

THE INTERNATIONALIZATION OF THE ROMANIAN SPORT IN THE LAST CENTURY

Internaționalizarea sportului românesc în ultimul secol

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Abstract

Background. The emergence, the development and the affiliation of the Romanian sports structures (such as the Romanian Olympic Committee, the sports federations, the Sports Associations) to similar international organizations have created the favorable framework for the modernization and adaptation of sporting and competitive activity within the sports branches in accordance with international regulation.

The training of specialists (coaches, medical doctors, scientific researchers, psychologists etc.) as well as the development of the infrastructure was also targeted, which contributed to the involvement of the Romanian athletes in the European and World Competitions.

The Romania's integration into the systems of international sports competitions took place in the first decades of the 20th century, with its debut at the Summer Olympics in 1924.

An important contribution to the affirmation of the Romanian sport at the world level was brought by the representatives of the Romanian sports, elected in the governing structures and in the committees of the international sports organizations (.

In the following decades of the 20th century, Romania's international sports exchanges have enjoyed a wide development and diversification, both at sports clubs and at sports federations level, through sports activities organized in the country at all levels of sports and with external correspondence. The involvement of many Romanian cities in the organization of international sports events has also increased.

An important contribution of Romania to the promotion of sport in the world was the organization of many European and world competitions, as well as meetings of international sports organizations in all these years. The '80s and '90s represent the culmination of Romanian sport, in terms of the active federations and sports clubs, but especially of the impressive number of titles and medals obtained in international sports competitions.

Objectives. The paper aims to highlight the participation, involvement and permanent collaboration of all Romanian sports structures in the last century, in order to develop and diversify their relations with international forums, as well as the progress of the Romanian sport on a global level.

Methods. The research is an ascertaining type, aiming to highlight Romania's international evolution in the last century, with emphasis on its results in the representative sports competition: the modern Olympic Games.

Results. The international evolution of Romanian sports in the last century is evidenced by the active attendance of this country in the important international competitions, materialized in results that have known both the apogee and the decline, the essential data that contribute to the formation of the history of Romanian sport in this era.

Conclusion. Through the constant participation in European, World and Olympic Games championships, but especially through the achievement of remarkable results over time, Romania has become world-renowned as one of the countries with a real sporting potential, the craftsmanship and the record of the athletes making an extraordinary image of the country.

At the same time, Romania has proved its constructive vocation in the international sporting life, contributing to the development of sports relations between nations, to the progress of various areas of contemporary sport, to the strengthening of the unity of the international Olympic and sports movement.

Keywords: Romanian Sport, Internalization, Last Century.

Introduction

Romania is known in the world as one of the countries with great sports potential. For nearly half a century, Romanian athletes have consistently been among the protagonists of the Olympic Games, the World Championships, the European Championships, other international competitions held in countries on all continents, making an exceptional sporting image of the country through their craftsmanship.

Romania has also demonstrated its constructive vocation in international sporting life, contributing to the development of sports relations among nations, to the progress of various areas of contemporary sport, to the strengthening of the unity of the Olympic movement.

The potential of Romanian sport, proved both in the athletes' performances and in the training of the specialists who contributed to the achievement of these performances, is at the basis of the development and diversification of the relations of the Romanian sports organizations with the international forums.

Through these relationships, it is possible to integrate Romanian sports organizations into existing international sports structures and to participate in their activities, as well as to develop the relationships with athletes from different countries.

Accession of Romanian sports structures to international sports organizations

The accession of Romanian sports structures to international sports organizations was determined and inspired by the emergence of international sports organizations and federations at the end of the 19th century. In 1894, the International Olympic Committee was established.

The Romanian Olympic Committee was established in 1914 and was immediately recognized by the CIO.

Between the 3rd and 4th decades, the affiliation process was intense, so that at the end of the forties, over 34 national sports structures in Romania were affiliated to international organizations.

