

Project Quality Report

October, 2009 – September, 2011

Vocational Training for Sports Centres Employees with European Certificate Project EuroSport

Distribution:

Plovdiv University Educational Technology experts

Reference documents:

EuroSport Proposal

Minutes from the project meetings

Project results

Valorization report

1. Overview

This report presents the findings and conclusions of project evaluation for the *Vocational Training for Sports Centres Employees with European Certificate* project, a project under Leonardo da Vinci LLP program. The project under evaluation was initiated in 2009 and aimed at transferring of innovative VET programmes certified in 10 European sport VET systems, at adapting and integrating them in the national qualifications framework and system. The project design envisioned a two-year period for implementing the desired interventions.

The purpose of this report is to provide an independent and objective analysis of the on-going activities within EuroSport project. The methodology of the evaluation contains several components: review of existing project documents, consultations with key project staff, focus group discussions. To assess the project management procedures, the evaluation relied mostly on information included on the Web page, documents available, and discussions and conversations with the coordinator, while for the project results a detailed documentation review was made in addition to all other methodological techniques mentioned above.

This report explores four sources of information: the project proposal, minutes of meetings, results published in the project Web page, valorisation report and semi-structured interview with the project coordinator.

The next sections will evaluate the extent to which the project objectives are achieved and the planned outcomes are available, and the quality of the management and dissemination activities.

This project is aimed at transferring of innovative VET programmes certified in a number of European sport VET systems, at adapting and integrating them in the national qualifications framework and system. Through adoption of common methods and VET programmes, including the EQF and ECVET system it will result in recognition of competences and qualifications of sport instructors and sport facilities managers and technicians Europe-wide.

The project specific objectives are:

- 1 Identifying and analysing user requirements of sport centres employees and managers, sport education providers and policy makers in Bulgaria, Germany and Sweden.
- 2 Analysis and adoption of common certification principles based on the ECVET system and description, via national qualifications frameworks and systems, of the VET qualifications in terms of learning outcomes.
- 3 Selecting and analysing innovative VET content and training methods to reach these outcomes and to meet the specific user requirements.
- 4 Transferring the adapted VET materials and development of e-learning support materials and a new course in kinesitherapy and rehabilitation for sport centres instructors.
- 5 Pilot test of the VET courses with trainees from public and private sport centres with delivery of European certificate.

The analysis within the previous projects and the preliminary analysis in Bulgaria has shown that with few exceptions the personnel at Sports Centres (SCs) have a short formal education and no vocational training in their profession. In this project the consortium planned to identify the deficiencies and analyse the expectations and specific training requirements of target learners, of training providers of certified VET, and the expectations of the GOs in sport and healthcare. The 2nd project objective is linked to the European and National priorities

of the call “Transparency and recognition of competences and qualifications” and met the need of SCs employees of recognised Europe-wide qualification, and provide them opportunity for further career development and increased mobility. The 3d and 4th objectives are linked to the 2nd priority of the Call to improve the quality of VET by transferring the best European practices and training materials in the sector and developing attractive VET systems through e-learning multimedia materials and interactive learning approaches. The courses were tested with target learners from public and private sport centres and a European certificate was planned to be delivered.

The target group for this project is the personnel of Sports Centres within the European Union. The European Network of Sport Science Education and Employment has estimated this target group to be 300 000 employees with little or no vocational education and training. They are identified as low skilled workers with responsibility for the day to day care and administration of Sports Centres which career for more than a billion visits of sportsmen, sportswomen and persons who undertake physical exercise in order to improve their health and wellbeing.

Project results:

| Result | Description | Target group | Languages | Deadline |
|--------|---|--|----------------|------------|
| R1 | Report on the analysis of training needs and user requirements | Trainees: SCs employees: instructors, managers, technical staff; Trainers: higher vocational sport education providers, sport schools, teachers and advisers from these institutions. | BG, DE, EN, SV | 30.12.2009 |
| R2 | Description of qualifications of Sport centres employees in terms of learning outcomes | National and European VET systems, Sport education and sport and leisure sectors, SCs employees, sport education providers. | BG, DE, EN, SV | 28.02.2010 |
| R3 | Syllabi of three VET programmes for sport centres instructors, managers and technical staff | Trainees: SCs employees: instructors, managers, technical staff; Trainers: higher vocational sport education providers, sport schools, teachers and advisers from these institutions. | BG, DE, EN, SV | 30.10.2010 |
| R4 | e-learning training materials for the three VET programmes | Trainees: SCs employees: instructors, managers, technical staff; Trainers: higher vocational sport education providers, sport schools, teachers and advisers from these institutions. | BG, DE, EN, SV | 31.03.2011 |
| R5 | Evaluation report | See Result 4, and VET providers in others sectors. | EN | 30.09.2011 |
| R6 | Valorisation report | See Result 4, and VET providers in others sectors. | EN | 30.09.2011 |

The projects' partnership includes developers and users of the project results: training organisations, universities, SMEs/sport centres, public authority in the target sector.

