



Joint model of vocationally oriented Master in Sport Professions

Agreement by the SPEED Consortium members

Elbasan, 17 May 2015

(Open access preview)

The academic partners of the SPEED project intend to harmonize their curricula and share a strategy to link the competencies and qualifications of Sport Science graduates to the changing socioeconomic needs. In fact, however valuable current curricula may be, vocationally oriented Master programs are a priority for both European, as well as all Western Balkan countries, particularly as they face a general process of Westernisation in lifestyle, increased life expectancy & related health & social problems. Promoting sport events and a sustainable tourism & wellness industry, is a priority in the development plans of the Western Balkan countries, while sport is also a recognized tool in promoting health & socioeconomic development, contributing to universal education, social inclusion, prevention & reduction of violence, gender equality, environmental sustainability. Motivated, expert sport professionals are needed, able to address these diverse needs and foster a transfer of skills into everyday life situations.

Indeed, while as in other European countries the job market in Western Balkan countries shows a decrease in the demand of traditional Physical Education teachers or coaches, new skills and expertise are required by the expanding fields of health-related physical activity, the leisure & wellness industry, tourism, sport events, management, etc., which are creating a job market of their own. Although Sport Science graduates should be the most obvious candidates for such positions, their current qualifications do not match the actual needs, also on account of a lack of flexibility and permeability in the curricula.

As in any other sector, also in sport and exercise area there is a general increase of the formal levels of qualification, even if the key criteria for employment remain the functional competence, mainly depending on field experience. To this aim, one of the main outcome of the SPEED project is to address the need of new sectorial qualifications in the strategic fields of health-related physical education & physical activity, wellness, leisure & tourism, sport management, social work, developing **a joint model of vocationally oriented Master** with diverse learning outcomes & competencies to provide a better match between job market needs and the qualifications offered, while fostering partnership between universities and stakeholders, and practical training in real working environment.

The model implies education and training methodologies that contain aspects of both academic and vocational areas, with a greater and more direct involvement of public and private sector employers. The final degrees are located at levels equivalent to levels 7 of the European qualifications framework (EQF).

The involvement of the various stakeholders (**labour** market actors, social partners, professional organizations, ecc.) has been considered at different level:

- ✓ *Curriculum development:* through a) the full endorsement to the project of European Network of Sport Science, Education & Employment (ENSSEE), Serbian Institute of Sport, Albanian National Olympic Committees, Association Sport-for-All Serbia, Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Tirana, Kosova* Chamber of Commerce, Ministry of Youth and Sports – Serbia, Ministry of Education and Science Albania, Ministry of Education, Science & Technology – Kosovo*, whose representatives participated to the development phase of the curricula, and b) local consultation of employers on the existing and new developed curricula;
- ✓ *Consultancy:* representatives from relevant public and private stakeholders will act as consultation bodies in the programs' management and quality assurance procedures;
- ✓ *Teaching :* Relevant stakeholders will be involved in offering guest lectures and practical classes;



- ✓ *Work placements:* internships, work-based assignments, company based thesis works.

On the basis of the 1) existing academic & professional sport science curricula in Serbia, Albania and Kosovo*; 2) related curricula in the EU universities; 3) the socioeconomic needs and job-market requirements & trends; 4) the graduate tracking & job market survey; 5) study visits of faculty members from partner country to EU partner universities, the SPEED consortium identified the sectorial qualifications (*sport coaching, health-related physical education or exercise training, sport management*) consistent with the socioeconomic development of the Western Balkans in the area, while defining the joint model for Vocationally Oriented (VO) Master for Sport professions as summarized in Table 1, with a common core reflecting EU standards and possible specialisations, acquired through a strong involvement of private sector & social partners.

Quality assurance - Quality assurance activities shall be implemented every year, through program evaluation from the students and staff, and monitoring of the course of studies, in terms of passed exams, length of course of studies, drop-out rates. Cyclically, monitoring of post graduation career will be object of follow-up analysis.

