



MINUTES OF THE LEONARDO DA VINCI MEETING

DEVELOPING THE PROFESSIONAL SKILLS OF THE FUTURE SPORTS INSTRUCTORS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE EQF

NICOSIA, CYPRUS

2ND PARTNERSHIP MEETING

Friday 26th – Saturday 27th February, 2010

THEME OF THE MEETING: SPORTS INSTRUCTORS: THE PROFESSIONAL STATUS

PARTICIPANTS:

Partner	Representatives
Serymar Training, Granada, Spain	Ana Fernández Ruda
CERES, Rome, Italy	Gabriella Pappadà Ricardo Antonazzo Rocco Lancellotti Stefano Pappadà
Dimitra ITD, Athens, Greece	Vaso Anastasopoulou George Petrou
Zeuxis Innovations Ltd, Nicosia, Cyprus	Michael Efrem Savvas Theofilou Costas Tringides
Liceul cu Program Sportiv Iasi, Romania	Ilie Gheorghică Fănița Cepoi Irina Prodan Mirela Andrici Viorel Popovici Carmen Nechita Sorin Andrei

Friday, 26th February 2010

Ms Irina Prodan – coordinator of the project – opens the meeting, welcomes the participants and announces that the objectives of the meeting are:

1. Set up the curriculum structure.
2. Create the framework for the professional status of the sports instructor.
3. Decide on the units of competence the curriculum will be based on.
4. Decide on the contents of the second issue of the project newsletter.

Moreover, she proposes the logo of the project, which the partners agree with. After presenting the agenda for the first day of the meeting, Ms Prodan speaks about the current state of the project. The



discussions carried out during the first project meeting have revealed that the term **“sports instructor”** should have a clear-cut meaning for the purposes of the project, so as it should not overlap the terms of “coach” / “trainer” in terms of qualifications and professional attributes. Another point is that the partners decided that they will collaborate in designing a **course curriculum** for sports instructors that is in accordance with the terms established by the EQF. The educational process will be described in terms of **learning outcomes**, meaning the knowledge, skills and competences that a learner acquires. The partners have agreed that each country will **focus on one sport only** while working on the curriculum. Thus, Spain will develop a course curriculum for handball sports instructors, Cyprus for football, Greece will focus on outdoor sports, Italy on fitness and Romania on athletics. The curriculum will have a **common structure**, with differences in the learning units that are particular to each sport.

Further on, Ms Ana Fernández Ruda speaks about the website of the project, introducing each of the sections the website is made of, providing information related to its structure and contents.

Ms Prodan speaks about the contents of the first issue of the project newsletter, emphasizing on the fact that for the second issue, the partners will decide together on the information to be included.

In the second part of the meeting, Mr. Savvas Theofilou speaks about the football club licensing system, on behalf of the Cypriot partners. He mentions that it comprises five levels of qualification and describes each of them in terms of topics approached by courses, qualification outline and duration of qualification.

Further on, Mrs. Vaso Anastasopoulou speaks about the degree of outdoor sports competency conceptualization in Greece. She starts by mentioning that instructor competency in outdoor sports is not a well defined job profile in the Greek context. Although there has been a rapid expansion of literature especially regarding the US and the UK contexts, about the qualities, competencies, and skills that can or should be possessed by instructors of outdoor sports, this sector is not yet developed in Greece. Introducing some of the features of the job, and mentioning the responsibilities, Mrs. Anastasopoulou further provides information on the methodology the Greek team has used while carrying out their research. As the desktop research could not be based on existing knowledge and already developed profiles for the specific sector, they chose to run a twofold research: on the one hand, they looked for similar or like-similar instruction profiles, on the other hand, they researched advertisements for job placements in the relative sector, gathering the skills that the employers in the industry were looking for and placing an advertisement for. Moreover, they discussed the outcomes with experts in the area, employers as well as employees of relative recreation organizations in order to pilot the conclusions they reached via the two previous means (*similar profiles and job advertisements*).

In the Greek context, sports instructors in general have used the metaphor of “*hard*” and “*soft*” skills to understand their practice; “*hard*” skills represent technical competencies, while “*soft*” skills refer to interpersonal competencies. She adds that the categorization of skills into “*hard*” or “*soft*”, however, may obscure important aspects of experiential learning and limit the development of an effective pedagogy for outdoor sports. After providing some examples of such skills, Mrs. Anastasopoulou draws the following conclusions: In order to develop:

- an understanding of learning principles and



- to be able to facilitate discovery learning in outdoor participants not only a well-conducted staff selection process is required but also the delivery of sophisticated training and appropriately guided experience.

This is the primary training responsibility for an outdoor sports organization.

