and the environment from risks to safety." (Tukes n.d.) These operations are strongly connected to events. One of the sectors of their operations is public and event security. Event security includes for example public safety, fire safety, first aid and maintenance of order.

At events Tukes is monitoring for example public safety and safety of side events. In addition, several other authorities are supervising the safety and security of events. According to the Tukes there are high possibility for risks at the event when the public has the opportunity to participate in activities themselves. (Tukes n.d.)

The event organizer is fully responsible for the safety of the event but as there are authorities monitoring the safety, events must be reported, and certain permits needs to be applied from several different authorities before the event can take place. Actions are taken to ensure the safety of the customers. One of the tasks concerning the event security is event safety and security plan. It includes risk assessment and actions taken if hazard situations are to happen. Risk identification also for the side events (appendix 1) has been done separately as a part of the competition organizing process.

### 7.6.1 Covid-19

Covid-19 pandemic has affected to the timing of the EYOF event but also it has influenced to the overall work in the planning and organizing the event. The pandemic has increased the risks and uncertainty. In the work of Kainuun Liikunta this has been reflected in practice so that different alternative models have been designed for the implementation of the events. Current situation has then showed which of the alternatives is put into practice (Kainuun Liikunta ry 2021). Risk analysis for the side events includes a part that covers a safe implementation plan of the event in case of a contagious disease (Appendix 1). EYOF event will also have a corona coordinator who is responsible of the safe organization of the event.

Detailed information package of the coronavirus is under preparation and will be distributed to the teams in November 2021. Later on, the EYOF organizing committee will receive own instructions regarding the Covid-19 situation. Regional state administrative agency and international sport federations such as International Skiing Federation are giving guidelines which are combined and modified to common guidelines for preparing and implementing the EYOF event.

## 8 Discussion

The purpose of this thesis was to create a side event program for European Youth Olympic Festival 2022 in Vuokatti according to guidelines stated in Host City Contract and also implement it in practice. The outcome was manual for side events including all the activities and resources related to them. As postponement of the event affected the schedule and content of this thesis, therefore the implementation phase is not included and assessed in this document. It will be reviewed with the commissioning party in the future when the event has been conducted. The thesis process followed the functional thesis' description of Vilkkä & Airaksinen (2003) as the authors conducted academic research resulting in literature review of the event management theories and conducting a planning phase for the content in side events and implementation plan assigned by the commissioning party, Kainuun Liikunta.

The delays affected the thesis process greatly therefore the goals and objectives felt distant and vague. Uncertainty and multiple changes caused fragmented stages in the planning and writing process. The event management process cannot be reviewed entirely because the implementation is not possible in the limitations of this thesis. The changing of event dates caused fragmentation to the core event functions when one of the sports could not be organized as planned. Boys' ice hockey teams were not able to postpone their coming until March 2022 when the EYOF 2022 was newly scheduled. Therefore, additional EYOF games will be held in December 2021. This additional event was kept separate from the thesis as it is much smaller on the event size and scope. In addition to the postponements of the event, the schedule of the sports has also been changing throughout the thesis process which has affected to the creation of the side event schedule. Furthermore, the planning of evening party and get together are postponed due the schedule changes.

The original purpose was to create side events only for the young athletes participating in EYOF but as the project of Erasmus-school visitors emerged, the developmental task was extended to concern the school visitors as well. Then again get together event and evening party combined to the snowboarding finals extended the side events to concern all public visiting the event. Nevertheless, planning of these events around the snowboarding final got on hold as the schedule of the sports competitions kept changing. On that account the evening party and get together will be planned in the future. However, they are mentioned briefly in the thesis as they are major part of the side events.



The event management for side events had multiple phases, starting from the recruitment of student to EYOF organizing committee and giving them a mission in event management. The meetings of the organizing committee helped to build a general picture of the whole event, and continued by forming a side events team and proceeding planning in a smaller unit. The working process followed the event star model by Vallo & Häyrinen (2016) as a main principle to bear in mind concerning side events. The strategic and operational questions gave clarity and insight into side event planning. However, event management theories by Getz (2007) and Shone & Parry (2010) helped to form a general image of the wide range of event management. The sustainability was taken into consideration from the beginning and activities are organised with partners that can provide equipment or resources for the duration of the event. After all, the sustainable event management models were not inspected that closely in this thesis thus Kainuun Liikunta has their own sustainability program and guidelines are adopted from there. However, such models would have been interesting to study how event management and sustainability have been brought to be a part of the event management theoretical framework.