In 1966, Romania was affiliated to 45 international organizations and sports federations, and in 1980 to 70 structures such as: the International Council for Physical Education and Sports Science, the International Council for Health, Physical Education and Recreation, the International Society for Sports Psychology, The International Committee for Sport Sociology, etc.

In 2000, sports organizations and federations in Romania were affiliated with more than 180 international and European sports organizations and federations and about 30 regional sports organizations. Also, several Romanian specialists were members of over 10 professional international sports organizations.

An important contribution to the affirmation of the Romanian sport at the international level was also brought by the elected Romanians in the governing structures and in the committees of the international sports organizations.

The first Romanian personality was elected as a member CIO in 1899 - Prince George Bibescu.



Fig. 1. George Gh. Bibescu (1834 - 1902), son of Prince of Wallachia, Gheorghe Bibescu

After 100 years, more than 330 Romanian specialists were elected to various positions in more than 100 organizations and the International Sports Federations.

Romania's participation in international sports competitions

Romania's integration into the system of the world sports competitions took place between the 20s and the 30s, after the affiliation of our country's sports structures to the international ones.

In the third and fourth decades, the first Romanian participations took place in World and European Championships on sports disciplines.

After the second World War (especially since the 1950), Romania has joined the entire international competition system: World and European Championships for seniors, juniors and youth, World and European Cups, official competitions between clubs, etc.

In this half century, Romania has achieved great international results: numerous Olympic, European and World championship titles, world Olympic and European Olympic recordings in various sports, winners of European Inter-Cups and the Grand Prix.

Following the international studies, the world's best Romanian athletes were declared:

- Iolanda Balaş - Athletics (1964-1965);
- Ilie Năstase - Tennis (1972);
- Nadia Comăneci - Gymnastics (1976) and the best athletes of the 20th century (1999);
- Gabriela Szabo - Athletics (1999);
- Simona Halep - Tennis - no. 1 ATP (2017)

An important contribution of Romania to the promotion of sport in the world is the organization of numerous international competitions and meetings. Among the first international sporting events held in Romania are highlighted in the 1930s the aeronautical competitions, followed by over 40 World Championships, over 65 European Championships, the 1951 Winter World University Games, the Summer University World Games (1981) and many other international competitions.

The first international competition organized in Romania, financially and politically, took place in 1981 in Bucharest - the World University Games or the Summer Universiade, where participated 2912 students from 86 countries. In total, Romania won 67 medals, 30 gold, 17 silver and 20 bronze and the second place after the USSR. Over 5000 Romanian students were volunteers, stadiums, pools and sports halls have been upgraded and modernized, the Student Campus Regie has also been upgraded.



Fig. 2. The opening ceremony of the Summer Universiade, Bucharest, 1981

Among the last major competitions organized by Romania in recent years are:

- Europa League Final at Football, Bucharest 2012;
- European Aerobic Gymnastics Championship, Bucharest 2012;
- The 11th Winter European Youth Olympic Festival (FOTE) - Braşov 2013;
- European Artistic Gymnastics Championship - Cluj-Napoca, 2017.

Romania's participation in the Modern Olympic Games

The Modern Summer Olympic Games - the 8th edition, Paris 1924: 51 - Romanian athletes, participants in four sports - football, rugby, tennis and shooting.

The first medal obtained at the JO: Bronze-Rugby

Modern Olympic Summer Games – Berlin 1936: 71 - Romanian athletes in 8 sports.

- The first silver medal obtained by Romania at the JO: Equestrian.

First major participation in the Summer Olympic Games -, Helsinki 1952: 128 - Romanian athletes participating in 10 sports. Romania won 4 medals.

- The first gold medal achieved by Romania at the Olympic Games: Shooting.

Romania's Best Ranking at the Modern Summer Olympics - Montreal 1976: 166 - Romanian athletes participating in 11 sports. Romania ranks 5th in the medal standings. Romania won 27 medals, of which 4 gold medals.

