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MASTER THESIS

Sport Diplomacy: A Tool for Foreign Policy

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Faculty of Economics and Marketing

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Master Thesis

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Abstract

The current master thesis attempts to make a connection between sports, diplomacy and marketing tools to facilitate foreign policy practice, where sport diplomacy could act as the vehicle for the achievement of foreign policy objectives, using marketing tools and techniques.

An explanatory research approach was followed, including both qualitative (interviews) and quantitative (questionnaires) research methods, together with marketing tools such as the SWOT and PESTLE analyses. The use of different research methods and techniques used allowed for triangulation of data, increasing the trustworthiness of the results (Guba, 1981, Shenton, 2004, Thomas & Nelson, 2001).

Forty-eight participants (*M*age = 36.52, *SD* = 7.39 years) responded to two 5-point Lykert-type scale questionnaires, based on the work of Bainvel (2005) and Feizabadi, Delgado, Khabiri, Sajjadi and Alidoust (2015). Furthermore, eleven individual interviews and informal discussions (*M*age = 46.27, *SD* = 12.56 years) were conducted to explore the different possible aspects of sport diplomacy.

Results indicated that sport could be used both as a political instrument (*M* = 4.01, *SD* = 0.71) and diplomatic tool (*M* = 4.20, *SD* = 0.77), as well as a social tool (*M* = 3.63, *SD* = 0.60) for integration and economic development in a diverse political, cultural and geographical context.

In summary, ten specific recommendations for the development and future direction of sport diplomacy strategies are suggested. Furthermore, the current master thesis gives specific directions for future studies and research in the field of sport diplomacy and foreign policy. It lays the foundation for the future use of sport diplomacy as a tool for the promotion of foreign policy, as sport diplomacy has the ability to communicate with a wider audience, increasing people-to-people contacts, facilitating foreign policy and diplomatic practices in developing international relations, promoting economic, trade, business and investment cooperation, as well as cultural, educational and employment opportunities.

Περίληψη

Η παρούσα μεταπτυχιακή διατριβή επιχειρεί να συνδυάσει τον αθλητισμό, τη διπλωματία και εργαλεία μάρκετινγκ για την ενίσχυση της άσκησης εξωτερικής πολιτικής, όπου η αθλητική διπλωματία θα μπορούσε να αποτελέσει το όχημα για την επίτευξη των στόχων της εξωτερικής πολιτικής, με τη χρήση εργαλείων και τεχνικών μάρκετινγκ.

Η ερευνητική προσέγγιση, συμπεριέλαβε τόσο ποιοτικές (συνεντεύξεις), όσο και ποσοτικές (ερωτηματολόγια) μεθόδους έρευνας, μαζί με εργαλεία μάρκετινγκ όπως οι μέθοδοι SWOT και PESTLE. Η χρήση διαφορετικών ερευνητικών μεθόδων και τεχνικών επέτρεψε την τριγωνοποίηση των δεδομένων, αυξάνοντας την αξιοπιστία των αποτελεσμάτων (Guba, 1981, Shenton, 2004, Thomas & Nelson, 2001).

Σαράντα-οκτώ άτομα (*Μηλικία* = 36.52, *SD* = 7.39 χρόνια) ανταποκρίθηκαν σε δύο ερωτηματολόγια με κλίμακα 5-σημείων, βασισμένα στις εργασίες των Bainvel (2005) και Feizabadi, Delgado, Khabiri, Sajjadi και Alidoust (2015). Επιπλέον, έντεκα συνεντεύξεις και ανεπίσημες συζητήσεις (*Μηλικία* = 46.27, *SD* = 12.56 χρόνια) πραγματοποιήθηκαν εξετάζοντας τις διάφορες πτυχές της αθλητικής διπλωματίας.

Τα αποτελέσματα κατέδειξαν ότι ο αθλητισμός θα μπορούσε να χρησιμοποιηθεί ως πολιτικό μέσο (*M* = 4.01, *SD* = 0.71) και διπλωματικό εργαλείο (*M* = 4.20, *SD* = 0.77), καθώς και ως κοινωνικό εργαλείο (*M* = 3.63, *SD* = 0.60) για την κοινωνική ένταξη και την οικονομική ανάπτυξη, σε ένα ευρύ πολιτικό, πολιτισμικό και γεωγραφικό πλαίσιο.

Συμπερασματικά, προτείνονται δέκα συγκεκριμένες εισηγήσεις για την ανάπτυξη και μελλοντική κατεύθυνση στρατηγικών αθλητικής διπλωματίας. Ακόμη, η μεταπτυχιακή διατριβή προτείνει συγκεκριμένες κατευθύνσεις για μελέτη και έρευνα στους τομείς της αθλητικής διπλωματίας και της εξωτερικής πολιτικής. Θέτει τα θεμέλια για τη μελλοντική χρήση της αθλητικής διπλωματίας ως εργαλείο προώθησης της εξωτερικής πολιτικής, αφού η αθλητική διπλωματία έχει τη δυνατότητα να επικοινωνήσει με ένα ευρύτερο ακροατήριο, αυξάνοντας της επαφές σε ατομικό επίπεδο, ενισχύοντας την εξωτερική πολιτική και τις διπλωματικές πρακτικές στην ανάπτυξη διεθνών σχέσεων, προωθώντας την οικονομική, εμπορική, επιχειρηματική και επενδυτική συνεργασία, καθώς και τις πολιτιστικές, εκπαιδευτικές και εργασιακές ευκαιρίες.

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Chapter 1
Introduction

"Sport has the power to change the world. It has the power to inspire, it has the power to unite people in a way that little else does" (Mandela, 2000)

Although the term sport diplomacy might be relatively new, it is dated back to the 9th century BC and the first Olympic Games. The concept of the Olympic Truce is more relevant than ever in today's world, where conflicts within and in between nations has become part of everyday life. The Olympic Truce is still applicable today and is highly related to the modern Olympic Games and other sporting events. Therefore, the relation between diplomacy and sports is strongly significant in today's world, where politics, culture, ideas and sport interact and influence international relations (Deos, 2013).

According to Feizabadi, Delgado, Khabiri, Sajjadi and Alidoust (2015) sport is becoming a vehicle for economic development, political agendas and diplomatic tactics. Sport could be used as a diplomatic tool across national, cultural, non-governmental and media domains, as well as an indirect tool for achieving foreign policy objectives. Consequently, soft power such as cultural and sport exchanges could be used by political leaders and diplomats to resolve conflicts and promote relationships, exceeding traditional boundaries of international relations (Feizabadi et al., 2015).

Another reason for the interaction and integration of diplomacy and sport is globalization. Both athletes and politicians are moving in a space of public awareness focusing on their roles and responsibilities within cultural and political spheres (Feizabadi et al., 2015). Sport and diplomacy are attracted by each other through their influence on people (i.e. citizens, voters, consumers). Diplomats and athletes are competing in races where the result is measurable as well as observable and it draws

the audience attention regardless of the competition's location (Feizabadi et al., 2015, Markovits & Rensmann, 2010).

Despite the longstanding association between sport and politics, the role of sport has been downgraded in the past and the interaction of the two has been relatively underexplored (EU Commission, 2016a, Murray & Pigman, 2014).

1.1 Research Aim / Purpose

The main purpose of the current master thesis is to identify best practices in sport diplomacy and to suggest future directions for the practice of sport diplomacy using marketing tools and techniques. These could act as a guide for governments to design their own sport diplomacy strategies.

1.2 Main Research Questions

The current master thesis attempts to address a series of research questions, including:

1. How could sports be used in the diplomatic practice to facilitate international relations, trade, economic and business cooperation, both at bilateral and multilateral levels?
2. How could foreign policy be developed and promoted through sports?
3. How could sport diplomacy act complementary to other forms of diplomacy, such as cultural and public diplomacy?
4. Further development of sport diplomacy and the use of sports in shaping a country's foreign policy and diplomatic practice.

1.3 Thesis' Contribution and Importance

The current master thesis contributes to the development of knowledge regarding sport diplomacy. It highlights the use of marketing in diplomacy and makes specific recommendations for the development of strategic planning for governments to achieve their country's priorities and objectives.

It recognizes the role of sport diplomacy not only as a political tool for furthering international relations, but also as a social tool for the development of economic, trade and business cooperation , as well as for investment and employment opportunities.

1.4 Research Approach

For the realization of this master thesis both qualitative and quantitative research methods were used, increasing the trustworthiness of the results through triangulation of data (Shenton, 2004). Professionals in the field of foreign policy (diplomats, trade counselors, government officials) and sport practitioners (sport officials, coaches, athletes) participated in the study.

Data was collected through individual interviews and informal discussions, as well as through two 5-point Likert-type scale questionnaires based on the work of Bainvel (2005) and Feizabadi et al. (2015). Furthermore, marketing tools such as the SWOT and the PESTLE analyses were used to evaluate the environment, in which sport diplomacy could be used, as it could be affected by both external and internal factors.

1.5 Outline of the Thesis

The master thesis is developed over six chapters.

Following the current Chapter (Chapter 1 – Introduction), Chapter 2 presents the relevant literature review, establishing the connection between sport, diplomacy and marketing.

Chapter 3 describes the methodology followed for the collection and analysis of data, while in Chapter 4 the results are presented using tables and figures.

Chapter 5 discusses the main findings of the thesis supported with literature and anecdotal evidences, making specific recommendations for future use and direction of sport diplomacy. Finally, in Chapter 6 limitations of the current master thesis are recognized, recommendations for future studies are suggested and a general conclusion of the master thesis is provided.

Chapter 2
Literature Review

The association between sports and politics has been known for centuries (Murray, 2013, Murray & Pigman, 2014). The interaction between sports and diplomacy, however, has been relatively under explored (Murray & Pigman, 2014).

Diplomacy has been defined as "the conduct of relations between sovereign states and other entities with standing in world politics by official agents and by peaceful means" (Bull, 2012: 156). Murray (2013:5) stated that sport diplomacy "involves representative and diplomatic activities undertaken by sports people on behalf of and in conjunction with, their governments across a number of venues, on and off the proverbial pitch". Its practice is supported by traditional diplomacy together with the use of sporting events and sport people aiming to inform, engage and create a positive image abroad, shaping the perception of foreign organizations and public, in order to achieve the sending government's policy objectives (Murray, 2013). Sport is often view as part of cultural or public diplomacy (Mabillard & Jadi, 2011, Murray, 2013).

Marketing on the other hand, involves the identification and satisfaction of commercially-centric human and social needs and can be described both as a science and an art, and it is carefully planned and executed using state-of-the-art tools and techniques (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Commercial interest and foreign policy have played a central role to each other. Their interaction is becoming more important and intense and is often difficult to manage and comprehend by the public (Garten, 1997).

Marketing could therefore act as a tool-box for sport diplomacy to be the vehicle for the realization of a country's foreign policy. Therefore, the current master thesis attempts to suggest ways of practicing foreign policy through sport diplomacy, using marketing tools such as the SWOT and PESTLE analyses (Daft, 2010, Kaplan & Norton, 2008), as

they provide information for strategy development (Kaplan & Norton, 2008, Shinno, Yoshioka, Marpaung, & Hachiga, 2006).

2.1 Marketing Strategies

Effective marketing strategies consist of a combination of marketing techniques working together, in order to establish a company's brand, minimise sales resistance, creating interest and desire for its product or service and cater all stakeholder's interests (Goyat, 2011).

However, organizations phase challenges in connecting with everyone in large, broad or diverse markets. As a result, in order to compete more effectively, organizations focus on populations within their capacity who can be satisfied, instead of scattering their marketing efforts (Goyat, 2011). Therefore, companies are creating a customer-centric marketing strategy by enhancing target marketing (Hunt, 2011). To develop effective target marketing, three basic elements should be considered, known as the "STP" of marketing: a) market segmentation, b) market targeting, and c) market positioning (Jaman, 2012, Lynn, 2011, Richa 2014).

2.1.1 Market Segmentation

The brake down of the market into homogeneous customers' groups according to their similar characteristics, needs and wants, is known as market segmentation (Goyat, 2011, Jaman, 2012, Liu, Ram, Lusch, & Brusco, 2010, Richa, 2014). The purpose of segmentation is to identify the appropriate market segments that will be targeted in order for a company to gain a competitive advantage within that segment (Goyat, 2011, Thomas, 2017). Segments could be defined taking into consideration behavioural responses of the customers, such as usage occasions and benefits, and how different characteristics are related to each customer-response segment (Goyat, 2011).

Regardless of the approach used, the objective is to adjust the marketing program according to the identified customer differences. In order to identify alternatives, four major segmentation variables have been identified, namely: geographic, demographic, psychological and behavioural segmentations (Fernández-Hernández, León, Arana, & Díaz-Pére, 2016, Goyat, 2011). Similarly Foreign Ministries or Diplomatic Mission adapt

their objectives and practices according to their audience and the countries they operate in.

2.1.1.1 Geographic Segmentation

Geographic segmentation is based on customer's location (Richa, 2014, Jaman, 2012). It divides the market into geographical units, such as continents, countries, region or even cities and neighbourhoods. A company can chose to operate in one or more geographic areas or in all, taking into account local variations (Fernández-Hernández et al., 2016, Wind, Douglas, & Perlmutter, 1973).