The customer experience was inspected by introducing the Experience pyramid by Kylänen & Tarssanen (2006) and Experience realms by Pine & Gilmore (1999), the first one being more from the touristic perspective and latter more from commercial point of view. These two theories widened the perspective to understand how the senses of event guests can be affected. Theories did not exclude each other but rather supported the views from different perspectives. Regarding the importance of those theories in this thesis, one more research question could have been formed for that matter.

Previous participation and personal working experience of the authors in organizing winter sports events has been helpful in the thesis process. Experience has been gained in multiple events and places, but it has also included Vuokatti and its skiing events. This has ensured that the location of the EYOF event is familiar for the authors and therefore the planning of side events has been easier. Secretary general Marita Kaipainen became familiar in the previous events in Vuokatti and during the thesis process as multiple meetings were held. Therefore, mutual credit has been built and the cooperation between authors and the commissioning party has worked out well throughout the thesis process. Also being part of the organizing committee has offered valuable opportunity to network with professionals from different industries giving insight how events bring uniquely many sectors together to form a community of their own kind.

## 9 Conclusions

The aim of this thesis was to plan the side event program for the European Youth Olympic Festival held in Vuokatti 2022. In addition, it highlights the sustainability in event management because the main organizer Kainuun Liikunta has adopted sustainability as one of their priority strategies in event production.

Research was conducted to explain the process of event management, planning and implementation by the literature review. Then the content of side events was designed to fulfill the requirements in the EYOF Host City Contract and create even broader selection than committed in the contract.

The research concerning the importance of side events for the competing athletes was limited. However, research has made regarding the motivational factors of youth participation. This was researched in order to create suitable program for target group. School visitors' side events were planned in accordance with the strategy of the commissioners in which Olympic theme reflection and children's activation towards physical activity were highlighted. Easy accessibility of the side events was considered during the planning of activities for athletes.

The thesis process provided a practical yet academical learning experience in which theory and practice were combined. The professional objective was reached through networking with organizing committee which consist of professionals. The thesis process allowed to examine the producing and organizing of events and therefore gave an overview of the event management.

As a result of the thesis process, a plan for the side event programs for the athletes and the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grades from elementary schools of Kainuu region was created. In addition, side event manual was compiled to be used in the implementation phase of the activities.

Global pandemic has affected the thesis process as it complicates the implementation of events overall. During the process Covid-19 caused a break to the planning as the EYOF event was postponed by a year due to restrictions in traveling. Correspondingly this affected the completion and the content of the thesis. Originally side events would have been implemented and evaluated in practice during the thesis process.

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## FIN - Kriisisuunnitelma - oheisohjelmat

### **Turvallisuus**

-Varmistetaan, että oheisohjelmien suorituspaikat/tilat ovat turvallisia yleisölle. Jo suunnitteluvaiheessa yleisömäärän huomioon ottaminen. Tiedostetaan riskien mahdollisuus, varaudutaan niihin ja tehdään suunnitelma niiden varalle.

### **Sää – kylmyys**

-Säätiedotuksen seuraaminen ja tapahtuman lähestyessä mahdollisten muutosten harkitseminen ja toteuttaminen mm. ulkona tapahtuvien aktiviteettien siirtäminen mahdollisuuksien mukaan sisätiloihin. Tiedotuskanavien hyödyntäminen sään mukaisesta pukeutumisesta muistuttamiseen. Varmistetaan, että oheisohjelmien aikana on mahdollista saada sairaanhoitoa tarvittaessa.

### **Tekniset ongelmat – sähkökatko**

-Tärkeiden toimintojen turvaaminen varavirralla.

