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Sport event volunteering: Exploring tourism motivations amongst Glasgow 2018 European Championships volunteers

The research aims to explore the motivations of sport event volunteers, focusing on a case study the inaugural 2018 European Championships in Glasgow, Scotland. Specifically this research investigates the importance of tourism as a motivator of sport event volunteering. Glasgow's Tourism and Visitor Plan to 2023 identifies leisure tourism as the city's biggest future growth opportunity, while presenting six key strands focusing on Glasgow culture, event and sports capabilities. Therefore, this research is ideally placed to explore any potential tourism motivators stimulating the sport event volunteer workforce of the 2018 European Championships. Emerging from event legacy research, the developing field of social legacy research presents large potential in understanding the impact and possible legacies for the people involved in sporting events. Volunteers are a crucial and largely under-researched percentage of event legacy research (Fairley et al., 2014; Doherty, 2009); hence, this research aims to address the gap in literature concerning wider motivations associated with sport event volunteers to aid volunteer recruitment and retention strategies. Framed in social exchange theory, this research highlights the importance of recognising both potential costs and benefits experienced by the volunteers involved, as well as facilitating a theoretical understanding of any positive or negative impacts on future volunteer intentions. Furthermore, social exchange theory provides a useful framework in investigating the volunteer relationship between large, special events and volunteer intent to engage in similar events. Utilised across a number of sport event types (Dickson et al., 2015), this study employs an adapted version of the Special Events Volunteer Motivation Scale (SEVMS) as part of an online survey. Developed from previous uses of the SEVMS with additional questions exploring tourism and leisure opportunities, this tool will focus on four main research questions: Who is volunteering, previous volunteer experience, volunteer motivations and future volunteer intentions. The quantitative approach taken in the survey element of this research will be supported by personal observations during the Glasgow 2018 European Games. Research conducted by Jarvis and Blank (2011) suggests that tourism-based motivations are overall less significant to the volunteer than volunteer-based considerations; however, their findings present that a number of volunteers would consider themselves a tourist. The findings from this research will provide a further perspective on volunteer motivations, as well as the volunteer's tourist intentions while volunteering at a sport event; this is considered a useful addition in understanding future collaborative directions for destination and event volunteer managers in order to capitalise on Glasgow as an ambitious event city.