Table 1 – Joint Model of Vocationally Oriented Master in Sport Professions		
	Professional Master	Master of Science
Admission requirements	Bachelor in Sport Science or related degrees – Other degrees	Bachelor in Sport Science or related degrees – Other degrees
Background ^{a,b} (<i>minimum requirements for admission</i>) 5 - 15 ECTS Up to 12 ECTS Up to 4 ECTS Up to 5 ECTS	Exercise Sciences Natural & Medical Sciences Psycho-Pedagogical Sciences Economy, Law	Exercise Sciences Natural & Medical Sciences Psycho-Pedagogical Sciences Economy, Law
Duration (ECTS)	60 - 90	60 – 120^c
Academic areas that will contribute to the education & training	Exercise Sciences Natural & Medical Sciences Humanities Economy, Law	Exercise Sciences Natural & Medical Sciences Humanities Economy, Law
Research Methodology (ECTS)	5 - 8	10 - 30
ICT (ECTS)	3	3
VO Education & Training Seminars /Practical teaching/ Internship/work-placement (ECTS)	Not less than 16%	Not less than 16%
Final Exam/Thesis (ECTS)	5 – 15 (also involving field work)	20 – 45 (up to 60) (also involving field work)
^a Depending from the master specialization. ^b On the basis of fixed criteria, previous informal and non-formal education and certified professional experience could be recognized as ECTS. ^c At least 300 ECTS of total University education.		



Relevant, agreed aspects are as follow:

Admission requirements: To be admitted to a VO Master in Sport Professions, in addition to a bachelor degree, it is mandatory to have earned a minimum requirement of ECTS from exercise sciences (i.e., motor control and learning, motor development, theory of training, training methodology, sport disciplines, exercise prescription, etc.), natural and medical sciences (i.e., anatomy, physiology, biochemistry, biology, biomechanics, sport medicine, etc.) and humanities (i.e., sport pedagogy, sport psychology, sociology, ecc.), with the exception of master in sport management, where a minimum background in exercise and economy sciences are required. The bachelor degree in sport science area (sport or movement sciences, physical education, kinesiology, etc.) is the first-level qualification fully recognised. Other undergraduate degrees can be evaluated to determine their consistency with the learning outcomes of the specific master program. On the basis of fixed criteria defined by the program board, certified professional experience, competences and skills could be recognised as ECTS.

Duration: The VO Master programs in Sport Professions consist of 60 up to 120 ECTS leading to the qualification of specialised coach or trainer (not less than 240 ECTS of University education), specialised sport manager (not less than 270 ECTS of University education), health-related or social-related PE teacher or exercise specialist (not less than 270 ECTS of University education). When the program is leading to a Master of Science (MSc) degree (not less than 300 ECTS of University education), a minimum of 30 credits have to be attributed to a research based thesis (not less than 20 ECTS) and in subjects in which the student gains competences and skills in subjects focusing on research methodology and theory of science (10 ECTS), respectively.

Vocationally Oriented activities: To provide a match between job market needs and the qualifications offered, the VO Master programs in Sport Professions shall include not less than 20% of teaching and practical training in real working environment distributed among seminars, practical classes, internships, work-placement (16%) and final exam or thesis (4 – 10%).

Research Methodology and ICT: Basic knowledge and skills in information & communication technology, as well as basic to advanced knowledge and skills in research methodology and are considered fundamental for all master graduates in sport professions.



Joint model of VO Master in Sport Coaching

Agreement by the SPEED Consortium members

Elbasan, 17 May 2015

On the basis of the outcomes of both the previous European Project AEHESIS - Align a European Higher Education Structure in Sport Science (*Higher Education in Sport in Europe - From Labour Market Demand to Training Supply, Meyer & Meyer Sport, 2008*), where the framework for the development of model curricula refers to the recognition of competence and qualifications, the SPEED survey and the comparison of existing European curricula, the following key aspects for a VO Master program in Sports Coaching (Table 2) have been defined:

Standard occupations: a) Master coach of performance-oriented athletes, with specializations in talent identified/performance athletes (children, adolescents, adults) or full-time/high performance athletes; b) Master coach of participation-oriented sportspeople, with specializations in beginners (children, adolescents, adults) or participation-oriented sportspeople (children, adolescents, adults)

Key competences: Plan, implement, analyse and revise multi-annual coaching programmes. Demonstrate advanced coaching competence, innovation and leadership.

Learning outcome: Graduates from a VO Master in Sports Coaching will be able to develop a critical understanding of sport coaching through the examination of underpinning theories, models, concepts and applied research skills pertinent to coaching practice and overall management of the coaching process.

