



BTC TRADE FOR DEVELOPMENT



***POLISH MARKET FOR FAIR
(AND SUSTAINABLE)
SPORTS BALLS***

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CONSUMPTION

Poland is one of the promising EU countries for sports balls producers from developing countries, especially because the European Football Cup will be held in Poland in 2012. This chapter provides information on the Polish market for sports balls, fairtrade in Poland and fairtrade/FSC sports balls in Poland. Polish imports of sports balls and the most important distribution channels for sports balls in Poland will also be discussed, together with the most important players on the Polish (fairtrade/FSC) sports balls market. For more information on sports balls consumption on a global and EU level, please refer to chapter 4 Consumption of the main document. For consumption in other promising EU countries, please refer to the separate documents.

> POLISH MARKET FOR SPORTS BALLS

Football is the most popular sport in Poland with 450,000 members. Other popular sports balls are basketball with 20,800 members, volleyball with 18,000 members and handball with 17,500 members.

Unfortunately no figures are known about how many sports balls are sold on a yearly basis.

EURO2012

In 2012, the European Football Championships will be held in Poland and Ukraine. This will give an enormous boost to sales of footballs and already now, many investments are made in preparation of the EURO2012. The most interesting activity at the moment is the programme of the Ministry of Sports and Tourism named “My Sports Field – Orlik 2012”. The mission is that each Polish zloty spent on sports and promotion of healthy lifestyle is a Polish zloty saved on medical treatment and health protection.

The objective of the programme is to build a sports and recreational complex in every community. The complex shall include two sports fields: one soccer field and one multi-functional field for basketball and volleyball. In addition, each facility shall be provided with social and sanitary facilities with locker rooms. Each built facility will be owned by the community. Furthermore, the Ministry of Sports and Tourism provides a set of sport equipment including 16 sports balls for each newly opened Orlik facility. In 2010 around 340 sets were sponsored. The purchasing of these sets is decentralised and done by several different sports federations.

Fairtrade Poland is working on a promotional plan to donate Fairtrade sports balls during the opening events of the Orlik sports fields. They are still looking for sponsors to finance it.

CODES OF CONDUCT

The Polish market is very price oriented. Price and value-for-money are the most important criteria when choosing a supplier. There are hardly any companies on the Polish market who include social criteria in their requirements. It is estimated that this is less than 10% of all importing companies.

> FAIRTRADE IN POLAND

Sales of Fairtrade products in Poland is still at a very low level. Most Polish consumers do not really care about how the products they buy

were produced, although the demand for organic products is growing rapidly. Price and value-for-price are still the most important purchasing criteria. Even though the market is very fragmented and lacks a monitoring system, it is estimated that the Fairtrade market increased by about 20% in 2009.

Research of the Polish Fairtrade Coalition in November 2009 showed that more than half (56%) of Poles aged 15-49 years has not yet come across the term "Fairtrade". Still even fewer recognise the Fairtrade certification system. 79% have never seen the Fairtrade mark and only 21% knew that the mark means that products are made in a way that guarantees better life for developing country producers.

62% of the Poles would actually be willing to pay more for products with an ethical origin, but usually it are small amounts. For example, one in five (19%) is willing to pay a higher price by up to 5%, and almost as many (22%) an additional 5% to 10%.

> POLISH MARKET FOR FAIRTRADE/FSC SPORTS BALLS

The company Natura Rzeczy sold around 50 fairtrade and FSC labelled sportsballs (brand Ethletic) in 2008 and 2009 together. At the moment Natura Rzeczy does not sell fairtrade sports balls anymore. That leaves the Polish Fair Trade Association "Third World and Us" (Trzeci Świat i My) to be the only company on the Polish market who currently sells fairtrade sports balls. In their assortment is one fairtrade football. They estimate to sell around 30 to 40 footballs on a yearly basis.

At the moment there is no company active anymore in selling FSC sports balls. The company Natura Rzeczy sold around 50 fairtrade and FSC labelled sportsballs (brand Ethletic) in 2008 and 2009 together.

IMPORTS

In 2009, Poland was a medium-sized importer of sports balls, ranking ninth in the EU, behind the Netherlands and Denmark, but ahead of Sweden and Greece. Between 2005 and 2009, total import value annually increased by an average 2.7% to €11 million in 2009. In the same period, imports from DCs annually decreased by 1.3% in value. Compared to 2005, the total share of DCs in import value increased slightly to 42% in 2009.

