



**EUROPEAN COMPETITION FOR YOUNG PEOPLE
"Ga. MES Net - European Medieval Sports & Street Games Network "**

**TRADITIONAL SPORTS AND GAMES ROLE OF
CONSERVATING THE EUROPEAN CULTURAL HERITAGE
FOR BUILDING A BETTER FUTURE FOR EUROPE**

Composition:

**Ga. MES Net - European cultural diversity through the promotion and protection of
traditional sports and games**

Preparatory action. European partnership for sport (EAC / S03 / 2013.)

Priority №3: Promoting European sports and games -

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I. Introduction and purpose

The aim of this report is to present the explored European common principles and values of traditional games and cultural diversity of the different European countries. Here will be shared information about cultural and historical origin and will be promoted traditional Bulgarian games since the Middle Ages to nowadays, in order to identify the common aspects (roots and values) at European level. The report presents the games "Gechki", "Chelik" and "Kempo" - their development and preservation through the years shows the conservation of non-material values. Including communication, informative and technological skills, the final offers innovative ideas for the preservation, promotion and development of the traditional games and sports in Europe.

II. Historical and cultural background of the traditional sports and games in Europe and possible common roots and values – exploration

1. Historical and cultural sources

Physical culture arises consistently on relevant stages of the development of society and man.



Since the Ancient times a man feels the need to do certain physical activity that can prepare him for the conditions in which he lives. On the first place, he realizes the necessity of good physical shape. In order to be well prepared for the challenges at their workplace, the European gets the idea for the origin of the GAME of work. Sport arises to replace the war - there is a fighting spirit and a desire to win.

Sport on the Bulgarian territory through the Bronze Age - this is the period when the production of more sophisticated bronze tools begins. Though people are devoted to this activity, the game has become an integral part of everyday life. This leads to the emergence of the primitive sports: running, jumping, throwing, climbing, wrestling, boxing, fencing, horse riding, horse chariot and others. Sport becomes intrinsic physical culture to kids and young people. A system of physical and military training has been invented. In various occasions, competitions are being held occasionally as exams. In the Thracian society, thanks to the aristocracy, hunting, fishing and riding have transformed from detached economy activity into entertainment and military-physical preparation.

Intellectual development of man reached a level, in which he realizes that in order to be full-bodied, he must be in good physical shape. Reaching this conclusion, a man realises that the games he can train since the very early age, can maintain his physical activity. Games become extremely popular, which is the reason for keeping them fit until today.

From ancient essays/ works it is clear that Thracians' fighting, fistfight (boxing), chariot racing (horse riding), javelin and archery are associated with the sport's mastery, which has been transmitted from generation to generation.

Early feudalism - folk forms of physical exercise and games are typical. They consist of jumping, wrestling, boxing, variety of simple games, dancing, swimming, weightlifting, riding, etc. What they do is help people in their work and military activity. In Early feudalism Christianity and Islam implant that respectively body is a "prison for the soul" and therefore any care of it are considered sinful, it is also believed that a man is strong enough to change the nature (his personal body).

For Slavs military and physical trainings are important. Numerous wars make them develop their dexterity and skills, which is often decisive for the battle's ending. As an exercising form they often used fencing, games, dancing and fighting. Physical training forms were under the direction of the inn, for the Proto-Bulgarians, because of the numerous wars and the lack of physical preparatory camps and activities. An important part of their daily lives were shooting with bow and arrow and dogfighting.

During the Developed Feudalism knightly tournaments are being born. They are principally engaged in the higher strata of society. The seven basic "knighthood values" and disciplines in which they competed were riding, swimming, shooting, fencing, chess and writing poems.

During the Middle Ages the union between Slavs and Proto-Bulgarians (681) brought development of material and spiritual culture. Popular sport was hunting with bow and arrow. This is the time, contributing to the enrichment with social values, understanding the present and visualizing the future. Critical thinking leads to progress. Vocational education is a creative application of acquired human experience and aims at further development of the stock of knowledge, that society has accumulated through the centuries of its existence. The following time is a historically theoretical analysis by historical analogues and comparisons. International organization of physical culture and the Olympic Movement has been developed.