A Diplomatic Mission's operating segments are defined by geographic regions or different countries. They could range from continent to continent or even from country to country and could also include honorary consulates or representation offices.

However, concentrating only on geographic segmentation has its backfalls as even in small locations, people could have different needs and wants (Jaman, 2012). Therefore, geographic segmentation could be combined with other forms of segmentation, such as demographic, in order to be more effective.

2.1.1.2 Demographic Segmentation

Demographic segmentation considers variables such as age, gender, religion, nationality, generation, income, occupation and social class (Jaman, 2012, Goyat, 2011, Richa, 2014, Thomas, 2017). These variables affect social traits and roles, which influence consumer behaviour at different times during the life-cycle (Martins & Brooks, 2010).

2.1.1.3 Psychographic Segmentation

In psychographic segmentation, customers are identified based on personal traits, values, lifestyle and preferences (Yankelovich & Meer, 2006). As a result, people within the same demographic segment could differ from each other in relation to their beliefs and attitudes (Goyat, 2011). Therefore, organizations could benefit by providing customers specific products and services. The same could apply to people from different countries or regions. Therefore, diplomatic missions would benefit by providing tailor-made programs or strategies.

2.1.1.4 Behavioural Segmentation

In addition and complementary to psychographic segmentation, behavioural segmentation separate people according to their knowledge, attitude and use or response to the product (Jaman, 2012, Richa, 2014).

Behavioural segmentation includes variables such as the needs and benefits a person is looking for, decision factors, as well as user and usage related variables. People's awareness, loyalty status and attitudes towards different products/outcomes are also considered (Richa, 2014). Furthermore, the combination of different behavioural bases could provide a more cohesive and comprehensive picture of the market and its segments (Fernández-Hernández et al., 2016).

A Foreign Ministry or Diplomatic Mission could facilitate both its behavioural and psychometric segmentation techniques by collecting and analysing data through an evidence based approach, such as media, visits, existing data sets and statistics, sponsorships and exchange programs data collection (Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2015). As a result, similarly to marketers, diplomatic agents could use all of the above variables, independently or in combination, along with operating variables, purchasing approaches and situational factors, while performing market segmentation (Fernández-Hernández et al., 2016).

2.1.2 Market Targeting

Following identification of the different market segments, an organization would have to decide how many and which segments to target (Jaman, 2012, Richa, 2014). Marketers combine a number of variables in their effort to identify smaller and well-defined target groups (Dillon & Mukherjee, 2006, Goyat, 2011).

As a result, a needs-based market segmentation approach has been adopted by market researches, which lead to the seven-step approach proposed by Roger Best (2013), described in table 1.

However, for market segments to be useful, they should be measurable, substantial, accessible, differentiable and actionable (Goyat, 2011, Kotler & Keller, 2016), as described in table 2 below.

Table 1. Steps in the segmentation process (Best, 2013).

	Description
1. **Needs-Based Segmentation**	Group customers into segments based on similar needs and benefits sought by customers in solving a particular consumption problem.
2. **Segment Identification**	For each needs-based segment, determine which demographics, lifestyles, and usage behaviors make the segment distinct and identifiable (actionable).
3. **Segment Attractiveness**	Using predetermined segment attractiveness criteria (such as market growth, competitive intensity, and market access), determine the overall attractiveness of each segment.
4. **Segment Profitability**	Determine segment profitability.
5. **Segment Positioning**	For each segment, create a "value" proposition and product-price positioning strategy based on that segment's unique customer needs and characteristics.
6. **Segment "Acid Test"**	Create "segment storyboard" to test the attractiveness of each segment's positioning strategy.
7. **Marketing-Mix Strategy**	Expand segment positioning strategy to include all aspects of the marketing mix: product, price, promotion, and place.

Table 2. Effective segmentation criteria.

	Description
1. **Measurable**	The size, purchasing power and characteristics of the segments can be measured.
2. **Substantial**	The segments are large and profitable enough to serve.
3. **Accessible**	The segments can be effectively reached and served.
4. **Differentiable**	The segments are conceptually distinguishable and respond differently to different marketing-mix elements and programs.
5. **Actionable**	Effective programs can be formulated for attracting and serving the segments.

While evaluating market segments, organizations take into consideration the overall attractiveness of the segment, as well as their resources and objectives (Dillon & Mukherjee, 2006). Furthermore, marketers' or diplomats' decisions can be guided by a continuum of segmentation levels ranging from full market coverage to individual segment. Markets can be therefore targeted at four main levels: mass (full market coverage), multiple segments, single segment and individuals (Kotler & Keller, 2016).

The full market coverage or mass targeting approach, can be undertaken only by large firms as this approach attempt to serve all different customer groups with all products they may require. However, many organizations adopt multiple segments targeting, as different groups of customers possess different needs and wants. For example, multiple segments could be targeted in terms of different demographic groups, which seek the same benefit (Kotler & Keller, 2016).

On the other hand, with single segment targeting, the organization concentrates to a particular segment. Concentrated marketing allows an organization to achieve deep knowledge of the segment's needs and to accomplish a strong market presence (Baker, 2014, Bhasin, 2016). The organization by specializing its production, distribution and promotion, enjoys operating economies. Another more narrowly defined group that seeks distinctive mix of benefits within a segment is the niche. Niches are usually identified by dividing a segment into sub-segments specializing on the needs and wants of the specific group (Huh & Singh, 2007, Kotler & Keller, 2016).

Finally, the ultimate level of segmentation leads to individual targeting. Therefore, the ability of a company to meet each customer's requirements is described as mass customization (Wind & Rangaswamy, 2001). Regardless of the chosen market targeting approach, organizations should target markets with particular caution, in a socially responsible and ethical manner, in order to avoid a backlash (Choi & Winterich, 2013, Coyne & Traflet, 2008).

2.1.3 Positioning

Positioning refers to the designing of a company's offering and image, in order to achieve a distinctive position in the target market (Ries & Trout, 2000). It involves the creation of an impression in the customers' minds (Richa, 2014).

A good brand positioning clarifies the brand's essence and reflects the goals it helps the customer to achieve by demonstrating them in a unique way. As Kotler and Keller (2016: 298) stated, "a well-positioned brand should be distinctive in its meaning and execution", in order to create and sustain competitive advantage (Panda, 2004).

Successful positioning creates a customer-focused value proposition, since creating a set of unique set of benefits is critical to the success of the brand (Richa, 2014). Therefore, everyone in the company should understand the positioning of the brand and use it during decision making process, as the brand value drives the customer loyalty and creates a long-term brand (Panda, 2004).

Organizations should develop a positioning plan taking into account their existing and potential customers' perception of their brands, as well as their competitors' strategies, objectives, strengths and weaknesses (Ghodeswar, 2008, Richa, 2014). Furthermore, latent competitors, who might offer new or alternative products to the customers' needs, should also be considered. By recognizing a target market and the relevant competition, a frame of reference is chosen and the optimal points-of-difference (PODs) and points-of-parity (POPs) are identified (Keller, Sternthal, & Tybout, 2002).

Points-of-difference are benefits or characteristics that are unique to the brand and are strongly held and favourably evaluated by the customers (Keller et al., 2002). Points-of-difference are desirable to the customer, deliverable by the company and differentiated by the competitors (Anderson, Narus, & van Rossum, 2006, Kotler & Keller, 2016).

Points-of-parity, on the other hand, are related to attribute or benefit associations that may be shared with competitors or other brands (Anderson et al., 2006, Brunner & Wänke, 2006). They are separated into: a) category POPs, which refers to associations that are deemed necessary to a credible and legitimate product within a specific category, b) correlational POPs that correspond to possible negative associations that arise through the existent positive associations of the brand and c) competitive POPs, which are associations designed to eliminate competitors' points-of-difference (Kotler & Keller, 2016).

2.1.3.1 Branding

Emotional branding is becoming an important tool in creating differentiation between competitors, as well as in creating a bond with the customers. Therefore, it becomes more powerful when emotional differences are related to the underlying functional differences (Mälar, Krohmer, Hoyer, & Nyffenegger, 2011, Sheehan, 2013).

Companies often define a brand mantra, in order to further focus their brand positioning, communicating the brand to the customers (Bedbury, 2002). Brand mantras provide guidance about new products and advertisement campaigns, as well as in defining whether and how to sell the brand by highlighting points-of-difference (Bedbury, 2002, Keller, 1999). Furthermore, a brand mantra guides management and sales departments in projecting a unique image ensuring that everyone in the company, as well as external partners understand the brand positioning, so that they can adjust their decisions and actions accordingly. While brand mantras are designed taking into consideration internal purposes (Keller, 1999), slogans are formed to create brand equity (Rosengren & Dahlén, 2006).

As Conlon (2015: http://www.brandingstrategyinsider.com/2015/08/behind-nikes-campaign.html) stated, "when a company locates and codifies its brand purpose into a positioning platform and brand campaign …………. then becomes possible to emanate a level of soulfulness in communications that people crave, which unlocks hidden energy and vitality on the brand field". Thus creating a brand membership, by informing the target group of the brand's uniqueness and how this could benefit the customers.

2.1.3.2 Improving Brand Positioning

Informing the customers of a brand's membership is a typical approach before stating its points-of-difference, as sometimes brands are associated with categories that they do not have membership (Kotler & Keller, 2016).

Three ways to communicate a brand's category membership are: a) announcing category benefits, b) comparing to exemplars, and c) relying on the product descriptors (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Another important aspect of positioning is communicating the points-of-difference and points-of-parity (Keller et al., 2002). This usually constitutes a challenge, as their benefits are often negatively correlated and customers typically aim

at maximising both the negatively correlated attributes and benefits. Therefore, an approach that accommodates both dimensions is desirable, as points-of-difference and points-of-parity refer to customer value dimensions, which aim at creating competitive advantage (Rintamäki, Kuusela, & Mitronen, 2007).

Another important aspect of positioning is cultural branding. Holt (2003, 2004) proposed that for companies to create iconic, leadership brands, they must gather cultural knowledge, plan accordingly to cultural branding principles, as well as train and employ cultural experts. The same could probably apply for countries.

As an alternative way to the structural positioning approach described above, less structured cultural approaches could be used, like brand narratives and storytelling addressing people's needs and desires (Cayla & Arnould, 2008). According to Ringer and Thibodeau (2014), narrative branding is "based on deep metaphors that connect to people's memories, associations, and stories" (p. 313). From an emotional branding approach, marketers could focus on narratives and storytelling that inspire and attract consumers (Thomson, Rindfleisch, & Arsel, 2006), as effective brands could be created through themes repetition in a variety of media, where the use of emotions that appeal to the minds and hearts of the people create an emotional relationship with the audience (Ghodeswar, 2008).

2.1.3.3 Country Branding

Country branding employs strategic marketing in order to promote a country's identity and competiveness (Anholt, 2003) and emphasizes the positive, attractive, unique, memorable, relevant and sustainable qualities of a country (Allan, 2004). Consequently the scope, power and market of sports in today's word is enormous and could shape the image of a country amongst foreign public (Murray, 2013). As a result sports together with marketing tools could be used in promoting a country's foreign policy objectives.

2.1.3.4 International Branding, Prestige and Image

Feizabadi et al. (2015) supported that sport could influence a nation's image, producing "social capital" or "soft power". National branding is a new element of public diplomacy, where sport could play a fundamental role in achieving it (Grix & Houlihan, 2013).

As national brand, sport could facilitate governments in reaching their commercial or political goals (Deos, 2013). One such example is Australia, which has been branded as a sports nation, before, during and after the Sydney 2000 Olympic Games (Grix & Houlihan, 2013, Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2105). Furthermore, following the failure of Athens to win the 1996 Olympic Games, the Athens 2004 biding team revised their strategy, which instead of concentrating on the *right of Greece* to hold the Olympic Games, focused on *merits,* promoting the strengths and advantages of the Greek culture in relation with the Olympic Games and their values. This cultural projection and branding of Greece continued to reflect the work of the Athens 2004 Organizing Committee and reached its peak at the opening and closing ceremonies of the Olympic Games in Athens (Angelopoulos, 2013).

Additionally to national branding, sports could facilitate nation building through promotion and cultural power (Bairner, 2001), leading to the rather new concept of sport tourism. As Greenwell, Bussel and Shonk (2014) suggested, sport tourism could be seen relative to theatre and fine arts, where stadiums are the theatres, players are the actors and spectators are the audience.

2.1.3.5 Country Branding and Sport Tourism

In today's globalized world, sport events could be regarded as a market through which countries could gain media attention (Feizabadi et al., 2015). Therefore, the notion of country branding could aim in attracting and increasing new investment and in the promotion of tourism and businesses (Sportdiplomacy 2013, Nauright, 2013).

