The Flemish fitness industry
Interorganisational relationships in a market

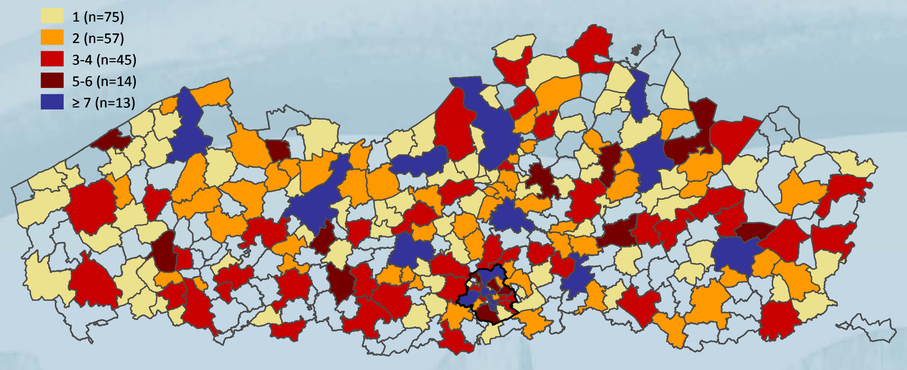
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Introduction

- State, market and voluntary sector are active in sports. The impact of the market is growing and commercial sport organisations play an increasing role.
- State, market and voluntary sector are clearly not independent in terms of cooperations and competition.
- Flemish fitness centres are market players and fitness is within the top 5 most popular sports in Flanders (Scheerder & Vos, 2009).
- Figure 1 - Distribution of fitness centres in Flanders and Brussels-Capital Region, N=582 (Scheerder & Vos, 2009)



Objectives

- Description of interorganisational relationships, in terms of cooperations (exchange of information, sports facilities, human resources, sports supply, etc.) between fitness centres and other fitness centres, sports clubs, schools, business enterprises and local sport authorities in Flanders and Brussels-Capital Region.
- Analysis of characteristics of cooperating fitness centres.

Theoretical framework

- Interorganisational relationships have six determinants: necessity, asymmetry, reciprocity, efficiency, stability and legitimacy (Oliver, 1990).
- Antecedents to the formation of partnerships are essential to partnership success. These include the partnership's purpose, the environment, the nature and culture of the involved organisations, the partners' motives, partner complementarity and fit, partnership planning, etc. (Parent & Harvey, 2009).

Material & method

- Stratified sample of fitness centres in Flanders and Brussels-Capital Region.
- Stratification by fitness supply and socioeconomic location.
- Face-to-face survey (N=117).
- Table 1 - Characteristics of Flemish fitness centres, in percentages (N=117)

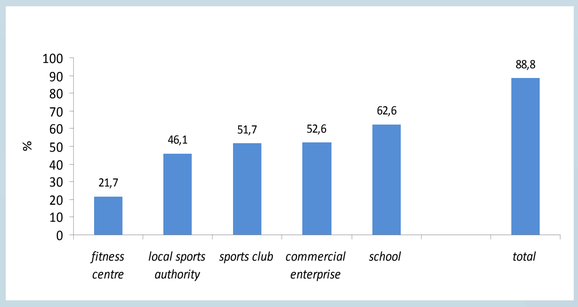
Year of foundation		
	Before 1990	22.4
	1990 - 1994	18.1
	1995 – 1999	17.2
	2000 - 2004	20.7
	2005 and later	21.6
Size		
	Small (< 300 customers)	31.3
	Medium (300 – 749 customers)	34.7
	Large (≥ 750 customers)	33.9
Type of business		
	Fitness centre	10.3
	Fitness + sports centre	56.0
	Fitness + wellness centre	6.0
	Multipurpose centre	27.6

Acknowledgements

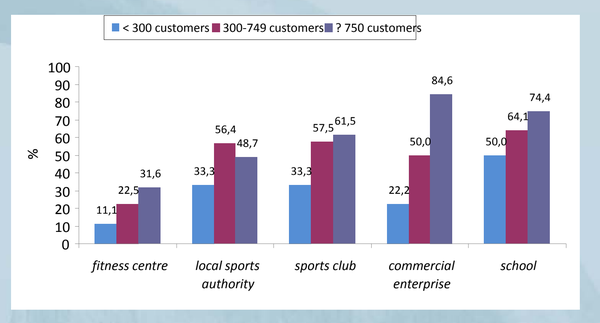
The research into fitness centres in Flanders is supported by the Flemish government within the framework of the Flemish Policy Research Centre for Culture, Youth & Sport.

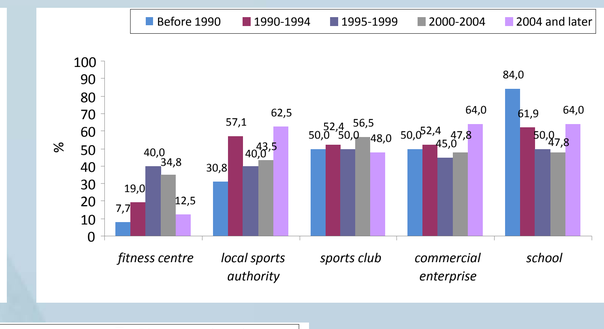
Results

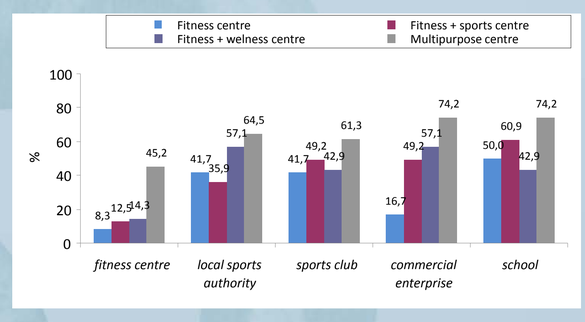
- Figure 2 - Share of fitness centres which cooperate with other institutions (N=116)



- Figure 3, 4 & 5 - Share of fitness centres which cooperate with other institutions in relation to size, year of foundation and type of business (N=116)







- Table 2 – Linear regression analysis for the number of cooperations of fitness centres with other institutions (N=112)

	Coefficient	*t-value*
Intercept	0.564 (NS)	0.95
Year of foundation		
Before 1990 (ref.)		
1990 - 1994	0.376 (NS)	0.93
1995 – 1999	-0.055 (NS)	-0.14
2000 - 2004	0.495 (NS)	1.23
2005 and later	0.316 (NS)	0.82
Size		
Small (< 300) (ref.)		
Medium (300 – 749)	1.058**	3.31
Large (≥ 750)	1.495**	4.47
Type of business		
Fitness centre (ref.)		
Fitness + sports centre	0.241 (NS)	0.56
Fitness + wellness centre	0.396 (NS)	0.59
Multipurpose centre	1.195*	2.51
Socioeconomic location		
Rural municipality (ref.)		
Urban municipality	0.324 (NS)	0.73
Industrial municipality	0.754 (NS)	1.24
Semi-urban municipality	-0.170 (NS)	-0.31
Tourist municipality	0.274 (NS)	0.32
Residential municipality	0.340 (NS)	0.74
Fitness chain		
Yes	-0.855 (NS)	-1.973
No (ref.)		
R^2	0.33	
R^2-adj	0.23	

*=p<.05; **= p<.001

Conclusions

- 90 percent of the fitness centres cooperates with at least one other institution.
- Fitness centres are more likely to cooperate with schools and commercial enterprises than with non-commercial sports providers. Cooperations with other fitness centres are limited.
- Cooperations are determined by fitness centre's size and the type of business.

References

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