The most controversial Modern Summer Olympics - Los Angeles 1984: 127 - Romanian athletes participating in 12 sports. Romania ranks second in the medal standings. Romania won 53 medals: 20 gold medals, 16 silver medals, 17 bronze medals.

The weakest participation in the Modern Summer Olympic Games - Rio 2016: 96 - Romanian athletes in 15 sports. Romania ranked 47th in the medal standings. Romania won 4 medals:

- 1 gold medal: Fencing;
- 1 silver medal: Tennis;
- 2 bronze medals: Canoeing, Fighting.

The best Romanian medalists at the Olympic Games:

1. Nadia Comăneci - Gymnastics - 9 medals: 5 gold, 3 silver, 1 bronze
2. Elisabeta Lipa - Rowing - 8 medals: 5 gold, 2 silver, 1 bronze
3. Georgeta Damian - Rowing - 6 medals: 5 gold, 1 bronze
4. Ivan Patzaichin - Rowing: 4 gold, 3 silver

Interpretation of data

Although there are constant results in obtaining medals over the years, although the results obtained are not directly proportional to the number of participants: for example: 239 Romanian athletes participated at the Moscow Olympics (1980) and won 25 medals, while 62 athletes took part in the Seoul Olympics (1988) and won 24 medals.

The most prolific participation of Romania in terms of the medals obtained took place at Los Angeles (1984), 53 medals. The results were influenced, of course, by the boycott of these Olympic Games by the socialist countries under the influence of the USSR.