Sport events could benefit, accordingly, not only large countries but also to small states (Feizabadi et al., 2015). Examples could include the Cook Islands and Cyprus. The Cook Islands with an estimated population of 21,000 hosting about 100,000 – 120,000 tourists annually (Wikipedia 2017, UN Data, 2017), over the last decade has invested in the construction of sports facilities and infrastructure. In 2009 hosted a series of sporting events like the "Pacific Mini Games", the "World Youth Netball Championship" and the "Bowl" rugby tournament. Only the "Bowl" tournament, which is one of the seven major rugby events, attracted 34,500 tourist to the island (Pigman, 2014).

On the other, hand Cyprus, with an estimated population of 848 thousands in 2015 (CYSTAT, 2016) and a total arrivals of about 3 million tourists at the end of 2016 (PIO, 2016), has attracted several international events such as the "XIII Games of the Small States of Europe" in 2009, the 2008 "Shooting European Championships", and the "ISSF World Cup Shotgun Championship" in 2017. It is also promoted as a potential sport and training destination for athletes and teams, including European football teams, Olympic hopefuls, seasoned medalists and endurance athletes (Cyprus Tourism Organisation, 2017).

Such sporting events and activities could serve as occasions to celebrate subcultures, promoting social and cultural events, attracting visitors to a city or region (Green & Chalip, 1998). Therefore, sport events have the potential to increase revenues and community spirit, increasing visitor's awareness of the region. As a result, tourism agencies, sport organizers and local communities could collaborate in developing special events to attract a particular target market (Gibson, Willming, & Holdnak, 2003).

2.1.4 Marketing mix

Creating the correct marketing mix and developing a well-differentiated and compelling positioning, requires time and clear understanding of the customers' needs and wants, as well as knowledge of the organization's capabilities and its competitors' actions, through a disciplined and creative thinking (Richa, 2014, Hunt, 2011). Furthermore, it is also important to communicate the organization's marketing strategy in an integrated way to its audience (Richa, 2014). Finally, it can be supported that through well-planned segmentation, targeting and positioning, an organization could achieve a considerable advantage in the battle of marketing and reaching out to its target population (Richa, 2014, Shaw, 2011). Essentially through a market segmentation strategy, an organization should identify segments demand, target specific segments and develop specific marketing "mixes" for each targeted market segment, in order to achieve competitive advantage (Hunt & Arnett, 2004).

2.2 Marketing Environment

The environment, in which an organization operates in, should be continuously monitored, as it could be affected by both external and internal factors (Daft, 2010). An organization should monitor both the microenvironment factors and the

macroenvironment forces that might affect its effectiveness (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Therefore, the monitoring of the external and internal marketing/operating environment is directly related to the organization's modern market management.

Several tools have been developed for this purpose, such as the PESTLE mnemonic, which stands for Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal and Environmental elements (Kaplan & Norton, 2008). Another tool for monitoring the internal and external marketing environment is SWOT analysis (Kotler, Keller, Brady, Goodman, & Hansen, 2012). SWOT analysis is an overall evaluation of an organization's program or strategy strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (Daft, 2010).

2.2.1 Political Element

Geopolitical changes in countries that a Diplomatic Mission operates, could negatively affect the working environment, leading to underperformance. For example, when Turkey was involved in the war in Syria, a number of countries issued travel advices, advising their citizens to avoid travelling to certain areas of Turkey and also removed personnel and diplomatic agents from their Embassies and Consulates. Furthermore, acts of terror, such as the recent attacks in Paris, Brussels and Stockholm, or the recent refugee crisis challenge the political stability (EU Commission, 2016a).

This would further affect the moral and the working environment, which could be reflected on the level of performance and achievements, as employees are important to marketing success and by extension to the success of the mission (Kotler & Keller, 2016).

2.2.2 Economic Element

The Marketing environment of a global organization could also be affected by economic factors, such as inflation and interest rates or foreign exchange rates (PESTLEANALYSIS, 2015, Team FME, 2013). Also changes in the governmental policy in relation to employment laws, taxation regulations, environmental regulations, trade transactions or even bureaucracy and corruption could affect people and the marketing environment (Team FME, 2013).

For example, changes in the exchange rate between the national currency and the local currencies of the various Missions abroad, would have an impact on their performance. Examples also include the continued economic crisis in Europe and threats for its cohesion (e.g. Brexit), which contribute to the loss of confidence towards EU institutions and lead people to feel uncertainty (EU Commission, 2016a).

2.2.3 Social Element

Social elements deal with factors affecting the market's social environment like cultural trends (PESTLEANALYSIS, 2015). Therefore, an important factor, which would determine and maintain the strong reputation of the organization, is the people within it, since employees' competencies reflect the level of marketing (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Other, social factors could include demographics, education and career trends, as well as social and cultural principles (Team FME, 2013).

Simultaneous social and economic crisis have led to the increase of extremist movements, especially in Europe, taking advantage of those citizens who feel socially, economically and politically marginalized (EU Commission, 2016a). Therefore, diplomatic agent's understanding of social factors would lead to better strategies and enhance the desired results.

2.2.4 Technological Element

Technological advancement and innovation are rapidly increasing and could therefore affect the operation of the market and the society (PESTLEANALYSIS, 2015, Team FME, 2013). People in today's world are increasingly moving towards online solutions.

Technological advancements in collecting and analyzing data are crucial in executing segmentation strategies (Quelch & Jocz, 2008). They make online segmentation and targeting easier, affecting marketing management and lead to unique online services and online marketing activities, creating long-term and mutually beneficial relationships with people (Kotler & Keller, 2016, Shaw, 2011).

2.2.5 Legal Element

Legal factors include current and future legislations (Team FME, 2013) as well as internal and external sides, since laws may affect the business environment in the

country of operation, while some companies/organizations have their own policies (PESTLEANALYSIS, 2015). Such factors could affect areas like employment, competition, as well as health and safety (Team FME, 2013).

For example, policies that introduce increased security checks at borders, affecting the freedom of goods and people (e.g. the new US administration's migration policy and the re-introduction of checks at the Schengen's area borders) affect the business environment and could also affect hosting sport events to countries affected by such measures.

In relation to diplomatic missions' activities, these are governed by the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations and the 1963 Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, accordingly, to safeguard that they operate under a common legal international framework and fair conditions, ensuring their function.

2.2.6 Environmental Element

Environmental elements consist of external factors, climate changes, infrastructure, ecological consequences of production processes, disposal of waste materials, as well as other factors that influence or could be determined by the surrounding environment (Daft, 2010). Therefore, they could either act as a threat or as an opportunity for a company.

For example, Sweden is aiming to become the first fossil-free country by 2030 and as such sustainable development and climate change are integral parts of its external foreign policy (Wallström, 2017).

2.2.7 Strategy Formulation

Strategy formulation involves the planning and decision making, in order to establish an organization's goals for the development of a strategic plan (Leontiades, 1982). It includes the assessment of the internal and external environment and factors affecting an organization, integrating the results into goals and strategy (Daft, 2010). Goals indicate what an organization would like to achieve, while strategy is the plan or way to achieve them (Kotler & Keller, 2016).

SWOT analysis evaluates an organization's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. Strengths and weaknesses involve the internal environment of the organization, while opportunities and threats are related to the external environment affecting the organization (Daft, 2010).

Strengths include internal characteristics of an organization that can lead to the achievement of its strategic goals, while weaknesses could be characteristics of the organization that may prevent or limit its performance (Daft, 2010). Strengths and weaknesses information could be obtained through a variety of sources, including different reports, as well as information collected through surveys or discussions with the employees (Daft, 2010).

External factors that may prevent an organization from achieving its goals could be defined as threats. Conversely, opportunities are external factors that could potentially help an organization in achieving its strategic objectives (Daft, 2010). External information regarding opportunities and threats could be obtained through several sources, including surveys, governmental reports, journals, consultants, media and internet search, association meetings, analyses of relevant global and domestic trends or even analyses of existing or potential competitors (Daft, 2010).

Therefore, an organization should monitor macroenvironmental forces and microenvironmental factors that could affect its ability, and should follow trends and developments, as well as any threats and opportunities (Kotler & Keller, 2016).

2.3 Sport, Politics and Diplomacy

In political science, sport is defined as "an institutionalized competitive activity that involves vigorous physical exertion or the use of relatively complex physical skills by individuals whose participation is motivated by a combination of intrinsic and extrinsic factors" (Allison, 1986: 7). It is governed by rules within time and space boundaries and requires discipline, determination and practice, and promotes teamwork, leadership, as well as respect for rules and one another (Qingmin, 2013).

Conversely, politics are concerned with power and interest (Qingmin, 2013). Politics involve the "practice or study of the art and science of forming, directing and

administrating states and other political units; the art and science of government" (Hanks, 1986: 1186-1187). Furthermore, Satow (1957: 1) defines diplomacy as "the application of intelligence and tact to the conduct of relations between the governments of independent states". It is the politics among the nations (Qingmin, 2013).

Sport to date has a positive role in diplomacy, facilitating peace and reconciliation (see Section 2.4.4) between different nations and cultures, while on the other hand it has also being used as "a punitive instrument of statecraft" (Qingmin, 2013: 215). Hence, Orwel (1994: 321) describes sport as "war minus the shooting". Examples include the ping-pong diplomacy between China and the United States of America (Mabillard & Jadi, 2011), the football diplomacy between Turkey and Syria (Polo, 2015), as well as the sanctions against Russia's athletic team in the 2016 Rio Summer Olympic Games, the abuse of the 1936 Olympic Games by Hitler and the boycotts of the 1980 and 1984, Moscow and Los Angeles Olympic Games, respectively.

2.4 Sport Diplomacy

"Sports diplomacy is an increasingly important aspect of diplomatic practice and a growing part of the global sports industry" (Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2015: 1). The global attraction to sport and its popularity, allows people to surpass cultural, socio-economic, national and political boundaries (Hays, 2013, Sport for Development and Peace International Working Group, 2008).

Recognizing the universal power of sports, a number of international organizations have adopted several charters, such as the European Sports Charter (Council of Europe, 1992) and the UNESCO International Charter of Physical Education and Sport (1978), while the United Nations organization established in 2001 the United Nations Office on Sport for Development and Peace (UNOSDP). At the national level, examples include, Australia, which adopted a Sports Diplomacy Strategy for the period 2015-2018, the United States Department of State has developed programs like "Sports United" (Murray, 2013) and "Sports Envoys" (Murray & Pigman, 2014), while the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs has regularly mobilized football diplomacy (Manzenreiter, 2008).

The Institute of Cultural Diplomacy, since its establishment in 1999 viewed sport as a tool of cultural diplomacy (Mabillard & Jadi, 2011). Following this approach, in order to

illustrate the effectiveness of sport as a tool of cultural diplomacy, Mabillard and Jadi (2011) performed an analysis of available material, including books, articles, press material, websites, relevant programs and initiatives. Through their analysis, they identified four main dimensions regarding the use of sports as cultural diplomacy: a) sport as a tool for development, b) sport as a tool for soft power, c) sport as an instrument to promote closer dialogue and integration in multicultural societies, and d) sport as a tool to promote peaceful relations at the international level.

It is evident that in most cases, sport diplomacy has been used to promote, peace and reconciliation, as well as development and mutual understanding (Mabillard & Jadi, 2011, Murray, 2013, Murray & Pigman, 2014) and in a less extend, trade, investment, education and tourism opportunities (Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2015).

While traditional diplomacy still affects perceptions and strategic concerns globally, in the post-cold war era, it also involves shaping international views of states as places for business development and tourism (Nauright, 2013). As a result, marketing a national brand has become increasingly important in today's economically integrated world (Nauright, 2013) and country branding has become a strategic tool in achieving a country's competitiveness (Akotia, Spio, Frimpong, & Austin, 2011).

A country brand is defined "as a national identity that has been proactively distilled, interpreted, internalized among the citizens and projected for international recognition to construct a favorable national image, and enhance a nation's competiveness" (Delorie, 2004: 124). Therefore, it could influence the behavior of its targeting population (Akotia et al., 2011).

2.4.1 Sport as a Soft Power

Milza (1984: 2) supports "that the international significance of sport encompasses three areas: Sport as a part of and reflecting the international stage; sport as a signifier of public feeling; and sport as a means of foreign policy". The later could be related to Nye's (2004) concept of soft power that is defined as the "the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments. It arises from the attractiveness of a country's culture, political ideals, and policies" (Nye 2004: x).

However, Leca (2013) questioned Nye's concept of soft power as ambiguous due to its concrete uses and polysemy, as soft power is usually considered only as an element of powerful states that have the ability to use hard power. Therefore, Polo (2015) used the concept of sport diplomacy to describe the strategic use of sport, rather than referring to the concept of soft power.

Public diplomacy is described as the result of cultural exchanges, cultural diplomacy and media casting (Fisher, n.d. cited in Feizabadi et al., 2015). When the three are fused together, they create the hybrid concept of sport diplomacy that could have a critical role in diplomacy (Deos, 2013).

2.4.2 The Role of Media, Sports and International Relations – The example of the Olympic Games

Achieving large audiences and increasing revenue are mutual goals for both media and sports. Technological advances have enabled sporting events, such as the Olympic Games, to become accessible to audiences worldwide (Feizabadi et al., 2015).