In the process of their development sport and games experienced ups and downs and a lot of changes. Each individual has its own purpose and function. They are of a great importance to the schooling, education, policy and the outlook of society.

2. Traditional sources of information

After extensive study among relatives (grandparents) and museum visits, we reach the conclusion that in times of injustice, lack of exercise or simply entertainment, sport was practised. All we need is Sport. Sport for communication and entertainment. Preservation of ancient traditions and promotion of sports and games is reached thanks to the common roots and values, derived from pagan dances that have been preserved to present days.

III. Classification of traditional games and sports. Characteristic and features of analyzed and described games.

1. General classification of the largest number of traditional sports in Europe.

1.1. Winter and summer sports - according to the specifics of the object physical activity are divided into 6 groups:

Group 1 – Sports which are characterized with motion and total appearance of physical and psychic qualities. Sports achievements depend on their own moving abilities.

Group 2 – sports that are based on activities connected with control of special vehicles (car, motorcycle, canoe, plane and etc.). The abilities for effective control of the vehicles is really valuable.

Group 3 – sports which involve physical activity – with special weapons (shooting, darts, etc.)

Group 4 – Sports that compare the achievements of the sportsman’ model design – model car, model plane etc.

Group 5 – sports whose content is determined by the opponent’s play (chess, table, bridge, etc.)

Group 6 – comprehensive sports composed by several sports disciplines included in various sports groups – orienting, hunting, biathlon, triathlon, decathlon, ocean sports, etc.

1.2. Individual and team sports:

1.2.1. **Individual** - disciplines in pairs, fours, etc. - For example, canoeing and rowing can be from single to a team with eight participants. Four acrobats are not a team because acrobatics has other individual formations. Even in a team competitions like “Davis Cup” tennis stays an individual sport because the result is decided by the individual matches (the same is the situation in table tennis and badminton).

1.2.2. **Team** sports are only those in which there is a team of a specified number of competitors and no other variations - such as rugby, soccer, basketball, volleyball, curling, streetball, beach volleyball.

1.2.3 Gender and sports opportunities - male and female sports

Women have practised sport from the dawn of tennis and nowadays they are more active in sports as European and English football, even traditional male sports such as wrestling and weightlifting.

Opportunities for girls and women increased significantly after 1972. The number of women-participants who practise organized sports competitions continues to grow. However, this number is still only 39%. In other countries, though, there is a better balance between men and women in the sport.

2. Characteristics and features of the game “Gechki”

“Gechki” is played with small glass or clay balls. The players dig a small hole in the ground and according to their personal abilities they determine the distance where they have to throw the ball. Both players must throw the ball and the one who throws the closest to the hole , has the right to shoot again.

Each player decides whether to shoot to the determined place or to push the opponent's ball away from the target. With each successful hit, the player gets a certain number of points - when the ball goes in the hole, it brings two points, while knocking the opponent's ball gives one point. In different regions, there are other games very similar to Game of "gechki".

In the past it was known as "Shikalki" and played with different balls. Only oak trees release secretions that hardens over the time in the form of a ball. It is "shikalki" which people used to play the game in antiquity. Resembling cork, they quickly and easily destroyed, which was the reason for replacing them with balls from another material.

Located in the Venice Lagoon, Murano island is famous for its glassware. There were created glass balls (gechki) which replaced "shikalki".

*shikalki - made by oak wood pellets

*gechki – made by glass pellets

3. Characteristics and features of the game "Chelik" (Tipcat)

"Chelik" is played with 2 sticks – big and small. The small stick is put on a specially prepared place in the ground and by using the bigger one, the player hits it in order to lift it into the air. Then the player hits the "chelik" once again to hurl it as far as possible. The player who starts the game is elected generally free and then the players take turns one by one.

