

It appeared, during the hearings, that there was no consensus among the sports community about the definition of success. Testimonies from the athletes, the sport-governing bodies and the multi-sport organizations revealed two different concepts of success: the first definition relates to individual achievement, while the second relates to winning medals at the international level (being the best in the world). This raises the issue of whether we want Canadian athletes to compete successfully or just to participate internationally. This issue is particularly significant in designing sports policy.

On one hand, some witnesses who appeared before the Sub-Committee claimed that the objective of winning medals is better than that of achieving excellence. According to these witnesses, this is the best way to motivate athletes, since success leads to more participation and attracts sponsors. On the other hand, others said that the recognition of success at the national level should be strengthened. They argued that when the chief motivation is tied to successful performance, the athlete is encouraged to resort to whatever methods improve performance. They also maintained that emphasizing a larger number of medals goes against the idea of promoting sport for all Canadians.

According to some NSOs, Canada currently appears to place much of the emphasis on achieving success at the international level. They said that this can be mainly explained by the fact that Sport Canada has over the years changed its definition of success. From this perspective, the Task Force Report is criticized because it outlines a set of performance levels (related to the winning of medals) that high-level athletes should attain in international competitions. The Dubin Report also expresses some concerns about the objectives set up by the Task Force and the policy of the federal government:

Government funding should not enshrine victory as the sole worthy objective of participation in sport. Although there are many commendable objectives in the *Toward 2000 report*, their importance is minimized when the measure of success of government investment in sport is the number of medals won in international competition. (...) The pursuit of excellence is worthwhile and should be encouraged. But all Canadians, not just our high-performance athletes, should have the opportunity to pursue personal excellence through sport while broadening their experience and abilities with a view to their future contribution to society. Success in national and international competition should be viewed as a consequence and not as a goal of mass participation in sport.⁽³⁾

The Sub-Committee recognizes that the dichotomy in the philosophy of sport — between winning and excelling — results mainly from the variety of goals, interests and needs which are distinctive for each sport organization. The Sub-Committee considers that both approaches are worthwhile and could be adapted to the organization's own objectives. Therefore, the Sub-Committee recommends:

⁽³⁾ Dubin Report, p. 526.