While broadcasting rights are the main source of revenue for the International Olympic Committee (IOC), for media sports are the main source of programming from a commercial perspective (Preuss, 2004). From 1936 to 1956 the number of territories where the Olympic Games were broadcasted was limited between one and two territories. Since 1960, however, when the Rome Olympic Games were broadcasted live for the first time in 21 territories, the number of territories increased exponentially to 220 until the Sydney 2000 Olympics (Feizabadi, Bakhtiari, Rashidzade, & Nik, 2013). At the same time, the cost of broadcasting rights increased from 1.2 million dollars in 1960 to over one billion dollars to date, creating a symbiosis between broadcasters and Olympic Games (Feizabadi et al., 2015).

Similarly, the commercialization of the Olympic Games has increased drastically with greater opportunities for sponsorship and revenues through tickets, merchandising and other associated events, leading to competition between countries and cities for hosting the games due to direct or indirect benefits for the local community and the perception of prestige (Feizabadi et al., 2015).

The potential for investment and development of infrastructure related to sporting events could lead to private and public investment in projects from the host country/city, while other sectors such as tourism and hospitality could profit from tourists, tickets sales and sponsors (Gibson et al., 2003, Preuss, 2004). As a result these could lead to the creation of jobs and positive contribution to the economic development of the host country.

2.4.3 Sport Functions in International Relations

In addition to their historic role, sports today play a central point in the community (Feizabadi et al., 2015). Bainvel (2005) identified positive and negative implications of sport and its political perspective, which he classified in three main categories; political, diplomatic and social aspects (see Table 3, below). Furthermore, stating Bainvel's (2005) work, Feizabadi et al. (2015) referred to the functions of sport as presented in table 4, below.

Table 3. Implications of sport and political use among the world by different perspectives (Bainvel, 2005: 79).

Positive Aspects	Negative Aspects
Political Instrument	***Political weapon***
To integrate minorities	To promote power and domination
To boost peace	To amplify political ideology
To encourage "sporting nationalism"	To construct national identity
Diplomatic tool	***Diplomatic trigger mechanism***
To share comradeship among nations	To spoil peaceful situations
To amplify friendship	To agitate hatred
To support peace	To provoke a country
To improve International relations	To damage neutral relations
Social tool	***Social weapon***
To install a fair-play spirit	To install revenge spirit
To explain antagonism	To make easy money
To analyze a situation	To hide doping
To highlight existing conflict	To intensify extreme chauvinism
To understand political troubles	To fix bribe
To explore the world	To amplify physical and verbal violence
To increase tolerance	To enlarge xenophobia and racism

Table 4. Functions of sport (Feizabadi et al., 2015: 190).

Functions of Sport
A tool for promotion of power and domination
A phenomenon to strengthen political ideology
A tool to destroy peacefulness
A way for provoking enmities
A tool to estimate and out graded nations
A tool for damaging the neutralized relations
A tool for revenge
Kind of easy business
A way to hide doping
A tool for tampering
A tool for racism
A tool for physical and verbal violence
A way to increase patriotism
A tool for integrating the minorities and tribes
Contributing tool for peace
A tool for encouraging the nationalism
A way to improve international relations
A way for strengthening peacefulness
A tool for nation's friendship
A way for increasing tolerance and kindness
A tool for reducing conflicts
A way for creating chivalry spirit
A tool for analyzing an especial
A way for explaining the opposes situation

2.4.4 Sport for Reconciliation

Mabillard and Jadi (2011) suggested that sport could act as a strong incentive for people and politicians, in order to improve a situation and/or achieving a peaceful settlement. It could be used in national, bilateral and multilateral reconciliation processes and international initiatives, as well as for the promotion of peace at international level, through events like the Olympic Games and the FIFA World Cup.

One of the most known examples where sport was used as a tool for diplomacy is the ping-pong diplomacy between the United States of America and China in 1971 (Mabillard & Jadi, 2011). In the framework of the cold-war, the American national ping-pong team tour China for a week, despite the fact that Washington had not recognized the People's Republic of China. Following the tour, Mao invited President Richard Nixon to visit China. According to the then Chinese Prime Minister Zhou Enlai "never before in history has a sport been used so effectively as a tool of international diplomacy" (De Groot, 2011).

Other examples include the India – Pakistan cricket diplomacy (Mabillard & Jadi, 2011), the Turkey – Syria and Turkey – Armenia football diplomacy (Murray & Pigman, 2014, Polo, 2015), the Greece – Turkey and USA – Cuba basketball diplomacy (Mabillard & Jadi, 2011, Murray & Pigman, 2014). Also examples include initiatives at the civil society level, such as the Israeli – Palestinian "Peres Team for Peace", which competed in the 2011 Australian Football League International Cup (Mabillard & Jadi, 2011).

In a more constructive way the US Department of State runs programs like the "Sports Envoys" (Murray & Pigman, 2014) and "Sports United" (Murray, 2013). Other examples include the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) that deployed football to overcome imperial stereotypes. As Manzenreiter (2008) stated, the Japanese Ministry used football to safeguard the environment of Japanese troops in Iraq, to bridge differences between the Balkan states and bring Israeli and Palestinian youth players to participate in training camps as a way of coming together. At a global level, the United Nations General Assembly adopted in 1999, Resolution 54/34 entitled: "Building a better world through sport and the Olympic ideal" (Beacom, 2000).

2.4.5 Sport for Development

Despite the wide use of sport diplomacy to promote peace and reconciliation, it has not been used in the same extend for promoting trade, investment, education, tourism or other developmental opportunities (Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2015). The Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (2015) suggested that sport could be a vehicle to achieve development goals, while it contributes between 2.5% to 3% to the gross domestic product of developed economies (Australian Sports Commission, 2013).

Recognizing the increased importance of sport diplomacy and the unique role that sport could play in shaping and showcasing the country's identity, value and culture, the Australian Government adopted a sport diplomacy strategy for the period 2015-2018. The strategy includes four main objectives, namely: "Connecting people and institutions", "Enhancing sport for development", "Showcasing Australia" and "Supporting innovation and integrity" (Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2015).

The Norwegian Minister of Culture, Linda Hofstad Helleland, in her speech at the Global Conference on faith and sport at the Vatican in Rome (2016), supported that sports could contribute in achieving the United Nation's sustainable goals and gender equality, as well as in improving people's health, promoting education and participation in the society, creating future leaders and by extension contributing to a better world.

Another example, which stems from an individual's initiative rather than a governmental one, is the Swedish sports movement exported to China known as "Heyrobics". In 1978, 2.5% of the Swedish population were over 80 years old and accounted for 25% of the country's health cost. While the problem was viewed as a medical and financial issue, Johan Holmsäter, an entrepreneur at the time, founded a non-profit sport association called "Friskis & Svettis" to promote a fit and healthy lifestyle through group workout to music and fitness exercises. In 2010, Holmsäter's son Linus introduced his father's concept in China, targeting one of the biggest markets in the world, promoting not only workout to music through "Heyrobics", but also his country and the Swedish lifestyle to the world (Krutmeijer, 2013).

2.5 Literature Conclusion

The review of literature indicates that sport diplomacy could act as a possible tool for the achievement of a country's foreign policy and objectives. Furthermore, the use of marketing techniques and tools could facilitate sport diplomatic endeavours, through effective target marketing.

Chapter 3
Methodology

Chapter 3 provides information about the methodology used for the realization of the current master thesis. It provides information about the participants, the instrumentation and procedure used, as well as the approach for the analysis of the collected data.

3.1 Participants

Forty-eight participants mainly from the fields of foreign policy (diplomats, trade counselors, government officials) and sports (sport practitioners, coaches, athletes), both male and female, took part in the study (Mage = 36.52, SD = 7.39 years).

3.2 Instrumentation and Procedure

Both qualitative and quantitative research methods were used for the collection of data.

3.2.1 Qualitative Research Methods

To explore the relationship between sports and diplomacy, current practices of sport diplomacy and future directions, an explanatory research design was adopted. Since qualitative research involves the detection of new in-sights aiming to further understand a phenomenon (Strauss & Corbin, 1998), individual interviews and informal discussions were used to elicit respondent's views and ideas.

Eleven individual interviews and informal discussions were conducted (Mage = 46.27, SD = 12.56 years). To facilitate the interview procedure, an interview guide was prepared aiming to explore a number of different aspects related to sport diplomacy (see Appendix A).

In addition, since the researcher's perception during qualitative research is constantly checked against possible alternatives or sources of error (Thomas & Nelson, 2001), data were analyzed using marketing tools, like the SWOT analysis and the PESTLE mnemonic (Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal and Environmental elements) to evaluate strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of sport diplomacy, as well as the environment in which sport diplomacy could be applied, as it could be affected by both external and internal factors (Daft, 2010). For the SWOT and PESTLE analyses secondary data available through public, governmental and legal documents, as well as data from the internet and other media, such as YouTube, newspapers and journals, were used.

3.2.2 Quantitative Research Methods

Trustworthiness of qualitative data is often questioned (Shenton, 2004). However, the use of different methods could compensate for possible limitations, facilitating the validity and reliability of results (Guba, 1981). Therefore, two 5-point Likert-type scale questionnaires, anchored by 1 (strongly disagree) and 5 (strongly agree) based on the work of Bainvel (2005) and Feizabadi et al. (2015) were used (see Appendix B). All 48 participants responded to both questionnaires.

3.3 Data Analysis

Analysis of data included, narratives, quotes, charts and tables (see Chapter 4). Relevant interview data was transcribed (see Appendix C) and first-order and second order themes were identified, leading to the general dimension theme (Thomas & Nelson, 2001).

The data from the SWOT and PESTLE analyses, were interpreted in relation to the study's objectives, extracting findings by tabulating the data and developing a summary of results.

With regards to the two questionnaires used, descriptive statistics were calculated (Mean score and Standard deviation) for each statement. Furthermore, with regards to the Bainvel (2005) questionnaire, descriptive statistics (average Mean score and Standard deviation) were also calculated for the six different aspects of sports as presented by Bainvel (see Table1, Section 2.4.3).

Chapter 4
Results

Results of the data analysis from the interviews and questionnaires, as well as the results of SWOT and PESTLE analyses are presented in the current chapter.

4.1 SWOT Analysis

Results from the SWOT analysis presented in Appendix D, lead to the proposed SWOT analysis strategies present in Table 5. The resulted proposed strategies acted as guidelines for the formulation of the recommendations and future directions of sport diplomacy suggested in Chapter 5.

Table 5. SWOT Analysis Strategies.

		Strengths	Weaknesses
Opportunities		**Strengths-Opportunities Strategies** • Pursue strategies to promote a positive image for a country, creating a country brand to attract investment, achieve economic development and create job opportunities. • Promote Olympic values, to inspire and empower people to achieve reconciliation and peacebuilding. • Undertake media campaigns to promote sport tourism and attract sponsorship.	**Weaknesses-Opportunities Strategies** • Pursue strategies to promote volunteerism.
Threats		**Strengths-Threats Strategies** • Use sport to promote equal rights and opportunities through media campaigns and Olympic values. • Pursue strategies to promote healthy lifestyle. • Promote fair play.	**Weaknesses-Threats Strategies** • Establish control mechanisms to minimize the misuse of sport for unfair competition and not legitimate gains. • Promote good governance in sport.

4.2 PESTLE Analysis

When considering any diplomatic actions, the overall environment in which they are going to take place should be considered. An analysis of different factors in today's international scene that might affect the realization of sport diplomacy are recognized using the PESTLE mnemonic in Figure 1.

Figure 1. PESTLE Analysis.

Political Elements
- Increase of extremism
- Increase of radicalization
- Terrorism
- Conventional and unconventional threats
- Increase of nationalism
- Globalization

Economic Elements
- The world economic crisis has affected developed countries, especially in Europe. This has affected the EU as well and could have a domino effect on other regions, as the EU is the largest development/humanitarian aid donor globally (EU Commission, 2016a).
- Economic crisis is affecting countries irrespective of their size, whether they are developed or less developed.

Social Elements
- Cultural differences between countries/regions (Arab world vs European countries)
- Gender differences
- Special characteristics of the target group. For example special needs persons, children, handicaps etc.

Technological Elements
- Availability of infrastructure
- Availability of sport equipment
- Access to technology
- Access to social media and communication tools

Legal Elements
- United Nations Resolutions
- Regional organizations policy framework (e.g. EU White Paper on Sport, 2007)
- Local laws related to sport activities
- Sport organizations and authorities in the country of accreditation
- The 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations and/or the 1963 Vienna Convention on Consular Relations

Environmental Elements
- Overall environmental conditions
- Environmental policies

4.3 Interviews Results

Interviews data results are presented in Figure 2. First-order and second-order themes were identified by analyzing the interviews raw data presented in Appendix C, leading to the general dimension theme of sport diplomacy.