### **Osanottajalle tapahtuu jotakin**

-Varmistetaan että aktiviteettien suoritusalueet ovat turvalliset ja niissä on mahdollisuus ensiapuun. Jokaisella suorituspaikalla turvallisuussuunnitelma ja pidetään huolta, jotta kaikki ohjaajat ovat tietoisia mahdollisista toimista tapaturmien sattuessa.

### **Henkilökunnan tapaturma**

-Pidetään huolta, että millään tapahtumapisteellä ei ole kukaan yksin töissä tapaturman varalta. Varmistetaan, että vastuuhenkilöiden tilalle on mahdollista saada sijainen tapaturman/sairauden sattuessa.

### **Häiritsevä käyttäytyminen**

-Järjestyksenvalvoja paikalla, joka pystyy poistamaan häiritsevän henkilön.

### **Tarttuva tauti**

-Järjestetään paikalle valtuutetut henkilöt arvioimaan tilanne ja toteutetaan tilanteen edellyttämien vaatimusten mukaan.

### **Uhkaava tilanne**

-Selvitetään todellinen tilanne ja toimitaan tilanteen edellyttämällä tavalla.

### **Aktiviteetin peruuntuminen**

-Varasuunnitelmien miettiminen mahdollisten peruuntumisten varalle.

**Tapahtuman peruuntuminen/siirtyminen**

-Varausten ja suunnitelmien peruminen. Yhteistyökumppaneille tilanteesta infoaminen ja mahdollisten jatkosuunnitelmien tekeminen.

**EN - Risk identification – side events****Safety**

-Ensuring that the venues for activities are safe. Taking into account the amount of possible audience. Being aware of the possibility of risks, preparing for them and making a safety plan.

**Weather – too cold**

-Following the forecast and making decisions closer to the events if the organizing of outdoor activities needs to be reconsidered/changed indoors. Making sure that we are giving instructions in every marketing channel for the audience to wear suitable clothing. Ensuring that there is paramedic available during side events.

**Technical difficulties – power outage**

-Having a back-up generator for important functions.

**Accident for participant**

-Making sure that there is paramedic/nurse on the venue and available. Ensuring safe venue for the activities. Having a rescue plan and making sure that the instructors have been trained to act in case of an emergency.

**Accident for staff**

-Having a back up person for every activity in case of a accident/illness of an instructor. Never having only one person being responsible of one activity.

**Disruptive behavior**

-Having security guard to remove disruptive person from the venue.

**Contagious disease**

-Having authorized persons assessing risks. Taking action that the situation requires.

**Threat**

-Finding out the threat and the real situation. Taking action that the situation requires.

**Cancellation of an activity**

-Having a backup plan for possible cancellations.

**Cancellation/transition of the event**

-Cancellation of the plans and reservations. Informing all the partners of the situation.

Making plans for the possible future event.