They will have advanced knowledge of:

- theory and practice of management related to sports coaching, including the pedagogical approaches to sports coaching, training methodologies and coaching practices, motor skill acquisition and the role of sports medicine in coaching
- theories and practice of leadership in a sports coaching setting
- scientific principles of sport nutrition
- psychological theories that underpin sports coaching
- research methodologies relevant to addressing questions related to sports coaching
- ways in which different research practices can advance the body of knowledge in sports coaching.

Other relevant issues: Courses of study must take place in collaboration with federation, national competent authorities, sport clubs, sport association. Practical involvement in sports coaching for a specified period and with specified groups of sportspeople or coaches are mandatory. Systems for the recognition of prior learning and current competence that are specific and applicable to the sports coaching context should be put in place and should include recognition of the experience of former athletes, as well as other relevant experience.

Table 2. Vocationally Oriented Master in Sports Coaching
Referent curriculum model as agreed by SPEED consortium

	Professional Master	Master of Science ^a
Admission requirements	Bachelor in SpS or related degrees – Other degrees	Bachelor in SpS or related degrees – Other degrees
Background ^b (<i>minimum requirements for admission</i>) 15 ECTS 10 ECTS 4 ECTS	Exercise Sciences Natural & Medical Sciences Psycho-Pedagogical Sciences	Exercise Sciences Natural & Medical Sciences Psycho-Pedagogical Sciences
Duration (ECTS)	60 - 90	60 - 120
Academic areas (ECTS range):		
Exercise Sciences	15 - 25	15 - 30
Natural & Medical Sciences	10 - 15	10 - 20
Psycho-pedagogical Sciences	8 - 10	8 - 12
Others (Economy, law)	3 - 6	3 - 6
Research Methodology	5 - 8	10 - 30
ICT	3	3
VO Education & Training Seminars /Practical teaching/ Internship/work-placement (ECTS)	10 - 20	10 - 24
Final Exam/Thesis	5 - 15	20 - 45/60

^a At least 300 ECTS of total University education.

^b On the basis of fixed criteria, previous informal and non-formal education and certified professional experience could be recognized as ECTS.

Joint model of VO Master in Sports Management

Agreement by the SPEED Consortium members

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On the basis of the outcomes of both the previous European Project AEHESIS - Align a European Higher Education Structure in Sport Science (*Higher Education in Sport in Europe - From Labour Market Demand to Training Supply, Meyer & Meyer Sport, 2008*), the SPEED survey and the comparison of existing European curricula, the following key aspects for a VO Master program in Sports Management (Table 3) have been defined:

Standard occupations: a) Local Sport Manager or Director in a city or municipality; b) Sport Club Manager or Director; c) Manager or Director in National Sport Federation; d) Manager in a Fitness Club.

Key competences: Understanding how political, economic, social and cultural factors influence the leisure market and responding to tourism and sport enterprises, public institutions and others organisations development; being able to evaluate and predict the national and international business



environment; being creative, proactive and receptive to the challenges; assimilating modern technologies and being able to apply contemporary scientific achievements in the activities of an organisation, enterprise or its division;

Learning outcome: The VO Master in Sports management shall be designed to enable the students to achieve the following learning outcomes:

- incorporate an understanding of ethical, legal, and socio-cultural issues in designing of marketing systems, strategies and campaigns in sport;
- demonstrate information literacy and oral, written, and group communication skills;
- employ sound principles, techniques and methods of strategic planning, practical management and human resource management in sport;
- use of marketing techniques in implementing sports products,
- knowledge of laws and rights in sport;
- apply research results in sport management.

Other relevant issues: Courses of study must take place in collaboration with the sport industry, including professional sport organizations, university athletic departments, community and recreational sport agencies, amateur sports organizations, sport management firms, and sport media enterprises. Practical involvement in sports management for a specified period is mandatory.

Table 3. Vocationally Oriented Master in Sports Management
Referent curriculum model as agreed by SPEED consortium

	Professional Master	Master of Science ^a
Admission requirements	Bachelor in SpS or related degrees – Economy - Other degrees	Bachelor in SpS or related degrees – Economy - Other degrees
Background ^b (minimum requirements for admission) 5 ECTS 5 ECTS	Sport Disciplines Economy	Sport Disciplines Economy
Duration (ECTS)	60 - 90	60 - 120
Academic areas (ECTS range): Exercise Sciences ^c Economy Psycho-pedagogical Sciences Others (Law)	5 - 10 15 - 25 8 - 10 8 - 15	5 - 10 15 - 25 8 - 12 8 - 15
Research Methodology	5 - 8	10 - 30
ICT	3	3
VO Education & Training Seminars /Practical teaching/ Internship/work-placement (ECTS)	10 - 20	10 - 24
Final Exam/Thesis	5 - 15	20 - 45/60

^a At least 300 ECTS of total University education.