Figure 2. Raw data themes and first- and second-order themes making up the general dimension of sport diplomacy.
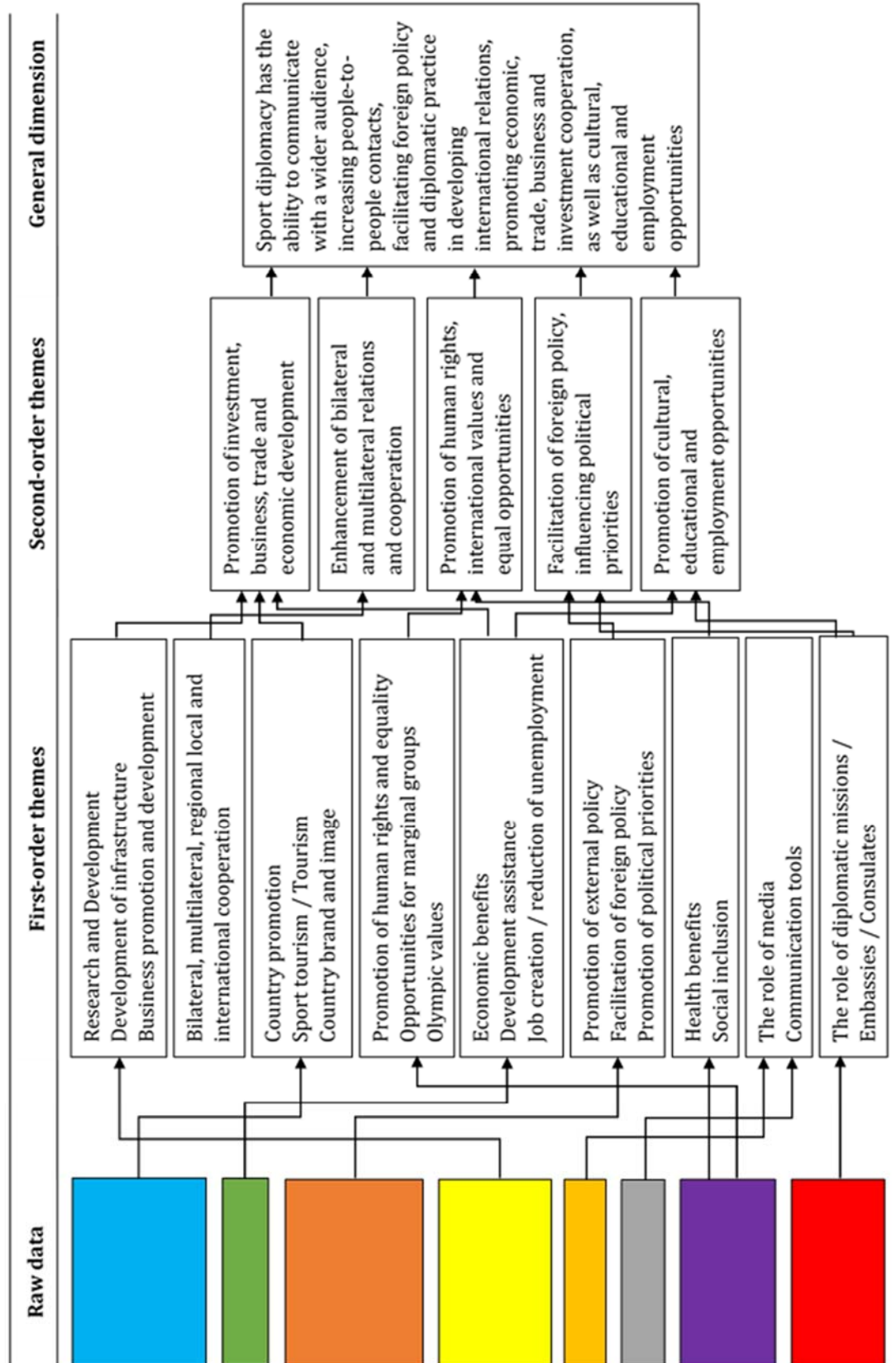
Note: Coloured boxes corresponds to the raw data presented in Appendix C.

4.4 Questionnaires Results

Table 6 below presents results for the functions of sport as defined by Feizabadi et al., (2015). Results highlighted the use of sport as a tool for integrating the minorities and tribes (*M* = 4.10, *SD* = 0.99), a contributing tool for peace (*M* = 4.33, *SD* = 0.86) and a way to improve international relations (*M* = 4.25, *SD* = 0.91).

Table 6. Functions of sport (Feizabadi et al., 2015: 190).

Function of sport	*M*	*SD*
A tool for promotion of power and domination	3.33	1.33
A phenomenon to strengthen political ideology	3.33	1.24
A tool to destroy peacefulness	2.29	1.30
A way for provoking enmities	2.50	1.22
A tool to estimate and out graded nations	2.75	1.16
A tool for damaging the neutralized relations	2.23	1.11
A tool for revenge	2.15	1.25
Kind of easy business	2.69	1.20
A way to hide doping	2.64	1.30
A tool for tampering	2.71	1.25
A tool for racism	2.71	1.38
A tool for physical and verbal violence	2.75	1.45
A way to increase patriotism	3.63	1.36
A tool for integrating the minorities and tribes	4.10	0.99
Contributing tool for peace	4.33	0.86
A tool for encouraging the nationalism	3.35	1.30
A way to improve international relations	4.25	0.91
A way for strengthening peacefulness	4.15	0.99
A tool for nation's friendship	4.23	0.95
A way for increasing tolerance and kindness	4.42	0.65
A tool for reducing conflicts	3.94	1.12
A way for creating chivalry spirit	4.06	1.00
A tool for analyzing an especial	3.67	0.86
A way for explaining the opposes situation	3.40	0.94

Furthermore, considerably higher scores than other functions presented, indicate the use of sport as way for strengthening peacefulness (*M* = 4.15, *SD* = 0.99) and a tool for nation's friendship (*M* = 4.23, *SD* = 0.95) as well as for increasing tolerance and kindness (*M* = 4.42, *SD* = 0.65), reducing conflicts (*M* = 3.94, *SD* = 1.12) and crating chiverly spirit (*M* = 4.06, *SD* = 1.00).

Using the respective aspects of sport identified by Bainvel (2005), the average mean score and standard deviation for the use of sports as political instrument, political weapon, diplomatic tool, diplomatic trigger mechanism, social tool and social weapon were calculated.

Table 7. Political aspects of sports (Bainvel, 2005).

Aspects of Sports	M	SD
Positive Aspects		
Political Instrument	**4.01**	**0.71**
To integrate minorities	4.33	0.72
To boost peace	4.13	1.10
To encourage "sporting nationalism"	3.58	1.29
Negative Aspects		
Political weapon	**3.31**	**1.12**
To promote power and domination	3.19	1.12
To amplify political ideology	3.10	1.36
To construct national identity	3.65	1.14

Results from tables 7 and 8, indicate that sport diplomacy and sports could be used as a political instrument (*M* = 4.01, *SD* = 0.71) and as a diplomatic tool (*M* = 4.20, *SD* = 0.77), to integrate minorities (*M* = 4.33, *SD* = 0.72), as well as to amplify friendship (*M* = 4.38, *SD* = 0.79). At the same time results indicate that sports and sport diplomacy could also be used to a considerable less extend as a political weapon (*M* = 3.31, *SD* = 1.12) or a diplomatic trigger mechanism (*M* = 2.68, *SD* =1.05).

Table 8. Diplomatic aspects of sports (Bainvel, 2005).

Aspects of Sports	M	SD
Positive Aspects		
Diplomatic tool	**4.20**	**0.77**
To share comradeship among nations	4.02	0.91
To amplify friendship	4.38	0.79
To support peace	4.25	0.93
To improve international relations	4.17	1.04
Negative Aspects		
Diplomatic trigger mechanism	**2.68**	**1.05**
To spoil peaceful situations	2.79	1.38
To agitate hatred	2.81	1.35
To provoke a country	2.54	1.29
To damage neutral relations	2.56	1.24

Finally, results presented on table 9 indicate the potential use of sports as a social tool (M = 3.63, SD = 0.60) to install a fair-play spirit (M = 4.48, SD = 0.71), to explore the world (M = 4.10, SD = 1.02) and to increase tolerance (M = 4.00, SD = 1.01). Results related to the negative aspects of sport for its use as a social weapon (M = 2.59, SD = 1.00), scored considerably lower than its positive social aspects.

Figure 3 shows a comparison of the average mean scores calculated for the six main categories of positive and negative implications of sport and its political perspective, as identified by Bainvel (2005). Comparison of the results, highlights the positive implications of sports as political instrument (M = 4.01, SD = 0.71), as well as diplomatic (M = 4.20, SD = 0.77) and social tools (M = 3.63, SD = 0.60), when compared with the negative aspects of sports suggesting the use of sport as political weapon (M = 3.31, SD = 1.12), diplomatic trigger mechanism (M = 2.68, SD = 1.05) and social weapon (M = 2.59, SD = 1.00).

Table 9. Social aspects of sports (Bainvel, 2005).

Aspects of Sports	M	SD
Positive Aspects		
Social tool	**3.63**	**0.60**
To install a fair-play spirit	4.48	0.71
To explain antagonism	3.60	1.14
To analyze a situation	3.25	1.14
To highlight existing conflict	3.10	1.24
To understand political troubles	2.90	1.22
To explore the world	4.10	1.02
To increase tolerance	4.00	1.01
Negative Aspects		
Social weapon	**2.59**	**1.00**
To install revenge spirit	2.38	1.28
To make easy money	2.75	1.34
To hide doping	2.63	1.33
To intensify extreme chauvinism	2.54	1.30
To fix bribe	3.06	1.31
To amplify physical and verbal violence	2.48	1.32
To enlarge xenophobia and racism	2.27	1.27

Figure 3. Comparison of the positive and negative implications of sport.
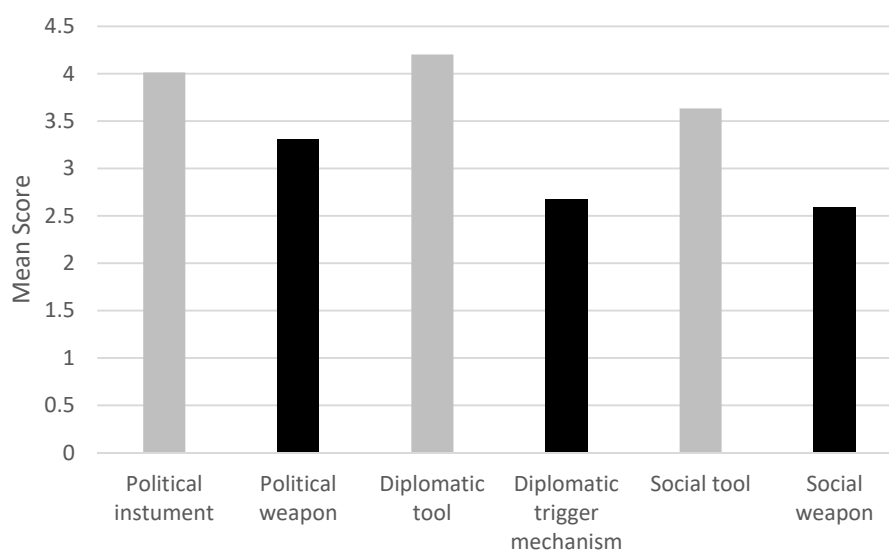
Chapter 5
Discussion

The current chapter discusses the main findings of this master thesis supported by literature and anecdotal evidences. Furthermore, directions for future use and practices of sport diplomacy are proposed. In general, findings have shown that sports could facilitate international relations, promote economic, trade and business cooperation, as well as research and innovation. Sport could further facilitate the promotion and branding of a country, increasing people-to-people contacts, promoting foreign policy objectives and political priorities.

Sport diplomacy has the potential to reach a wider audience than traditional diplomatic activities allow, as sports are not limited by gender, age, social or cultural background (Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2015, EU Commission, 2016a, Ushkovska & Petrushevska, 2015).

5.1 Sport as Political and Diplomatic Tools

Results highlighted sport both as a political instrument (M = 4.01, SD = 0.71) and diplomatic tool (M = 4.20, SD = 0.77) for peace (M = 4.33, SD = 0.86). Sport has been identified as an influential tool for promoting peace, understanding, reconciliation and intercultural dialogue, disregarding social classes and geographical borders (EU Commission, 2016a, Qingmin, 2013).

Sport events offer a platform for a country to be made known. Especially for smaller countries (Interview, 8). It nurtures both bilateral and multilateral relations (Interview, 6).

> "One example was the 2013 Francophone Games in France. Before the opening ceremony, the President of France, Mr. François Hollande, came at the area where the athletes were and welcomed each mission separately. When he met

the Cyprus team, he was pleasantly surprised, because he didn't expect a small country, which in theory had no cultural or linguistic links with France to participate in games where either countries who are French speaking or have traditional cultural and historical (ex-colonies) links with France participate. During his speech at the opening ceremony, he took the opportunity and commented on Cyprus's participation, giving a special welcoming to the Cypriot team, using it as an example of international relations and friendship beyond close borders" (Interview, 8).

This gesture of President Hollande, transferred the message of inclusiveness, friendship and cooperation at the international level. At the same time it indirectly promoted a small country (probably unknown to many of the spectators) and offered the opportunity for a country to be heard at the international scene.