EVENT	Sun 20.3.	Mon 21.3.	Tue 22.3.	Wed 23.3.	Thu 24.3.	Fri 25.3.	Sat 26.3.
Alpine Skiing	Training	Slalom Girls 10.00	Slalom Boys 10.00	Parallel Slalom Qualification Girls & Boys 10.00 Get Together / Snowboarding Finals	Team Event 13.00	Parallel Slalom Finals Girls & Boys 10.00 Closing Ceremony	Departures
	Opening Ceremony	Big Air & Slope Style Training Girls & Boys 10.00	Big Air Qualification Girls & Boys 10.00	Slope Style Qualification Girls 10.00 Big Air Finals Boys & Girls 18.00 Get Together / Snowboarding Finals	Slope Style Qualifications Boys 10.00	Slope Style Finals Girls & Boys 10.00 Closing Ceremony	Departures
Snowboarding	Opening Ceremony	Girls 7.5km (F) Boys 10km (F) 14.00	5km (C) Girls / 7.5km (C) Boys 10.00	Official Training	Sprint Girls (F) Sprint Boys (F) 10.00	Mixed Relay 4x5km (C+F) 10.00 Closing Ceremony	Departures
	Training	Official training	Sprint Girls 6km / Boys 7.5km 14.00	Get Together / Snowboarding Finals	Individual Girls 10km / Boys 12.5km 10.00	Mixed Relay 2x6km+2x7.5km 10.00 Closing Ceremony	Departures
Cross Country Skiing	Opening Ceremony	Girls tournament 15.00 & 18.30	Girls tournament 15.00 & 18.30	Get Together / Snowboarding Finals	Girls 5th place game 15.00 Girls Bronze medal game 18.30	Girls Gold medal game 14.00 Closing Ceremony	Departures
	Training	Unofficial training 15.30-22.30	Unofficial training 14.30-21.30	Official Training 7.30-13.30 Short programme g&b 13.45-21.10 Get Together / Snowboarding Finals	Official training 6.30-13.20 Free programme 13.35-21.50	Closing Ceremony	Departures
Biathlon	Opening Ceremony	9.30-14.30 Girls / Boys 1500m Mixed Relay 3000m Heats	Girls 500m Boys 500m Mixed Relay 3000m Semi-Finals 9.30-13.30	10.00 Girls / Boys 1500m Mixed Relay 3000m Heats Get Together / Snowboarding Finals	HS 100 Girls 9.00 HS 100 Team Boys 17.00	Girls & Boys 1000m Mixed Relay Finals 11.00-16.00 Closing Ceremony	Departures
	Training	Official training 15.30-22.30	Official Training HS 100 Girls / Boys 8.00	HS 100 Boys 16.30	HS 100 Girls 9.00 HS 100 Team Boys 17.00	HS 100 Mixed Team 9.00 Closing Ceremony	Departures
Ice Hockey	Opening Ceremony	Official training HS 100 Girls / Boys 15.00 Official training CC Girls / Boys 18.00	HS 100 Girls 16.00 Individual Gundersen Girls 18.15	HS 100 Boys 9.00 Individual Gundersen Boys 11.30	HS 100 Girls 9.00 HS 100 Team Boys 17.00	HS 100 Mixed Team 14.00 Mixed Team Cross Country 16.00 Closing Ceremony	Departures
	Training	Official training 15.30-22.30	Official training 14.30-21.30	Official Training 7.30-13.30 Short programme g&b 13.45-21.10 Get Together / Snowboarding Finals	Official training 6.30-13.20 Free programme 13.35-21.50	Closing Ceremony	Departures
Figure Skating	Opening Ceremony	9.30-14.30 Girls / Boys 1500m Mixed Relay 3000m Heats	Girls 500m Boys 500m Mixed Relay 3000m Semi-Finals 9.30-13.30	10.00 Girls / Boys 1500m Mixed Relay 3000m Heats Get Together / Snowboarding Finals	Official training 6.30-13.20 Free programme 13.35-21.50	Girls & Boys 1000m Mixed Relay Finals 11.00-16.00 Closing Ceremony	Departures
	Official Training 9.00-16.00	Official training 15.30-22.30	Official Training HS 100 Girls / Boys 8.00	HS 100 Boys 16.30	HS 100 Girls 9.00 HS 100 Team Boys 17.00	HS 100 Mixed Team 9.00 Closing Ceremony	Departures
Short Track	Opening Ceremony	Official training HS 100 Girls / Boys 15.00 Official training CC Girls / Boys 18.00	HS 100 Girls 16.00 Individual Gundersen Girls 18.15	HS 100 Boys 9.00 Individual Gundersen Boys 11.30	HS 100 Girls 9.00 HS 100 Team Boys 17.00	HS 100 Mixed Team 14.00 Mixed Team Cross Country 16.00 Closing Ceremony	Departures
	Official Training 9.00-16.00	Official training 15.30-22.30	Official Training HS 100 Girls / Boys 8.00	HS 100 Boys 16.30	HS 100 Girls 9.00 HS 100 Team Boys 17.00	HS 100 Mixed Team 9.00 Closing Ceremony	Departures
Ski Jumping	Opening Ceremony	Official training HS 100 Girls / Boys 15.00 Official training CC Girls / Boys 18.00	HS 100 Girls 16.00 Individual Gundersen Girls 18.15	HS 100 Boys 9.00 Individual Gundersen Boys 11.30	HS 100 Girls 9.00 HS 100 Team Boys 17.00	HS 100 Mixed Team 14.00 Mixed Team Cross Country 16.00 Closing Ceremony	Departures
	Official Training 9.00-16.00	Official training 15.30-22.30	Official Training HS 100 Girls / Boys 8.00	HS 100 Boys 16.30	HS 100 Girls 9.00 HS 100 Team Boys 17.00	HS 100 Mixed Team 9.00 Closing Ceremony	Departures
Nordic Combined	Opening Ceremony	Official training HS 100 Girls / Boys 15.00 Official training CC Girls / Boys 18.00	HS 100 Girls 16.00 Individual Gundersen Girls 18.15	HS 100 Boys 9.00 Individual Gundersen Boys 11.30	HS 100 Girls 9.00 HS 100 Team Boys 17.00	HS 100 Mixed Team 14.00 Mixed Team Cross Country 16.00 Closing Ceremony	Departures
	Official Training 9.00-16.00	Official training 15.30-22.30	Official Training HS 100 Girls / Boys 8.00	HS 100 Boys 16.30	HS 100 Girls 9.00 HS 100 Team Boys 17.00	HS 100 Mixed Team 9.00 Closing Ceremony	Departures



