NEGOTIATING WELFARE STATE CITIZENSHIP IN FINNISH AFTER-SCHOOL SPORTS PROJECTS
Laine Kaarlo, Hakamäki Matti
(LIKES Research Center for Sport and Health Sciences, Finland)

The Finnish Ministry of Education and Provincial state offices allocate money to projects developing voluntary after school sports activities for children aged between 10 to 16 years. This national program started in the year 2004 and will continue till the end of 2007. In this presentation we will examine and discuss the results, experiences and sociological interpretations of the program and the projects based on a follow-up and evaluation study carried out by our unit (LINET). In this perspective after three years of operation 270 local projects in all parts of the country with about 32 000 children have taken part in the national program. The basic ideas are concern for sedentariness of children, moving sports from evenings to afternoons and to take especially into account children who don’t take part in other sport activities. The goal of the program is not clearly defined and there are no fixed models or rules to promote activity. Just certain conditions and terms are set. In sociological terms the system of the program represents a new phase or a turn in the development of social state. That is not only because the program is the last area where welfare state has expanded, but also because the organizing principles and executing of the system as a negotiating process between partners and actors. The program can be seen as a way of producing and reproducing welfare state citizenship and at the same time integrative mechanism of society. In this respect sport as a human activity is defined in the context of health and well being and as a mean to avoid marginalization of young people, immigrants and disabled.