In 2009, leading suppliers to Poland were Germany, China, Belgium, Pakistan and Thailand. Belgium recorded highest growth in the period mentioned (20% per year), followed by China (+19%), Germany (+13%) and Thailand (+7.5%). Imports from Pakistan declined (17.7%), as did imports from India (-21%), France (-17%), Italy (-15%) and the Netherlands (-2.5%). Refer to Table 1 for more information.

Table 1 Imports by and leading suppliers of sports balls to Poland, 2005-2009, share in % of value in 2009

Supplier group	2005 € mln	2007 € mln	2009 € mln	Leading suppliers in 2009	Share
Total	10	11	11		
Intra-EU	5	7	6	Germany (34), Belgium (12), The Netherlands (3.6), Italy (3.5), France (2.7)	58
Extra-EU excl. DCs*	0	0	0	Taiwan (0.3), USA (0.1)	0.4
DCs	5	5	5	China (23), Pakistan (11), Thailand (5.1), India (1.3), Macedonia (1.2), Vietnam (0.2), Philippines (0.1)	42

Source: Eurostat (2010)

*DCs=Developing Countries

DISTRIBUTION CHANNELS IN POLAND

The most important distribution channels for sports balls in the EU are multinationals (like adidas and Nike, but also regional brands), sporting goods importers and wholesalers and sports retail chains. Some non-specialised retail chains, such as supermarkets, hypermarkets and department stores also have sports balls in their assortment. In the case of fairtrade/FSC/sustainable sports balls, specialised fairtrade importers are also an important distribution channel.

The demand in Poland can be divided, like any other, into sports clubs, schools and private persons. Private persons can buy their sports balls in sports retail shops, hypermarkets or on the internet, while sports clubs and schools have various channels available to purchase their equipment, such as importers, wholesalers and also sports retail chains.

> SPORTS RETAIL CHAINS

Besides the large sports retail chains, there are still many local sports retail shops active in Poland. Also, there are many webshops for sports equipment active on the Polish market. While the large sports retail chains import their sports goods directly from large brands and from their international headquarters, the small shops buy from Polish importers or wholesalers (depending on the size). The major sports retail chains in Poland are:

- > **Decathlon** - <http://www.decathlon.pl> - international sports retail chain with around 20 shops in Poland. Decathlon PRO is the B2B part of Decathlon and delivers to sports clubs, sports organisations and schools.
- > **Go Sport** - <http://www.go-sport.pl> - international sports retail chain, headquartered in France. It currently has 24 shops in Poland.
- > **Intersport** - <http://www.intersport.pl> - international sports retail chain with currently 28 shops in Poland.

> SPORTING GOODS IMPORTERS/WHOLESALERS

In Poland there used to be a clear division of tasks between importers and wholesalers. However, lately this division is disappearing and many wholesalers currently import their own sports balls (at least their private label balls). Importers sell to wholesalers, larger sports retail shops, schools and sport clubs. Wholesalers mainly sell to smaller retail shops. Examples of importers and importing wholesalers are:

- > **Folc Sport** - <http://www.folc.pl> - importer/distributor of sports equipment in Poland.
- > **SMJ Sport** - <http://www.smjsport.pl> - one of the largest importers of sports equipment in Poland. Sells to schools, wholesalers, larger sports shops and sports clubs.
- > **Sportech** - <http://www.sportech.pl> - large importer/wholesaler of sports equipment. Sells mainly to small sports shops.

> OTHERS

Other distribution channels for sports balls are specialised importers and general retail chains, such as hypermarkets. Hypermarkets usually import their (low-quality) balls through their headquarters. The only company who currently sells fairtrade sports balls is:

- > **Polish Fair Trade Association "Third World and Us"** - <http://www.sprawiedliwyhandel.pl> - currently the only place in Poland where one can buy fairtrade sports balls.

> HOW TO DO BUSINESS IN POLAND

For more information about how to do business in Poland, refer to <http://www.kwintessential.co.uk/etiquette/doing-business-poland.html>.

> USEFUL SOURCES

- > **Natura Rzeczy** - <http://www.naturarzeczy.pl> - large fairtrade/organic store in Poland. Used to sell fairtrade/FSC sports balls.
- > **Polish Fair Trade Coalition** - <http://www.fairtrade.org.pl> - promotes the Fair Trade movement in Poland.
- > **Polish Football Association** - <http://www.pzpn.pl>.
- > **Polish Ministry of Sport and Tourism** - <http://www.msport.gov.pl> - in the English version of the website you can find links to the main sports associations. The Polish Ministry of Sport and Tourism is also responsible for the programme "My Sports Field - Orlik 2012".
- > **Polish Volleyball Federation** - <http://www.pzps.pl/en/home.html>.