**EYOF**  
**2022**  
**VUOKATTI**

EUROPEAN  
YOUTH OLYMPIC  
FESTIVAL 2022  
VUOKATTI

Side Event Manual

**AUTHORS**

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## Introduction

This side event manual shows the content of side events and activities offered by the European Youth Olympic Festival in Vuokatti, Finland. The mini-Olympics are targeted for 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders coming to visit the event from elementary schools of Kainuu region through Erasmus+ project. There are two kinds of activities for the school visitors. Other that are instructed and require personnel and other that are “cold points” with written instructions. The Quukkel mascot will be present in the event circulate around the event area.

Athletes of the EYOF event are the other target group of the side events. Side events for the athletes are divided into three groups. These groups are called activity zone, game zone and chill out zone. This division is due to the theme of the activities. Activity zone offers knowledge and learning possibility through small tasks for the participants. Game zone gives has different games from playing cards to E-sports possibility. Chill out zone is meant for relaxation. There are equipment's for athletes to use for muscle care exercises. For athletes the objectives are different as the main purpose of side events is offering them leisure possibilities that enhance their recovery between official trainings and competitions. It is also a possibility to socialize with their peers and arrange a meeting place for international group of youth.

Side events are offered daily through the competition week. This manual offers templates for the schedule planning and gathering of volunteer information. All the activities are explained and the possible equipment's needed for the activities are listed in the tables. Estimation of the personnel needed in the guided activities is shown in the information and partners for equipment's can also be found in the information boxes.



## Mini-Olympics, activities with personnel

### 1. Hockey radar

<b>Materials and equipment:</b>	Personnel
Goal, radar, sticks, pugs, shooting platform	1-2
<b>Description:</b>	
Player shoots towards a goal from certain shooting platform. Radar measures the speed of the shot.	
<b>In cooperation with:</b> Asema13, ice hall	

### 2. Eco-shooting

<b>Materials and equipment:</b>	Personnel
Table, shooting equipment	1-2
<b>Description:</b>	
Shooting simulator. Completely bullet-free, laser-free and noise-free firearm.	
<b>In cooperation with:</b> Sotkamon Jymy/Maarit Järvelä-Kiiskinen	

## 3. Cross country skiing

<b>Materials and equipment:</b>	Personnel
Skis, poles, ski boots, tandem skis, sit ski equipment, stopwatch	4-5
<b>Description:</b>	
<b>Beginners track:</b> Easy track for trying out the sport.	
<b>Skill track:</b> Different obstacles on the track.	
<b>Tandem skis:</b> Two people are attached to the same skis.	
<b>Sit ski (para sport) track:</b> Paraskiing possibility.	
<b>In cooperation with:</b> Paralympic committee, Vuokatti Sports Center, Kajaani University of Applied Sciences	

