

FIRST INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE DEDICATED TO THE PRACTICE OF SWIMMING BY ADULTS!



Participants from four countries, with ages between 26 and 74, were present at the: **"Swimming for Adults - sports and health"** conference, held on 4-6 September 2009, in Oradea, Romania.

It was the first international conference dedicated to practicing swimming by adults (masters swimming).

According to specialists, the lack of physical activities affect the adults' capacity for effort and, implicitly, the state of public health. It generate psycho-social problems for the whole society.

On the other hand, increasing life expectancy and the global economic crisis, as recent developments, require a repositioning of the authorities on retirement age. A recent EU recommendation mentions in this connection the need to increase the active period in the labor market, both for women, as well as for men. Under these conditions, one of the issues raised during the conference aimed at preserving the adults' health condition until pension period and ensuring active old age.

The practice of sports by adults is one recommended solution. In developed countries, this activity acquired the valences of social movements, based on an considerable involvement of individuals and authorities. This is the result of the weight that individuals give sports activities in relation to their free time, the role of the associations and clubs promoting amateurs sports, and the instruments of public policy which the authorities manage to stimulate adult involvement in sport.

Starting from the role of swimming in adult practitioners' life and in society, the conference aimed to define a theoretical perspective on masters swimming movement as a social phenomenon. Issues related to practice of sports by adults and, of which, the swimming, and the benefits brought by the practice of this sport by adults, both at the individual level, as well as collective, were highlighted during the event. And, also, the way in which the practice of sport by adults is reflected in public policies. The conference represented, also, the framework for an exchange of experience regarding the management of masters swimming movements in different countries.

Considering the way that the topic was approached, the event was an international premiere.

Organizers were MASTERS Swimming Association of Romania (IMRO) and the Association of Masters Swimming in Hungary.

Representatives of masters swimming clubs, national associations and federations, academic and representatives of public institutions attended the conference. Mr. Hans-Peter Sick, member of the Masters Committee of the German Swimming Federation (DSV), honoured the event.

For more information on the conference, contact is Mihai Lisetchi, project manager, mobile: +40-722 218 204, contact@inot-masters.ro, www.inot-masters.ro

This action took place within the "Swimming for Adults - sports and health" project, initiated by Romania MASTERS Swimming Association (IMRO) and developed in partnership with Masters Swimming Association of Hungary, the Directorate for Sport of Timis County, Department of Physical Education and Sports of the West University of Timisoara and Agency for Information and Development of NGOs (AID-ONG).

The project is funded by the European Union and the Romanian Government, through the Romania-Hungary cross border cooperation program, PHARE CBC 2006.

The conference represented an excellent opportunity to relate the public and private institutions concerned with development of the sport by adults as one of the solutions to strengthen health, individually and collectively. The event was intended, at the same time, as an opening space for national and international cooperation on this issue.

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