^b On the basis of fixed criteria, previous informal and non-formal education and certified professional experience could be recognized as ECTS.

^c such as Olympic Movement, Ethical Perspectives in Sport & Physical Activities, etc.



Joint model of VO Master in Health-related Physical Education or Physical Activity

Agreement by the SPEED Consortium members

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Because of the well documented health benefits of physical activity, authorities recommend quality school physical education, where students learn not just sport skills, but the context or rationale for participating in physical activity, and health-promoting physical activity for all ages (prevention, aging, sport therapy). On the basis of the outcomes of both the previous European Project AEHESIS - Align a European Higher Education Structure in Sport Science (*Higher Education in Sport in Europe - From Labour Market Demand to Training Supply, Meyer & Meyer Sport, 2008*), the SPEED survey and the comparison of existing European curricula, the following key aspects for a VO Master program in Health-related Physical Education or Health-related Physical Activity (Table 4) have been defined:

Standard occupations: Specialist PE Teacher or Health-related Exercise Specialist (depending from the curricula specialization), with different employment opportunities in schools as well as public health services to private health companies, workplace health promotion, physical reeducation and rehabilitation, adapted physical activity for special groups, fitness or wellness clubs, social services, schools, leisure and recreation, tourism industry, etc.,

Key competences: Design and implement public health educational programmes of physical activity for the prevention of major risk factors and chronic disorders (e.g., obesity, diabetes, hypertension, etc.). Conduct risk stratification of subjects before exercise prescription and exercise testing. Design, administer and evaluate graded exercise tests. Design, administer and monitor, under medical supervision, training programmes for re-education, rehabilitation or coping in special groups and conditions, such as post-traumatic, cardiac or pulmonary patients, or other chronic conditions or disabilities.

Learning outcome: The VO Master in Health-related Physical Education or Physical Activity shall be designed to enable the students to achieve the following learning outcomes:

- expand and integrate knowledge of fitness, health, and wellness and apply it to the field of teaching or exercise science;
- demonstrate an in-depth working knowledge of conditioning components as related to life-long fitness activities, physical training and nutritional factors;
- advanced knowledge of themes applied to the exercise sciences, such as biology, medicine, psycho pedagogy, sociology, movement and sport methodology, allowing understanding of physical activity peculiarities in the various age/health conditions and settings, disabilities or temporary/permanent limitations.
- read and interpret research and apply significant findings to their profession;

Other relevant issues: Courses of study must take place in collaboration with relevant public and private stakeholders, such as schools, public health services, private health companies, physical reeducation and rehabilitation centers, fitness or wellness clubs, social services, leisure and recreation centers for all ages. Practical involvement in PE teaching or physical activity & exercise therapy for a specified period is mandatory.

Table 4. Vocationally Oriented Master in Sports Coaching
Referent curriculum model as agreed by SPEED consortium

	Professional Master	Master of Science ^a
Admission requirements	Bachelor in SpS or related degrees – Other degrees	Bachelor in SpS or related degrees – Other degrees
Background ^b (<i>minimum requirements for admission</i>) 12 ECTS 12 ECTS 4 ECTS	Exercise Sciences Natural & Medical Sciences Psycho-Pedagogical Sciences	Exercise Sciences Natural & Medical Sciences Psycho-Pedagogical Sciences
Duration (ECTS)	60 - 90	60 - 120
Academic areas (ECTS range): Exercise Sciences Natural & Medical Sciences Socio- psycho-pedagogical Sciences Others (Economy, law)	10 - 15 15 - 20 8 - 15 0 - 6	10 - 20 15 - 30 8 - 15 0 - 6
Research Methodology	5 - 8	10 - 30
ICT	3	3
VO Education & Training Seminars /Practical teaching/ Internship/work-placement (ECTS)	10 - 20	10 - 24
Final Exam/Thesis	5 - 15	20 - 45/60

^a At least 300 ECTS of total University education.

^b On the basis of fixed criteria, previous informal and non-formal education and certified professional experience could be recognized as ECTS.