Performing this action, the winner is the one who measured distance with the fewest strokes.

The "chelik" is considered as a predecessor ("grandfather") of American baseball and English cricket, because of the method of striking one object with another one.

The game has several versions and each of them is played with their own rules and conditions.

*chelik (tipcat) – that's how is called the smaller stick, which is sharpened at both ends.

4. Characteristics and features of the game "Kempo"

Bulgarian Kempo (BulKempo) includes the following elements: basic technique, form and match. Discipline is the main component that is presented in each element and at the same time it unites them. Combined with the traditional ritual, it turns "Kempo" into a path to a personal development.

This sport can be practised even by adults. It helps their physical health and it is also a way of relaxation. Kempo's rules are simple - it is forbidden to attack a fallen opponent, pricking in

his eyes and hitting in the groin. There are no specific categories, which means opponents can be different sex and age group.

In the past that sport was used for self-defence, as rayah was not allowed to own any weapon. The only “weapon” that was legal was goat horn, which was specially sharpened.

After special treatment, the goat horn becomes a deadly tool for self-defence or revenge.

The drawdown requires special training, transmitted secretly through the generations. In today's feature version rules are available, but in the past his only goal was to eliminate the enemy in any way.

World champion and founder of Bulgarian Kempo is Velin Hadzholov. He demonstrated that game for the first time on a festival of martial arts in Korea. Lead by him, the Bulgarian team was nominated with a gold medal "Honor" and the Bulgarian style was accepted as a full member of the World Union of Martial Arts.

IV. Traditional values and rules of traditional games - elements that characterize the role of traditional games in building the future of Europe.

Sportsmanship includes several criteria in themselves:

- respect for the opponent and the enemy
- respect for the rules of the game and the decisions of the judge, if necessary challenging a result, it should be done according to the rules established order;
- doping and any artificial stimulation of the body are inadmissible and should not be allowed to determine the results;
- equal opportunities - all athletes start can count on victory;
- self-control of the competitor.

These are the main principles of sportsmanship and fairness in sport. The term arises for the first time in knightly duels. In our days officially is introduced sportsmanlike conduct and oath of the Olympic Games in Antwerp in 1920. Other necessary skills to participate in traditional games are physical strength, agility, endurance, observation, practical knowledge and skills, experience, action.

V. Critical situations and risks to continuity in Europe

Every innovation hides some risks in its implementation. The continuity is possible in Europe if young people from different countries share and apply best practices from an early age among adolescents. Develop a positive attitude towards participation in European international cooperation programs would prevent risks to continuity of local, national and European level. Awareness of cultural and traditional identity (culture, values, habits and customs) of the various European countries have melted the ice and can not be avoided any critical events of European level.

VI. Suggestions and ideas for the protection and promotion of traditional sports and games in the scope of European policy.

Sport strengthens European values such as mutual respect, social inclusion and equality between men and women. In Europe there are many good examples of sports initiatives that use sport as a means to overcome differences and strengthen the sense of community. Maintaining and building the future of longtime sports and games in Europe could be achieved in the following ways:

1. Innovative continuity of traditional games through communication and promoting them in three aspects - theoretical knowledge, technical skills and practical competence through dissemination in the media.
2. Exchange of experience with as many European countries, mass distribution of the sports movement, raising educational sports activities, raising the achievements of our athletes, study, revival and promotion of selected, evolved from medieval sports - participation in European exchange programs .
3. Establish contacts with DG "Education and Culture". Art "Kempo" requires agility, speed, agility - skills that are required in the regulations cover classes in ISF. After motivating quality advantages of this Olympic sport, it can be introduced as required activity in the course and programs P.E.
4. Video of the game "Tipcat"- as a precursor to baseball and cricket - to provoke interest in the game with the purpose of preserving the ancient traditions.
5. Promotion in the media and participation in international projects help the aforementioned games to be included in the list of Olympic sports. Conversion of motor sport in the integration in Europe at all levels.

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