## 4. Ski jumpin simulator/device

<b>Materials and equipment:</b>	Personnel
Mattress, jumping rack, roll	1
<b>Description:</b>	
Customer jumps on a ski jumping machine to the mattress.	
<b>In cooperation with:</b> Vuokatti Sports Center	

## Mini-Olympics, activities without personnel

### 1. Orienteering

<b>Materials and equipment:</b>	Personnel
QR-points, info point, map showing the track options	-
<b>Description:</b>	
Tracks: Short/Long/Disabled	
QR-coded orienteering track with information points about Finnish sport history and Olympics.	
<b>In cooperation with:</b> Kajaani University of Applied Sciences	

### 2. Snow football

<b>Materials and equipment:</b>	Personnel
Info of the game, ball, goals, vests for the teams	-
<b>Description:</b>	
Football on a deep snow.	
<b>In cooperation with:</b> Kajaani University of Applied Sciences	

## 3. Fatbike track

<b>Materials and equipment:</b>	Personnel
Fatbikes, helmets, track markers	-
<b>Description:</b>	
Possibility to test ride a fatbike on a snow track.	
<b>In cooperation with:</b> Vuokatti Ski Service	

## 4. Snowshoeing, backcountry ski

<b>Materials and equipment:</b>	Personnel
Snowshoes, backcountry skis	-
<b>Description:</b>	
Possibility to test snowshoes and backcountry skis.	
<b>In cooperation with:</b> Kajaani University of Applied Sciences	

## 5. Sledging / tubing

<b>Materials and equipment:</b>	Personnel
Sleds, snow hill	-
<b>Description:</b>	
Sledging down on a hill.	
<b>In cooperation with:</b> Kajaani University of Applied Sciences	



## 6. Precision shot

<b>Materials and equipment:</b>	Personnel
Goals, objects to throw	-
<b>Description:</b>	
Throwing objects to the goals and testing your accuracy.	
<b>In cooperation with:</b> Kajaani University of Applied Sciences	

## Side events for athletes

### Activity zone

ACTIVITY	EXPLANTION
<b>Map of Finland &amp; Sotkamo / Get to know Finland</b>	Paper maps where all important places are marked
<b>Map of Europe / Where are you from</b>	Paper map where participants can put a sticker on top of their home-city/country
<b>Social media wall / "Follow me"</b>	Paper where possibility to share own social media account names
<b>Language wall</b>	Thank you, Hello etc. words in every language EYOF covers
<b>Quest book</b>	Notebook where we hope to participants write comments/greetings during the event.
<b>Quiz of Finland / EYOF</b>	Questionnaire of Finland/EYOF and possibility to take part in lottery.
<b>History of Olympics</b>	Slide show with historical facts

**Chill out zone**

<b>Yoga mats</b>
<b>High rollers</b>
<b>Tennis balls</b>
<b>Fatboys</b>

All the muscle care /chill out zone equipments are in cooperation with Kajaani University of Applied Sciences.

**Game zone**

<b>Board games</b>
<b>Chess</b>
<b>Playcards</b>
<b>VR-goggles</b>
<b>Playstation 5</b>

All the game zone activities are in cooperation with Kajaani University of Applied Sciences.

**Schedule template for side events**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Sunday 20.3.</b>	<b>Monday 21.3.</b>	<b>Tuesday 22.3.</b>	<b>Wednes- day 23.3.</b>	<b>Thursday 24.3.</b>	<b>Friday 25.3.</b>
<b>8-9</b>						
<b>9-10</b>						
<b>10-11</b>						
<b>11-12</b>						
<b>12-13</b>						
<b>13-14</b>						
<b>14-15</b>						
<b>15.16</b>						
<b>16-17</b>						
<b>17-18</b>						
<b>18-19</b>						
<b>19-20</b>						

**Volunteer schedule form**

First name	Last name	Phone number	SUN 21.3.	MON 22.3.	TUE 23.3.	WED 24.3.	THU 25.3.	FRI 26.3.

**Volunteer contact information form**

First name	Last name	Phone number

### Side event zone map