Sport could also act as a mean for national pride for a nation globally (Interviews, 9 & 11). This is true in the case of international sport events, as in honour of the winners their national anthem is played and the flag of their country is raised. The other case that this is happening officially, at the international level, is during official visits abroad of the Heads of States and Governments (Interview, 8).

5.1.1 Sport Diplomacy for Peace Building and Reconciliation

Sport could be used as a way to improve international relations (M = 4.25, SD = 0.91), strengthening peacefulness (M = 4.15, SD = 0.99) and friendship between nations (M = 4.23, SD = 0.95). Sports could offer a way for increasing tolerance and kindness (M = 4.42, SD = 0.65) and reduce conflicts (M = 3.94, SD = 1.12). If used correctly, sport can promote peace and reconciliation (Interview, 7). Tackling problems in post-conflict situations could be facilitated through sports, as it has the ability to build confidence and active friendship (EU Commission, 2016a).

However, it should not be ignored that sports have been abused in the past for political and geostrategic purposes, as in the cases of 1936, 1980 and 1984 Olympic Games. They could be used as a propaganda tool to harm the image of a country (Interview, 4), or even for gaining recognition of illegal entities (Interview, 2), giving cultural power to separist movements (Bairner, 2001).

During the apartheid era in South Africa, the African National Congress discouraged its supporters to participate in sports, as they were seen as white domination (Interview, 7). On the other hand, in the post-apartheid South Africa, Nelson Mandela took advantage of the 1995 Rugby World Cup, which was hosted by his country and used rugby as an opportunity to bring black and white people together, promoting national pride, as well as national and international reconciliation and understanding.

Since the end of the cold-war, the diplomatic mix is following a softer approach and diplomatic work has been expanded from solving problems between countries to building bridges between people, increasing the scope and diversity of diplomatic actors (Qingmin, 2013). Therefore, sport should act as a *diplomatic lubricant* (Cha, 2009), taking advantage of its excellent international image and sport diplomacy could be a source of cultural soft power (EU Commission, 2016a).

Sport organizations, athletes, clubs and sport officials could play a part in diplomacy through cooperation with governments (Interviews, 1 & 2). Within this framework people and sport organizations could actively participate in international affairs. Two such examples are: a) the appointment of Jacques Rogge, Honorary President of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), as the United Nations Secretary-General's Special Envoy for Youth Refugees and Sport (United Nations, 2014) and b) the agreement between the IOC and the UN to strengthen collaboration in using sport as a tool for peace and development (IOC, 2014).

Furthermore, since 1993 the United Nations General Assembly has adopted numerous resolutions calling upon the systematic inclusion of sports in peace building and sustainable development efforts internationally, resulting to the establishment of the United Nations Office on Sport for Development and Peace (UNOSDP) in 2001. Moreover, the 6th of April was adopted as the international day of sport for development and peace (United Nations, 2013). Hence, the basis for the legal and political framework of sport diplomacy has already been established. It remains however, for individual states and international, regional and intergovernmental organizations to identify their own competencies and set their priorities in developing their sport diplomacy strategies in order to achieve their goals and objectives.

5.2 Sport as a Social Tool

Further to its contribution in promoting peace building and reconciliation, sport could also play an important role for "social integration and economic development in different geographical, cultural and political context" (EU Commission, 2016a: 8). This is also supported by results of the current master thesis, which indicate that sport has the potential to be used as a social tool (M = 3.63, SD = 0.60).

Levermore (2008) described sport as an engine for development. "Sport could also benefit a country at educational and social levels, as it promotes values like fair play, gender equality and mutual respect" (Interview, 3). Furthermore, life skills such as goal setting and planning could be learned through sports. "Sports can be used as a tool for life coaching and personal development. In some countries, life coaching programs are run in collaboration with local communities/municipalities, promoting social inclusion and developing life skills for children with special needs" (Interview, 5). For such less advantaged groups, sport could result in enhanced social empowerment and self-confidence (Dorokhina, Hosta, & van Sterkenburg, 2011).

Such programs could be run at bilateral, regional, as well as at international levels. Scientists, experts and professionals from different countries could work together, sharing experiences and expertise. This could nurture bilateral and international collaboration at people-to-people level, but also through research and development by participation in scientific and other exchange programs.

Sport could foster social inclusion of vulnerable groups, disable people or minorities, not only at national level, but also in the context of external relations (EU Commission, 2016a). It could act as a tool for social inclusion (Gasparini, 2010) as well as for the development of social and personal skills (Dorokhina et al., 2011). Social connections could result through sport, leading to a variety of results, such as employment opportunities and improvement of life quality (Dorokhina et al., 2011). Such programs could benefit the health system of a country creating financial and economic benefits, allowing funds and human resources to be directed to other sectors where there might be a need (Interviews, 2 & 5).

A different example, where sport was used as a social tool to promote social inclusion and understanding and also relations between countries, was the 2003 Special Olympics World Summer Games in Dublin. Each participating country was assigned to a town in Ireland and in the lead up to the Games participants spend a week in their corresponding host town. During that week, cultural and sporting events took place in the respective towns with the active participation of each guest country's team. The main objectives of the organizers, were to promote social inclusion and understanding, but also to make both countries' culture and history known to each other, creating national and cultural relations and links (Interview, 9).

5.3 Branding and Sport Diplomacy

Country branding is a strategic tool in achieving country competiveness (Akotia et al., 2011). Similarly, country branding is an important ingredient of sport diplomacy and respectively sport could act as a tool for achieving national branding and facilitating states in achieving their political and/or commercial objectives (Deos, 2013). Sport could be used to promote a country by shaping its image (Feizabadi et al., 2015).

"International and Olympic level athletes could be used for the promotion of their country. They could become business and sport diplomacy ambassadors" (Interview, 1). Sport could be used for the promotion of a country's image and is a way for creating chivalry spirit (M = 4.06, SD = 1.00). Themes like "Cyprus image" or "Cyprus story" could be presented through sporting success (Interview, 1), creating a cultural and emotional brand, communicating with people (Bedbury, 2002, Cayla & Arnould, 2008, Thomson et al., 2006). In the case of small nations or nations with financial constraints, sport could also act as an alternative for symbolic and draw materials (Deos, 2013, Interview, 9 & 11).

Therefore, a country brand involves strategic marketing to create a favourable national image, enhancing a country's competitiveness through proactive distillation and interpretation of the national identity among a nation's citizens and projecting it internationally (Anholt, 2003, Delorie, 2004). It has the ability to influence the behavior of the targeting group (Akotia et al., 2011).

5.4 Sport Tourism and Economic Development

Sport could be used to promote a country as well as its tourism (Interview, 2). Sport tourism has been described as a virtual industry in the new millennium (Feizabadi et al., 2015). In conjunction with the relevant country branding, states (small or large) could benefit from hosting sports events or activities proportionally. "In the case of the tourist industry and sport tourism, if athletes have a good experience from the games or training camp in a country, the chances that they will return as tourists or that they will encourage others (friends, relatives etc.) to visit the country are increased" (Interview, 3).

Good infrastructure, nice weather and small distances between facilities, together with easy access to amenities could be an advantage for smaller countries in developing sport tourism (Interviews, 2 & 3).

Larger and more developed countries could take advantage of the organization of mega events, such as the Olympics or World Cups. Prior to the 2012 London Olympic and Paralympic Games, the United Kingdom's Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) issued a report on Britain's public diplomacy, which also included the promotion of the United Kingdom as a tourist destination, promoting the British culture and values, and the organization of parallel trade events, taking advantage of the visitors from the business sector in order to maximize the country's commercial gains (FCO, 2011).

Other than the immediate economic benefits from sport tourism, sport events could further act as platforms for other industries to be promoted (Interview, 3). Such industries could range from sport related businesses to real estate companies or even the food and manufacturing industries (Gibson et al., 2003, Preuss, 2004). Furthermore, "sports could promote investment both in events and infrastructure. For example the organization of a regatta could promote sailing but also sport tourism, as well as the development and promotion of relevant infrastructure, such as marinas, ports and fishing shelters" (Interview, 1). Therefore, with the right country branding new investment and businesses could be created (Sportdiplomacy 2013, Nauright, 2013).

In order to promote sport tourism, but also the culture, the image and the brand of a country, as well as addressing broader segments of tourists internationally, "persons or

groups from sectors other than sports could be included in international sport missions. For example cultural or folklore dancing/music groups could be included to promote the culture of the country. Consequently, tourism could be promoted, as well as development and investments" (Interview, 2).

Furthermore, through activities organized before, during or even after sport events, like the ones at the 2003 Special Olympics World Summer Games (see Section 5.2), tourists are attracted, helping the economy of local communities. Also the guest countries have the opportunity to promote their own tourism industry, history and culture (Interview, 9). As Green and Chalip (1998) suggested, sport events could be occasions to celebrate subcultures shared with people from distant places.

5.5 The Role of Media and Communication

Media could play a crucial role in the promotion of sports and by extension in the promotion of sport tourism and a country's culture and image. For example in the case of a bilateral or international event, media could communicate the message that sports bring people together, unite and solve political differences, building friendship between them (Interview, 3). This can be achieved not only with the use of traditional media such as newspapers and magazines, but also through new media tools, such as the internet, sponsoring of events and outdoor communications, and events that allow individuals' involvement. Such approaches allow the creation of an image/brand that builds an emotional relationship with the target population (Ghodeswar, 2008).

However, media should be handled with care as they could be often politically driven and used as a propaganda tool to harm a country's image (Interview, 4). Therefore despite any precautions taken during the branding process, these could become ineffective taking into account the global media landscape (Cayla & Arnould, 2008).

Nye (2004) described culture as a source of soft power and distinguished between popular and high cultures. High culture includes literature, art and education, and is often referring to the elites of a country. Conversely, popular culture includes television, movies and popular sports, targeting the general public with the aim of entertaining it. Therefore, "popular sport, as a part of popular culture, plays an important part in

communicating values and is a source of cultural soft power" (EU Commission, 2016a: 10).

Furthermore, sport or sport diplomacy could be used as a tool of communication, as it has the potential to attract a wide audience (Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 2015, EU Commission 2016a, Ushkovska & Petrushevska, 2015). Sport creates a space for dialogue (Interview, 10) and can also act complementary to other forms of diplomacy, as it can be applied to all social classes and avoids language barriers (Interview, 7).

5.6 Development of Sport Diplomacy Possibilities

The ability of a state to develop an appropriate and attractive image through sport internationally can create unique opportunities for political and economic development (Feizabadi et al., 2015).

"In order for a state to be successful in sport diplomacy or sport practices, it should first develop the appropriate "man power" and build on it" (Interview, 1). Diplomatic missions could lay the foundations for development of sport diplomacy both at leader's level, as well as within the society with people-to-people contacts and through public campaigns. "They could play a crucial role especially prior to the organization of a sport event, by creating the right environment within the society. They could organize pre-event meetings and events at the people level, helping to communicate the correct messages at political level" (Interview, 3).

Another venue for the development of sport diplomacy is the signing of protocols of cooperation or memorandums of understanding in sports between states. However the implementation of such agreements is often problematic, since there is a lack of follow-up after the signing of the agreements. This could be overcome with the active participation of the diplomatic missions of the contracting parties, which could oversee and facilitate the implementation of the agreements. Furthermore, for diplomatic missions to be effective, they should be directly involved in the early process of the negotiation process and they should be made aware of the needs and wants of their countries, as well as of their strengths and advantages in the field. This would help in the development of appropriate programs of cooperation, as well as for the development of

expertise in order for sport diplomacy to be effective (Interview, 2), as the level of familiarity is a contributing factor to the pursued positioning strategy (Kalafatis, Tsogas, & Blankson, 2000).

Additionally, countries could establish organizations with the task of implementing their strategy, including establishment of cultural centers, friendship groups, academic and scientific cooperation, media cooperation, as well as sports, tourism and cultural activities, in order to achieve economic development and ease of tension by encouraging contacts and understanding (Jan, 2013). Therefore, sport diplomacy could be an important ingredient of countries' cultural diplomacy and could contribute to a government's public diplomacy strategy (Jackson, 2013).

Moreover, for the realization of sport diplomacy the interaction and collaboration of different actors both at national and international levels is important (Interviews, 1 & 2). Governments, diplomatic missions and sport organizations could collaborate through exchange programs, training camps or in organizing sport events. Such activities promote economic development and create job opportunities. They allow the exchange of knowledge, expertise and best practices between countries, developing research and innovation (Interview, 1 & 2).

5.6.1 Grassroots Sport and the Development of Sport Diplomacy

For a state to undertake and develop sport diplomatic activities at international level, it should first develop internal procedures, promoting sports and by extension sport diplomatic methods and tools within its territory and citizens (Interviews, 2 & 3).