However, this is a difficult task in the current environment where outdoor sports seem in most countries to be moving towards official qualification of only hard-skill competencies for instructors.

On the promising side, in fields such as using outdoor sports for therapy of certain groups (*e.g horse riding for children with special abilities, sailing for people with movement problems etc*), sports instructors:

- Use techniques from counselling, social work, and clinical psychology,
- Are further developing knowledge about effective facilitation techniques and
- Discuss about the necessity of having formal recognition for such skills.

Based on the EQF model, Mrs. Anastasopoulou further presents the knowledge, skills and competences an outdoor sports instructor needs to have.

Ms. Ana Fernández Ruda introduces the levels of qualification for handball coaches in Spain, going through the requirements of each, describing the attributes and competences they involve. Her presentation also includes the professional abilities for levels 1, 2 and 3, with details on position in the work sphere and the responsibilities the coaches have to take in their job. Further on, Ms Ruda speaks about the manner education is structured in terms of course length, common and complementary modules, as well as practical modules for each of the levels.

The Italian partners, Mrs. Gabriella Pappadà and Ricardo Antonazzo, present the results of their research that are based on the Italian context and, as they mention, their work represents an initial attempt at developing an outline qualification structure that can develop the standard of industry professionals.

Considering the level of qualification, the training of the future sports instructors will have two components: basic core knowledge fitness instructing and basic gym instructing.

Within this setting, a development in terms of skills and competences has been made by the Italian partners. It envisages aspects that touch upon the planning, management, carrying out, assessment of a training session.

Mr. Antonazzo provides some details on the current structure of the fitness sector for instructors, emphasizing on the fact that it lacks organization and effective management. Thus, an instructor can work in a gym without necessarily having a certification, as the educational system for sports instructors in fitness is not clearly established yet.

Talking about the Romanian context, Irina Prodan mentions that the occupation list in Romania includes sports instructors, but their professional status is not defined by an official document; the professional attributes are described by five units of competence issued by the Ministry of



Education, Research, Youth and Sports. The National Training Centre for Coaches has issued a draft on this document as part of a project, its first review being scheduled for March 2012.

In conclusion, the professional status of the sports instructors is not clearly stated in any of the countries involved in the partnership, and the training of the sports instructors lacks a clearly-defined organization. Therefore, the course curriculum should clearly delineate the professional attributes of the occupation so that it should not be confused with that of trainer/coach.

Ms. Prodan proposes a structure for the course curriculum that includes an introduction, a definition of the qualification (the professional status of the sports instructor), units of competence, standards of professional training (the units of competence as described in terms of learning outcomes) and the curriculum. The latter includes information on the type of training (theoretical/practical), learning module, learning unit, competence(s) envisaged, training resources, methods and techniques, number of classes. After discussing this structure with the partners, the following organization of the course curriculum is agreed upon:

1. Introduction
2. Definition of the qualification
3. Learning units
4. Training resources
5. Methods and techniques
6. Forms of assessment
7. Number of hours

The term “**competence**” is also brought into question, the partners agreeing on its definition as “a clusters of **skills**, **abilities** and **knowledge** needed to perform specific jobs or to achieve specific aims”. It is this definition of “competence” that the partners will have in mind while working on the course curriculum. Moreover, the learning units Ms. Prodan has proposed will be defined and detailed as competences.

After the break, the partners meet to work together on the professional status of the sports instructors, at the end of the workshop deciding on the following features of the document:

The sports instructor ...

- Is the professional who organizes and carries out training activities in a sports discipline with various categories of participants.
- Knows and uses a variety of instruction strategies that are specific to the sports discipline in which the activity is carried out.
- Communicates and collaborates with the partners involved in the educational process: students, parents, officials and other individual / juridical bodies involved in the organization of sports activities.
- Monitors and assesses the training level in a sports discipline.
- Carries out training sessions in accordance with the rules and regulations of the sport discipline.
- Provides technical support and motivation to the participants in various learning situations.
- Assesses, plans, delivers and evaluates basic exercise programs.
- Uses, assesses, maintains and instructs on the use of the equipment.



- May supervise, guide and give advice to participants in the sports activities that are organized.

Saturday, 27th February 2010

Mr. Costas Tringides, Director of Zeuxis Innovations Ltd. welcomes the participants. The meeting opens with a review of the work done so far, the partners reading together the features of the professional status they have agreed upon.

Ms Prodan also asks for suggestions regarding the contents of the second issue of the project newsletter, its publication being due at the end of April.

Details regarding the third project meeting in Rome, Italy are discussed. At the end, each partner is invited to fill in an evaluation form for the meeting, and Mr Tringides hands in the certificates of attendance.

Sincerely,

Irina Prodan, project coordinator