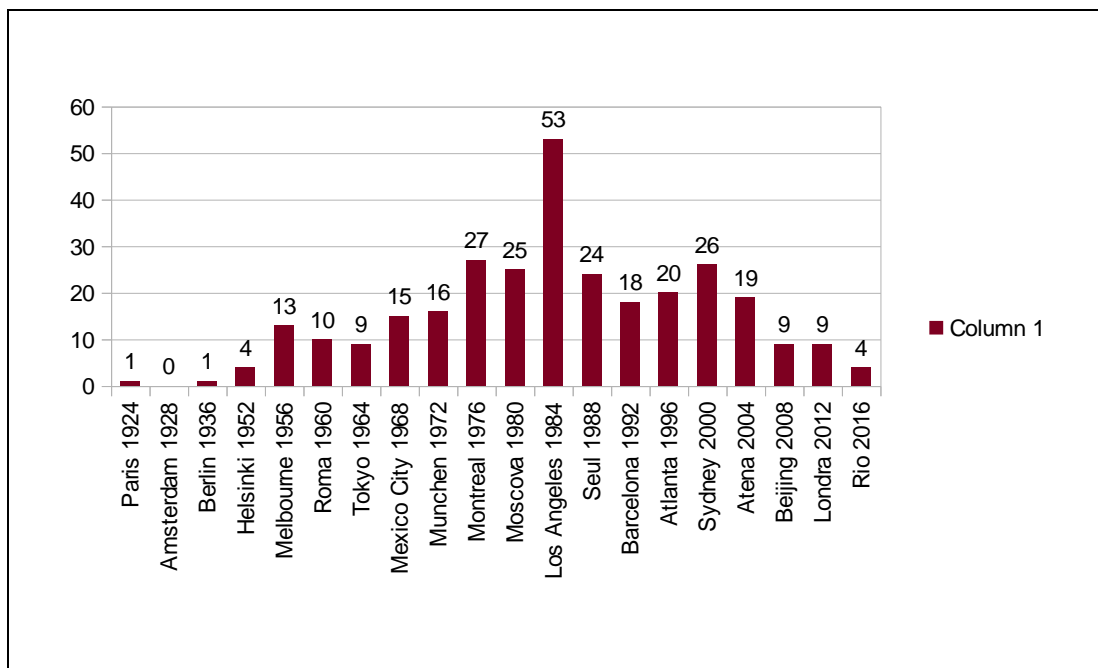


Fig. 3. Medals won by Romania to the Olympic Games

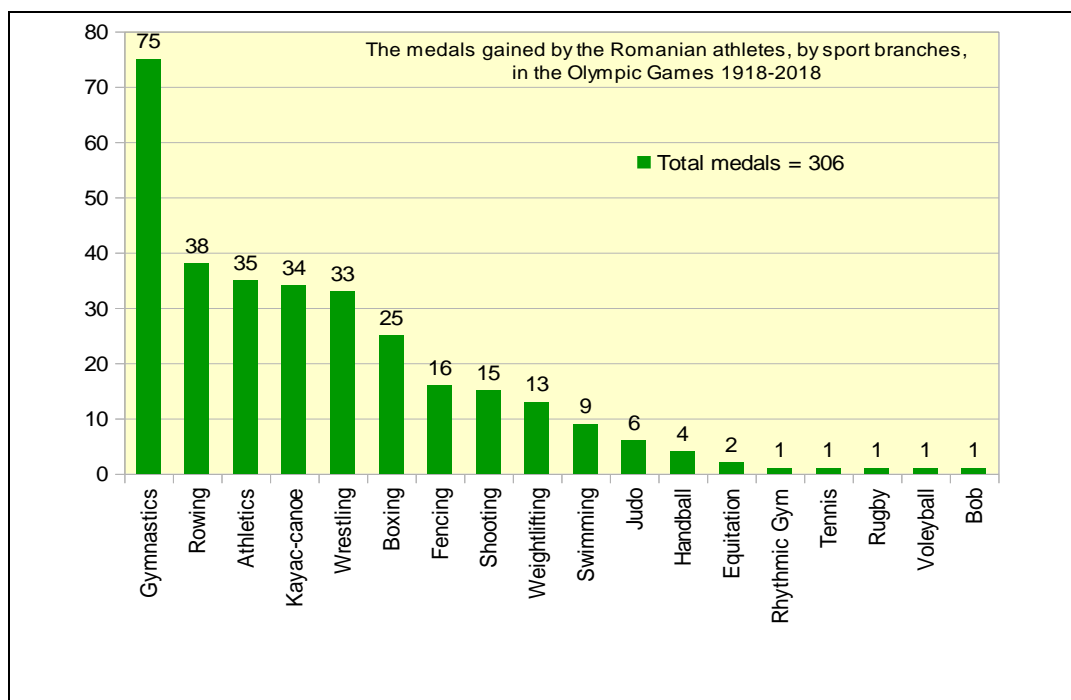


Fig. 4. Medals won by Romania to the Olympic Games by sport branches

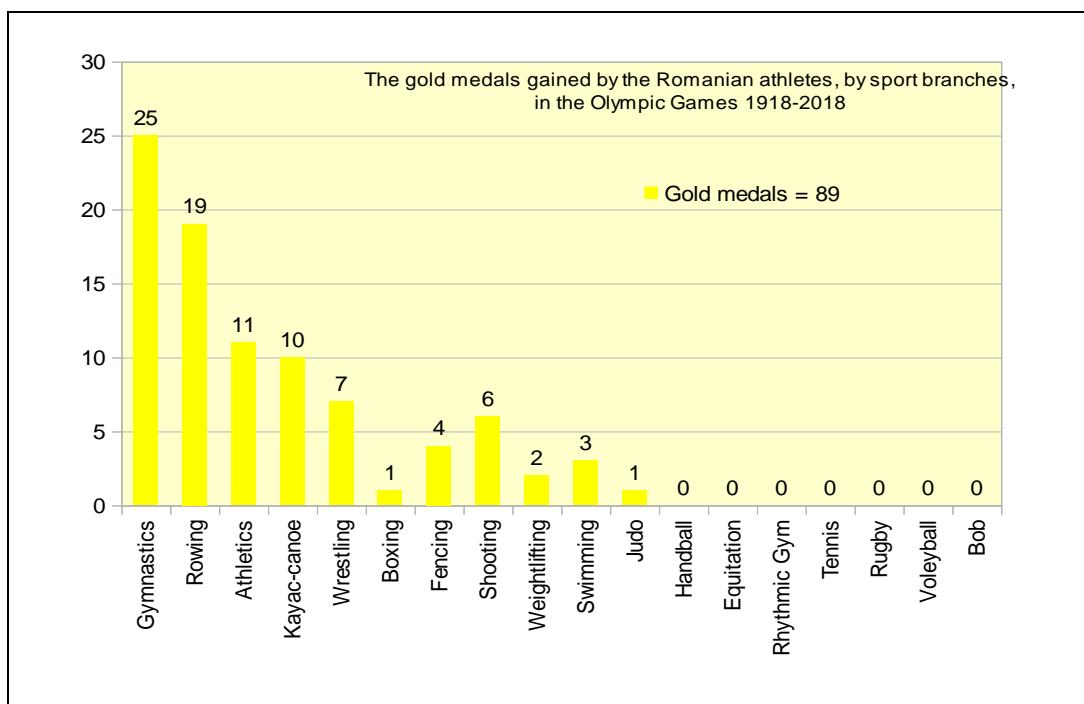


Fig. 5. Gold medals won by Romanian athletes to the Olympic Games

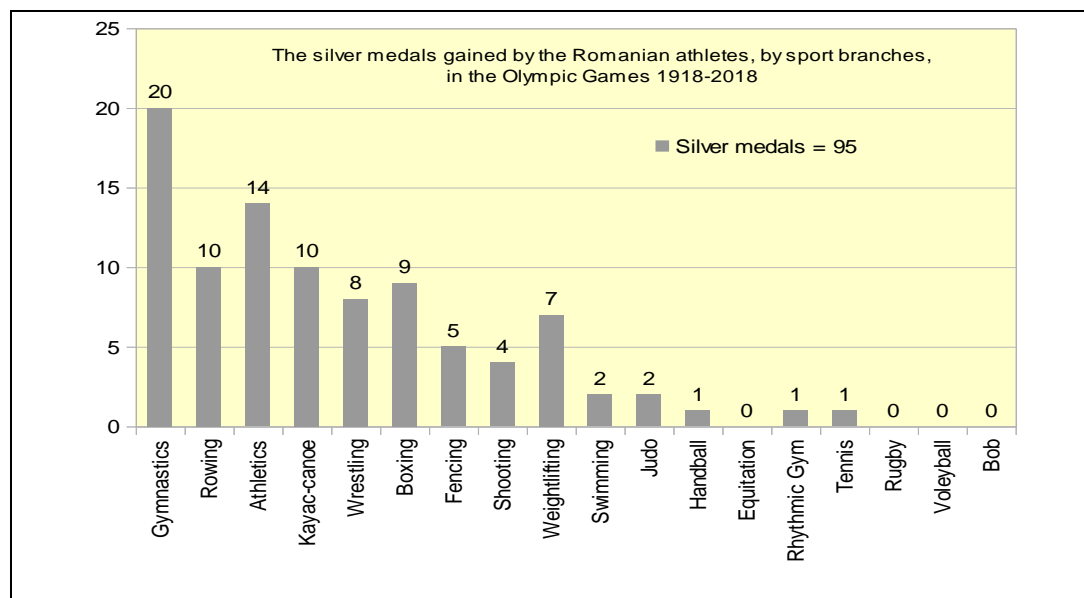


Fig. 6. Silver medals won by Romanian athletes to the Olympic Games

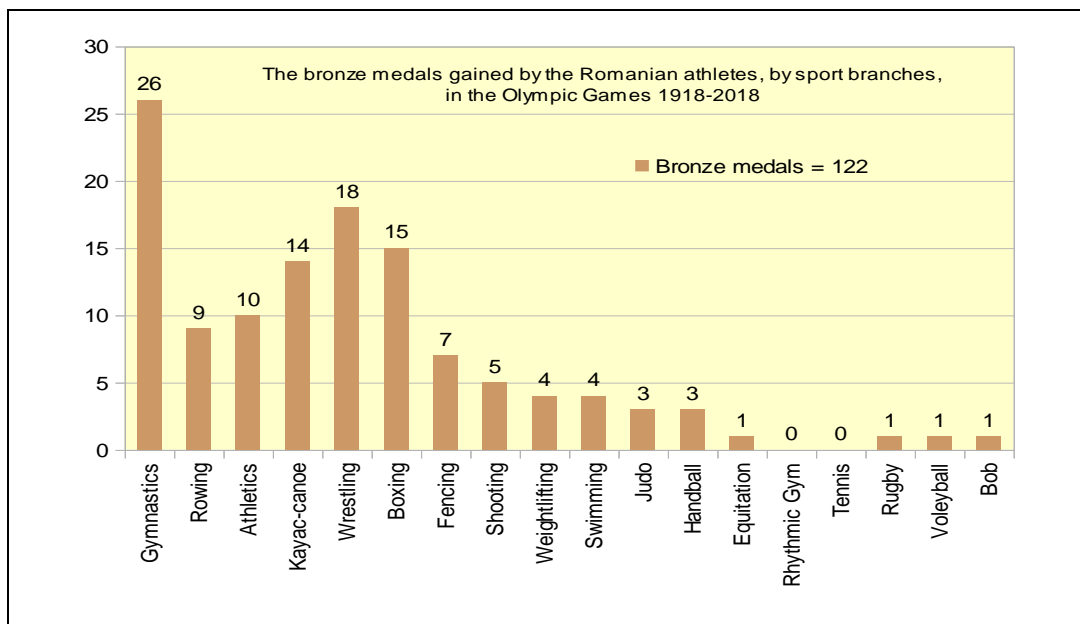


Fig. 7. Bronze medals won by Romanian athletes to the Olympic Games

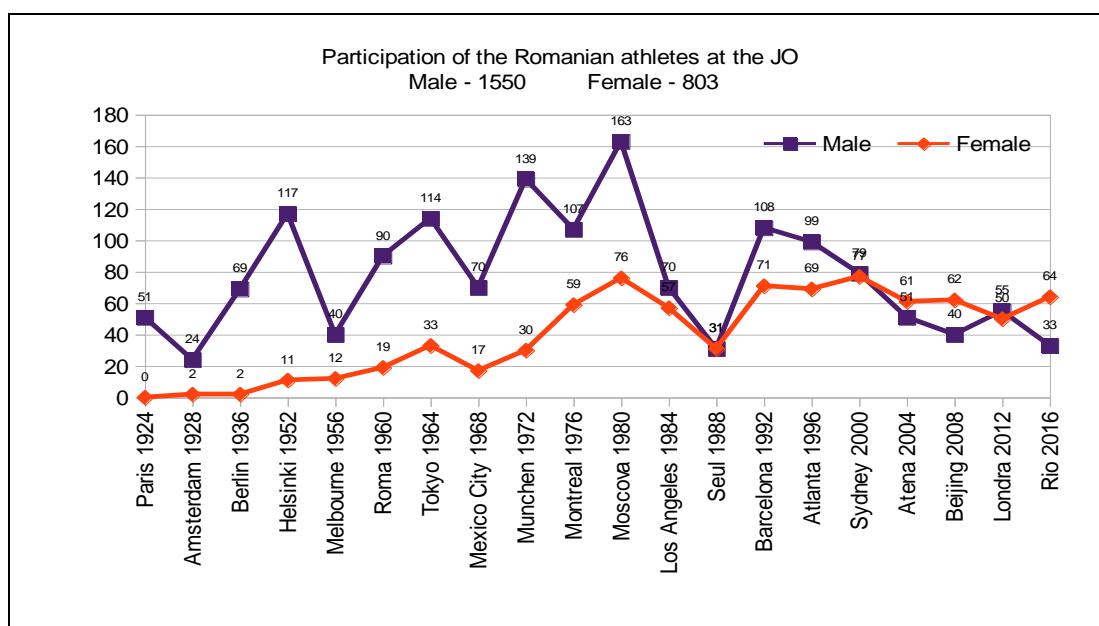


Fig. 8. Participation of the Romanian athletes to the Olympic Games