A crucial role in developing sport diplomacy could be played by grassroots sport. Grassroots sport is defined as "physical leisure activity, organised and non-organised, practiced regularly at non-professional level for health, educational or social purposes" (EU Commission, 2016b: 4). Consequently, sport could lead not only to economic benefits, but also to health and social benefits. Such benefits lead to further direct or indirect benefits, such as reducing the state's health care cost, reducing days lost from work due to illness, leading to business and employer's economic benefits and increased productivity. Grassroots sport could also promote social cohesion and volunteering,

resulting in informal training and learning, encouraging the development of skills and reducing unemployment (EU Commission, 2016b).

Furthermore, through sports, Olympic culture, spirit and values, could benefit a country at the educational and social levels, as it promotes values like fair play and equality (Interviews 2, 3, & 7). For example, sport diplomacy can be used in schools to promote acceptance of migrants, understanding and mutual respect (Interview, 7).

5.7 Recommendations

Summarizing the discussion of the main findings of the current master thesis and also taking into account the results of the SWOT (see Table 5 and Appendix D) and the PESTLE analyses (see Figure 1) lead to specific recommendations and directions for future use and practices of sport diplomacy by Governments.

In order for Governments to lay the foundation for the development of future sport diplomacy strategies for the accomplishment of the country's priorities and objectives through sport, they could:

- Create award/scholarship programs for projects and initiatives undertaken by civil society to promote development and cooperation through sports with the objective of achieving foreign policy objectives, such as the promotion of democracy, the rule of law, respect for human rights and social cohesion.

- Present best practices examples using communication tools, such as the social media, websites and documentaries.

- Organize specific events involving different diplomatic missions on the international day of sport for development and peace.

- Support projects and research relating to major sport events, including pre-event, parallel side events and activities promoting the culture, branding, image and values of the country.

- Identify the potential of sport as an aspect of economic diplomacy so that it could contribute to the economic, trade and business objectives of the country, contributing to its growth and competitiveness, leading to the creation of jobs.

- Establish a network of sport ambassadors to promote the countries values through sport. This can include current and former athletes, as well as coaches and sport officials.

- A group of experts from different governmental and non-governmental institutions, under the leadership of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs could be established to exchange expertise, discuss best practices and generate ideas on sport diplomacy.

- Include sport in the portfolio of cultural and trade counsellors/attaches, requesting them to take sport into account when assessing the social, economic and political situation in the country they are posted.

- Raise awareness within the Foreign Ministry on the potential use of sport as a diplomatic tool and a source of soft power.

- Facilitate good governance in sport, for the promotion of social inclusion, and encourage early positive sport experiences, as well as physical activity in schools through active learning, to promote volunteerism and the development of skills for future employment.

When considering the above recommendations, Governments should take into account today's globalized environment, where there is an increase of extremism as a result of terrorism and radicalization. Where economic crisis has considerably affected countries irrespective of their size or power, as well as regions. Furthermore, cultural differences, respect of human rights and individual differences should be taken into account, together with the existing legal framework and environmental elements. Finally, technological advances and available infrastructure and tools could be used to maximize the effectiveness of sport diplomacy. Thus developing the right diplomatic/marketing mix creates a competitive advantage that achieves foreign policy goals and objectives (Hunt & Arnett, 2004).

Chapter 6
Conclusion

Due to the complex and challenging context of today's world (e.g.: economic crisis, terrorism, increase of extremism and radicalization), it is more urgent than ever for states to reinvest and develop tools and resources to achieve their goals and objectives at international level.

Although sport has been downgraded in the past, today is considered by a number of countries as a tool to enhance their foreign policy and international relations, reaching a wider audience, effectively influencing external policies, enhancing their international image and influence (EU Commission, 2016a).

Sport could play an important role in different aspects of a country's external relations, in developing dialogue between states, in external development and assistance programs, as a facilitator in multilateral organizations and as part of a state's diplomacy in general. Sport can be used as a political tool to reach and understand a wider external audience, to improve international relations and foreign policy, positively affecting a country's brand, image and influence, creating opportunities for economic development and employment, as well as for the promotion of human rights, rule of law, equality and understanding.

6.1 Limitations

Despite the substantial findings of the current master thesis, a number of limitations should be taken into account in developing future research in the area of sport diplomacy.

Although interviews may allow the collection of several different opinions and ideas, qualitative research methods, such as interviews, have their limitations as samples used might be small and not representative of the general population (Kotler & Keller, 2016).

Furthermore, the results are based simply on what responders are stating. As a result, different researchers may interpret the same set of data in several ways, thus reaching at different conclusions (Thomas & Nelson, 2001).

This limitation was partially addressed by the use of other qualitative and quantitative research methods, such as questionnaires as well as the use of SWOT and PESTLE analyses. However, the validity and reliability of the results could further be facilitated by the use of multipurpose sources of data, where possible, such as the use of focus groups and observations (Thomas & Nelson, 2001). Furthermore, the use of a larger sample size, from a diverse population, including the general public (not only experts in the fields of foreign policy and sports), could be appropriate to generate a better understanding of the effect of sport diplomacy as a tool for foreign policy.

6.2 Recommendations for Future Studies

Future studies could examine the use and effect of sports in diplomatic practice in a more general and wide population. They could examine possible differences between small and large nations, as well as the potential use of sport diplomacy in developed and non-developed countries. Also the use of sport diplomacy in countries with different cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds could be examined (e.g.: the Arab world, African countries, Islamic countries etc.).

Studies could further concentrate on specific issues that could potentially be addressed through sport diplomacy. Examples could include sport diplomacy for social cohesion and inclusion, or the use of sport for the promotion of human rights, democracy and the rule of law, as well as gender equality. The effect of sport diplomacy on bilateral and multilateral relations, and the impact of sports on the development of economic, trade and business cooperation, could also be examined.

Furthermore, the role of sport diplomacy on the function of civil society and non-governmental organizations could be examined and its impact on people-to-people

contacts. In addition, the use of sport diplomacy in conjunction with other types of diplomacy, such as public and cultural diplomacy, could be considered.

Finally, studies could also include the planning, development and execution of sport diplomacy strategies for specific countries or regions. This could include short term and medium term strategies, as well as long-term approaches.

6.3 General Conclusion

In conclusion, the results of the current master thesis indicate that sport diplomacy has the ability to communicate with a wider audience, increasing people-to-people contacts, facilitating foreign policy and diplomatic practices in developing international relations, promoting economic, trade, business and investment cooperation, as well as cultural, educational and employment opportunities. Finally, the current master thesis lays the foundation for future strategies of sport diplomacy to be designed through an effective target marketing approach.

Appendix A
Interview Guide

• How is sport related to politics and diplomacy?

• How does politics affect sport?

• How does sport facilitate diplomacy?

• How does the transformation of traditional diplomacy to new diplomacy affect the functions and characteristics of sport diplomacy?

• What do the parameters of sport diplomacy imply?

• Could sports be used as tool for diplomacy? If yes how? If no, why not?

• How could sport diplomacy be defined?

• Could you give some examples where sports could affect diplomatic endeavours?

• Why has sport diplomacy yet to develop as a field of practice?

• Which theoretical frameworks apply to determine sport diplomacy's effectiveness?

• Has sport diplomacy proven successful?

• Why and how is sport diplomacy important?

• Why it is important to build sport diplomacy's capabilities?

• Could sport diplomacy be used as an effective diplomatic tool to ease tense relations between countries?

- To promote bilateral relations?

- To promote multilateral relations?

- To promote economic and trade relations? etc.

• Why has sport diplomacy succeeded on specific cases e.g ping-pong diplomacy or cricket diplomacy?

• Why has sport diplomacy failed on specific cases e.g Moscow 1980?

• How has it failed to improve diplomatic relations?

• When utilizing sports for diplomatic reasons have not borne positive results, what are the reasons behind it?

• How the celebration of international sporting events have heightened domestic tensions within the host countries? (e.g Rio 2016)

• How sports could heightened or resolve domestic and/or international tensions?

• Are there specific factors and or conditions that allow sport diplomacy to thrive?

• Could sport diplomacy contribute to the branding of a country/nation and how?

• What are the strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities of sport diplomacy and how these could be used or be avoided?

• How could sports be used as a tool for economic, trade and developmental promotion?

• What should be taken into account in the development of a sport diplomacy strategy?

• Which areas/fields/priorities could be included/taken into account in a sport diplomacy strategy?

• How could sport diplomacy contribute to the "marketing" / promotion of a country's policies and/or diplomatic practice?

• How could sport diplomacy act complementary to other forms of diplomacy? (e.g. cultural and public diplomacy?

• Could you suggest a way forward for the further development of sport diplomacy and the use of sports in shaping a country's foreign policy and diplomatic practice?

Appendix B
Questionnaires

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Please complete the following set of questions as accurately as possible.

Full name

Gender

Male	Female

Education

Secondary	University Degree	Master	PhD
Other (please specify) _____			

Age

Years:

All information provided will remain completely confidential.

Feizabadi et al. (2015) referred to the functions of sport as follow.

On a scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree) state your opinion.

Sports or sport diplomacy could be used as…

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
A tool for promotion of power and domination	1	2	3	4	5
A phenomenon to strengthen political ideology	1	2	3	4	5
A tool to destroy peacefulness	1	2	3	4	5
A way for provoking enmities	1	2	3	4	5
A tool to estimate and out graded nations	1	2	3	4	5
A tool for damaging the neutralized relations	1	2	3	4	5
A tool for revenge	1	2	3	4	5
Kind of easy business	1	2	3	4	5
A way to hide doping	1	2	3	4	5
A tool for tampering	1	2	3	4	5
A tool for racism	1	2	3	4	5
A tool for physical and verbal violence	1	2	3	4	5
A way to increase patriotism	1	2	3	4	5
A tool for integrating the minorities and tribes	1	2	3	4	5
Contributing tool for peace	1	2	3	4	5
A tool for encouraging the nationalism	1	2	3	4	5
A way to improve international relations	1	2	3	4	5
A way for strengthening peacefulness	1	2	3	4	5
A tool for nation's friendship	1	2	3	4	5
A way for increasing tolerance and kindness	1	2	3	4	5
A tool for reducing conflicts	1	2	3	4	5
A way for creating chivalry spirit	1	2	3	4	5
A tool for analyzing an especial	1	2	3	4	5
A way for explaining the opposes situation	1	2	3	4	5

Bainvel (2005) described the implications of sport and political use among the world as follow. On a scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree) state your opinion.

Sports or sport diplomacy could be used….

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
To integrate minorities	1	2	3	4	5
To boost peace	1	2	3	4	5
To encourage "sporting nationalism"	1	2	3	4	5
To promote power and domination	1	2	3	4	5
To amplify political ideology	1	2	3	4	5
To construct national identity	1	2	3	4	5
To share comradeship among nations	1	2	3	4	5
To amplify friendship	1	2	3	4	5
To support peace	1	2	3	4	5
To improve International Relations	1	2	3	4	5
To spoil peaceful situations	1	2	3	4	5
To agitate hatred	1	2	3	4	5
To provoke a country	1	2	3	4	5
To damage neutral relations	1	2	3	4	5
To install a fair-play spirit	1	2	3	4	5
To explain antagonism	1	2	3	4	5
To analyze a situation	1	2	3	4	5
To highlight existing conflict	1	2	3	4	5
To understand political troubles	1	2	3	4	5
To explore the world	1	2	3	4	5
To increase tolerance	1	2	3	4	5
To install revenge spirit	1	2	3	4	5
To make easy money	1	2	3	4	5
To hide doping	1	2	3	4	5
To intensify extreme chauvinism	1	2	3	4	5
To fix bribe	1	2	3	4	5
To amplify physical and verbal violence	1	2	3	4	5
To enlarge xenophobia and racism	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix C
Interviews Raw Data

Raw data from the interviews. Related or similar responses are placed in the same theme box and related theme boxes carry the same colour.

Sports could promote research and development as well as innovation (e.g. Formula 3) (Interview, 1).

Scientific exchange programmes and common research projects could be developed through sports to promote research and development but also the Olympic culture and education (i.e. Olympism) (Interview, 2).

Sports could promote investment both in events and infrastructure. For example the organization of a regatta could promote sailing but also sport tourism, as well as the development and promotion of relevant infrastructure, such as marinas, ports and fishing shelters (Interview, 1).

For example Qatar has invest on sports infrastructure and the promotion of sports in the country (Interview, 1).

Sport could promote a country internationally. For example at economic level (Interview, 3).

Trade could also be developed through sports. This is achieved through the assignment of international sport events to a country. Such assignments helps the local industry and businesses to be developed (e.g. construction industry, production of sport gear and accessories) and by extension job opportunities are created. This could help to overcome economic crisis (Interview, 3).

Sport events could also be used as platforms for other industries to promote themselves. Such industries/businesses could range from sport related businesses to the food industry or even to real estate industry (Interview, 3).

Sport can promote bilateral, multilateral, economic and trade relations (Interview, 6).

Sport could be part of economic diplomacy. One barrier in economic and trade relations is the language. Sport however, is an international language and can break this barrier. (Interview, 7).

International level and Olympic athletes could be used for promotion of their country. They could become business and sport diplomacy Ambassadors. The same applies for teams (e.g. Kontides, Baghdadis, APOEL). (Interview, 1)

Sportsmen and sportswomen can have a massive positive impact as role models (Interview, 9).