Over the past decade, there has been a dramatic decrease in the medals earned by Romanian athletes and the number of participants, many of them being motivated by the lower interest in practicing performance sports, poor training conditions, lower involvement of the institutions in the development of the Romanian sport at the level of children and junior, the promotion of practicing private sport since the 1990s.

Also, the budget allocated to the COR for the training and participation of athletes at the JO is extremely low, of 6.35 million euros in 2011, a budget 100 times smaller than England (Căliman, C. et al, (2011).

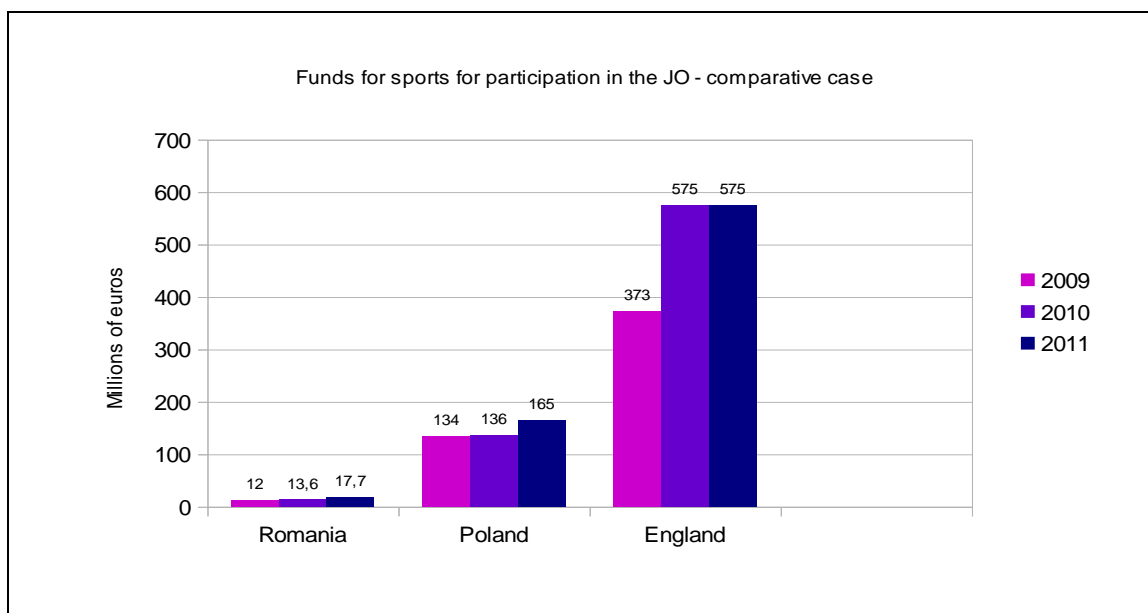


Fig. 9. Financing sport for participation at the Olympic Games – comparative case: Romania – Poland – England (Căliman, C. et al, 2011)

Conclusions

The sport became and it continues to be a major phenomenon for the international relations. By its increasing effects it is one of the most important cases from the past century to nowadays. The sportive competitions executed previously by a very small minority has influence almost all the world before the Olympic Games. The sport has been a decisive instrument in national and international politics.

The sport can be defined as a totality of activities realized in order to affect positively social and moral benefits as well as physical benefits. It is based on common training and is the mirror of mind and level of education of people. (Boyacıoğlu, Oğuz, 2016).

For Romania, the internationalization of sport has been and continues to be the most visible and real means of developing and modernizing the infrastructure in line with world requirements, developing relationships with international sports organizations, promoting the Romanian sport and its values in the world.

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