Promotion of the country's image. Themes like "Cyprus image" and/or "Cyprus story" could be presented through sports (i.e. success). (Interview, 1)

For example the organization of a regatta could promote sailing but also sport tourism (Interview, 1)

Persons or groups from sectors other than sports could be included in international sport missions. For example cultural or folklore dancing/music groups could be included to promote the culture of the country. Consequently, tourism could be promoted, as well as development and investments (Interview, 2).

Sport could be used to promote a country as well as its tourism. Sport tourism could be developed. For example the German athletic national team trains regularly in Cyprus and Scandinavian teams organize training camps during winter in Cyprus (Interview, 2).

Sport could promote a country internationally. For example at economic level. E.g. Cyprus could be used for training camps due to its climate, variety of sport infrastructure, short travelling times between sport sides, easy access etc. (Interview, 3).

An industry that benefits directly in the case of international sport events is the hospitality/tourist industry (e.g. hotels, restaurants, car rentals, tourism etc.) (Interview, 3).

People at key positions at international sport organizations often try to promote their country (Interview, 3).

In the case of the tourist industry and sport tourism, if athletes have a good experience from the games or training camp in a country, the chances that they will return as tourists or that they will encourage others (friends, relatives etc.) to visit the country are increased (Interview, 3).

Tourism can be promoted. E.g. Sport tourism. Not only for sporting reasons but also to get to know the society and the culture of the country. This will create economic development and jobs (Interview, 7).

At the 2003 Special Olympics World Summer Games in Dublin, the organizers in their attempt to involve the whole country in the Games and to promote the relations of their country with the participating countries, as well as promoting social inclusion and understanding, assigned each country to a town in Ireland. The week prior to the Games cultural and sporting events took place in the respective towns with the active participation of each country's team. The objective was to make both countries' culture and history known to each other, but also to create relations and links both at the national level and at the society's level. Furthermore, the different activities attracted tourists to the respective towns, helping the economy of the local communities. Also the guest country had the opportunity to promote its own tourism industry (Interview, 9).

Par-Olympians could be used for the promotion of equal rights and opportunities for handicaps. Sports are not mutually exclusive (Interview, 1).

Scientific exchange programmes and common research projects could be developed through sports to promote research and development but also the Olympic culture and education (i.e. Olympism) (Interview, 2).

Sport could also benefit a country at educational and social level, as it promotes values like fair play, gender equality and mutual respect. It could also help in goal setting, strategic planning and achieving different targets (Interview, 3).

Sport promotes respect and fair play (Interview, 9).

Sport can be used as a tool for life coaching and personal development. In some countries such as Israel, life coaching programs are run in collaboration with local communities/municipalities, promoting social inclusion and developing life skills for children with special needs. Such programmes could benefit the health system of a country creating financial and economic benefits, allowing funds and human resources to be directed to other sectors that may have needs (Interview, 5).

Olympics is the most prominent example of the influence of sports in diplomatic endeavours. I must certainly commemorate Nelson Mandela. "Sports has the power to change the world". It was a positive example of sport diplomacy as a major tool against racism (Interview, 6).

Olympic spirit. Sport is a way of improving and enhancing the lives of people. It can be used for the integration and understanding of migrants. As a tool for understanding and mutual acceptance (Interview, 7).

Sport diplomacy can be used in schools to get immigrants involved through sports with the community and make them accepted (Interview, 7).

Sport can be used to integrate minorities if society is ready. This can be done through a bottom down approach (citizens – leadership) and by a top-down approach where the government prepares the society (Interview, 9).

Sport could also be used for integration of refugees due the latest political developments. In cases where the refugees are not welcomed, the opportunity of participating in a sport event could contribute in a smoother integration into the society (Interview, 10).

Sport could be part of cultural diplomacy, it could be about human rights, gender equality and children rights (Interview, 7).

In order for a state to be successful in sport diplomacy or sport practices, it should first develop the appropriate "man power" and build on it (Interview, 1).

Another example is the protocols of cooperation (MoUs) in sports between different countries. However the implementation of such protocols is often problematic, as there is no follow-up. To overcome this problem the first point of contact could be the respective Diplomatic Mission of the contracting parties/countries, which would oversee and facilitate the implementation of such cooperation agreements. Furthermore, during the negotiations of such agreements, the Embassies should be directly involved and made aware of the needs of their country but also of the opportunities that could arise from them, as well as of what their country has to offer to the other party. In other words the strengths or advantages of their country in the field (i.e. infrastructure, expertise, scientific knowledge, sport programmes etc.). This will also help the development of appropriate porgrammes and expertise for sport diplomacy to be effective (Interview, 2).

Relations could be promoted between sport clubs and sporting federations. Such relations could lead to the organization of different sport events (Interview, 3).

Through the oraganisation of sport events, especially at international level, sport clubs and sport federations have economic revenues, which could be invested in the development of spots in the country and athletes benefit from them. Hence the chances for a sporting success internationally, which by extension will promote the country, are increased (Interview, 3).

The Embassies could prepare the ground for contacts between countries not only at the leaders' level but also at the peoples/society level through campaigns. They could play a crucial role especially prior to the organization of a sport event, by creating the right environment within the society. They could organize pre-event meetings and events at the people level, helping to communicate the correct messages at political level (Interview, 3).

For everything to success (i.e sport diplomacy) it has to become part of the institutions. In many countries, it could be the non-governmental orgnanistation what can start that and bring presusure to the government, or people or it could be even leaders because people discuss about these issues in various international fora. It needs people, leaders and institutions to make it successful (Interview, 7).

Diplomatic practice could aim in organizing sport events, on-day meeting or conferences whose theme could be the Olympic Games, international sport relations, the promotion of the Olympic Truce etc., in an attempt to promote their own diplomatic objectives (Interview, 10).

At the same time it sponsored Barcelona a team which has been acting as an Ambassador for UNICEF. By doing this Qatar improved its image in terms of human rights protection (Interview, 1).

Sport diplomacy could be used at political and sports levels. It could be used as a mediation tool (e.g. Israel-Palestine) or for the promotion of illegal entities (e.g. the so-called illegal entity "TRNC") (Interview, 2).

Bilateral relations could be developed, mainly at people-to-people level. At political level it's more difficult, due to the different interests or conflicts between countries (e.g. Cyprus-Turkey, Russia-Ukraine). However, at political level, sport could create a bond between countries, especially in the cases where there are no strong conflicts of interest (Interview, 3).

It could act as a bridge between the relations of some countries (Interview, 3).

To the point that diplomacy targets on building bridges between nations, sport games can facilitate diplomacy. Sport diplomacy can be very efficient in affecting public opinion. Social and international sporting events are usually used to send political messages and facilitate diplomatic links (Interview, 6).

Sport facilitate diplomacy, bringing people together. Through sports problems can be solved at people-to-people relations or through non-governmental organizations. People get together and try to solve their problems in a different way (Interview, 7).

It could also be used to create conflicts between countries, when the political relations between such countries are not good or have they have disagreement over a political matter. One such example was the fighting between the Lyon – Beshiktas football funs when France and Turkey were at disagreement over political issues (Interview, 3).

Sometimes sports are used to deteriorate diplomatic relations (Interview, 6).

Persons or groups from sectors other than sports could be included in international sport missions……Also through such involvement/participation a political priority of a country or an international problem could be made known (e.g. Cyprus problem / refugees Olympic team) (Interview, 2).

Sport could be used to promote the policy of a country or a purpose. It can act as a medium to start relations the two countries not necessarily in sport. It can be used as a pretext. For example if a country would like to reinstall its bilateral relations with Iran, a first step could be made through sport and more specifically wrestling. A sport where Iran excels and has a tradition in practicing it. Therefore a workshop in wrestling or a training camp could be organized in both countries (Interview, 2).

Through sport events small countries are given the chance to be heard and become known. One example was the 2013 Francophone Games in France. Before the opening ceremony, the President of France, Mr. François Hollande, came at the area where the athletes were and welcomed each mission separately. When he met the Cyprus team, he was pleasantly surprised, because he didn't expect a small country, which in theory had no cultural or linguistic links with France to participate in games where either countries who are French speaking or have traditional cultural and historical (ex-colonies) links with France participate. During his speech at the opening ceremony, he took the opportunity and commented on Cyprus participation, giving a special welcoming to the Cypriot team, using it as an example of international relations and friendship beyond close borders (Interview, 8).

Sport is also a tool for increasing national pride. The only two cases where that the national anthem of a country is played and its national flag is raised during an official ceremony publically, outside the country, are when the President or Prime Minister of a country is visiting another country or when a country wins a gold medal at a sporting event (Interview, 8).

For smaller countries sport is a source of national pride (Interview, 9).

The hosting of Olympic Games could also have a symbolic meaning, irrespective of the final result, at the international relations level (Interview, 11).

The use of sports as a means to politics and diplomacy has had both positive and negative interconnections over history. Politics set the framework, within which sport activities operate. Politics may have a positive or negative effect to sport, depending on the specific circumstances and the politicians (Interview, 6).

Politics affect sport. For example during apartheid, the African National Congress was asking people not to participate in sport (Interview, 7).

Sport is a vehicle for political messages (Interview, 9).

Peace can also be promoted through sports if used correctly (Interview, 7).

If sport diplomacy is correctly applied, it could become the mean by which cultural differences can be overcome and it could bring people closer (Interview, 11).

Media play a crucial role in promoting a sport event. In the case of a bilateral or international event, the media could pass the message that sport brings together, unite and solve political problems building friendship between people (Interview, 3).

During the latest European football championship, western media used as a pretext the fighting between hooligans before the game England-Russia to harm Russia's image. Western media referred only to Russian fans, hiding the fact that English fans and fans from other countries took part in the fightings. The fighting were presented like a fight between the East and the West. Media were politically driven. (Interview, 4).

Sports could be an ideal platform for the media to promote a peace culture. Sport creates a space where dialogue could take place (Interview, 10).

Sports and sport results had always a magnifying influence and importance to spectators due to media. That's why investing in sport is a less costly option for a state or a political system to be promoted, while at the same time it builds a national identity (Interview, 11).

It can also promote cooperation between and within regions (e.g. Mediterranean region) (Interview, 1).

Diplomatic Missions could collaborate with local and national sport federations and clubs to promote the sports and the country. For example exchange programs, training camps, organization of sport events. Such activities supports the economy and could lead to the creation of new jobs and by extension to reduction of unemployment. Also allows the share of expertise and best practices between countries (Interview, 1).

Furthermore, cooperation at local as well as at international level, within and between different Ministries could take place using sports as tool to tackle problems such as obesity. For example the Ministry of Education together with the Ministry of Health could create programs at schools through sports to promote healthy eating and exercising (Interview, 2).

People can invest in sports, bringing jobs to people, forcing people from different cultures to work together for a mutual goal (Interview, 7).

Volunteerism can have an important impact on the individual. For example expertise for future employability (Interview, 9).

Sport can be seen as a part of cultural diplomacy. Such kind of issues has a great advantage in «breaking the ice» (Interview, 6).

Sport games may offer the opportunity to people to relax, express feelings and communicate each other, which is the base to understand and accept differences between cultures and countries (Interview, 6).

The new diplomacy era is characterized by the involvement of more international actors and different groups from the public, to interfere with negotiations. Through the years, it became apparent that sports issues can really affect mazes of people, touching the public opinion. The importance of the multiple functions and characteristics of sport diplomacy started to increase, as well as other forms of the public diplomacy (Interview, 6).

I suppose that the social, cultural, economic and political parameters of sport diplomacy may imply that what makes the sport diplomacy influential, are the specific attributes of sports as popular activities that overcome national boundaries (Interview, 6).

It is important because it has the possibility to affect directly a large audience (Interview, 6).

Sport could be a main tool (of diplomacy), because everybody can participate in sports, and can act complementary to other forms of diplomacy. It can be applied to all social classes. In sports you can avoid language barriers. It's an international language. It can be used at one-to-one level and at a team level (Interview, 7).

As international sport events are watched by millions of people worldwide, sport diplomacy has become one of the most effective tools for influencing a wide audience by consciously creating role models, who are dressed with world known athletic brands and gear i.e. for marketing (Interview, 10).

Appendix D
SWOT Analysis

Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats of Sport (SWOT Analysis).

Strengths

- Powerful image (European Commission, 2016a)

- Media attraction

- Reflects the society. "It appeals to the general public" (European Commission, 2016a)

- Sport is a global language (Thurston, 2015)

- Olympic Values / Empowerment (UNHCR, 2016)

- It has the power to inspire (Mandela, 2000; Laureous World Awards)

- Volunteerism (Aggelopoulos, 2013)

Weaknesses

- Can me misused

- Sometimes expensive

- Lack of Funding (EU Commission, 2016a, Loroupe, 2017)

Opportunities

- Creates opportunities for sponsorships

- Economic developments and benefits

- Investments

- Job creation

- Tourism development

- Reconciliation and Peacebuilding

Threats

- Doping

- Match fixing

- Money laundering

- Racism / Xenophobia

- Violence / Hooliganism

- Political Influence

- Corruption

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