All partners have the capacity and even more, the interest to exploit and disseminate the project results. The course developers have the interest to have their products more sustainable, so they will exploit the certified training programmes in their daily practice and disseminate them in all possible settings that can be potential users of the products - the sport schools as providers of training and the sport centres employees as users, in Bulgaria and in other European countries. The advantage of the Internet-based courses is that they can be easily updated and adapted to the specific user needs.

The results from previous two Leonardo da Vinci are being used in the partners' training activities and with this project – transferred in new countries. The partners from EuroSport project worked on the transfer of the set of three certified VET programmes in other European countries and on the dissemination of the most important project result - the transparent qualifications in VET.

The project partners are university professors, managers, medicine doctors. They all have professional experience in publishing and communications and all share responsibility for dissemination and larger exploitation of project results. They all are members of professional and educational networks and unions what is a good opportunity for dissemination of project results to a very large audience in the sport and health sector and in the sport education.

Quality Management plan:

Aim: To verify whether quality of project activities and related results comply with planned arrangements.

Scope: Quality management procedures cover assessments of the products - learning materials, delivery system, assessments of development and implementation processes.

Users of project products were involved from the first project meeting and invited to all meetings and training seminars. All results, documents, prototypes are available on the project Web site for assessment by potential users from SMEs and VET institutions. The external evaluator also collected information from the target users on their needs met, requirements satisfied, effectiveness of training materials.

Characteristics of the assessments: Product quality assessments are based on the requirements applicable to the finished learning products. These correspond to the project objectives and follow the guidelines of the European Common Reference Framework on Quality in VET.

Assessment personnel: Working Group on evaluation and supervised by the internal project evaluator. Peer review was carried out by external evaluator.

Reporting of results: Oral reports at all PSC meetings, A written report of the assessment results from the pilot test, an evaluation report from the external evaluator. Quality assessment observations were reported in the intermediate project reports for external quality assessment by the NA.

Decisions and actions: The responsible of the function concerned was checked that decisions and actions with regard to any notified observations are taken ASAP. (S)he discussed these decisions with the other partners in the project in order to ensure the consensus in activities/changes to be undertaken. The PSC made decisions for continuation, changes/improvement of the processes of development, coordination of activities, and of the quality of materials and delivery.

Follow-up: The implementation of actions associated with an assessment report was followed up by the local project coordinators by means of continuous monitoring, reporting back on actions or direct follow-up in conjunction with the assessment being performed the next time as required. The result of the follow-up was documented in the project report.

Management review: Results of assessments and observations made during follow-up were presented at the PSC meetings. External evaluator performed the summative project evaluation. Evaluation by the NA of the reports.

2. Evaluation Scope and Objectives

The ultimate objective of this evaluation is to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the project implementation and the impact of its deliverables, and to study the potential for sustaining the results achieved in the future.

The main goal of the evaluation is to serve decision making within the project (Reeves, 1993) but its specific purpose is to help developers in the improvement of the product and development process and it is more oriented to the end users (s.f. Moonen, 1994, PALIO guide, 1995, ARTICULATE, 1995, EUSC¹ guide, 1996). It will be more oriented to the end users, i.e. to obtain feedback to help developers to improve the products and services as well as to optimise the development process through early diagnosis of defects, to reveal of unforeseen circumstances in the learning environment, to insure better communication in the development team, to measure whether training objectives and trainees' needs have been achieved and that results could be used for decisions about the implementation and dissemination of the products and for new training modules development.

2.1. Objectives of the evaluation

The main objectives of this evaluation are:

- To assess how effective and efficient were the planning, implementation and monitoring of the project, and how effective was the partnership's decisions.
- To examine the extent to which the collective work undertaken by the partnership helped in better addressing the outcomes on the various stakeholders and the project's impact at large.
- To draw conclusions regarding project's strengths and weaknesses, and to recommend methodologies and strategic alternatives that will help in strengthening the partnership and ensure sustainability of the results

2.2. Major questions

A group of questions has been developed to guide the evaluation of the project. These questions were grouped into three categories: questions related to process, to management, and to dissemination.

2.2.1 Questions regarding the process

- Were project objectives met through the different phases and across project components during the project life? Were they met on time as scheduled?

¹ European Usability Support Centers guide

Identifying and analysing user requirements

The first activity in the project was the analysis of user needs and requirements to provide the most appropriate training resources for meeting them, the expectations of the national governmental organisations in sport and healthcare.

Need analysis activities done: interviews with managers and employees of Sport centres, graduated students from NSA and their teachers and deans, rectors, social workers of the regional employment services, policy makers from the National governmental organisations of the sport and youth and in healthcare.

The need analysis revealed that almost all EC countries participate with their National Fitness Associations in EHFA, which is the European body which has developed the map of knowledge, skills and competences for the qualification and which is accrediting the VET providers in the sector. Bulgaria is not represented and does not have a National Association. Decision was taken – to start the organisational work on the foundation of the Bulgarian association in the sector.

At the end of the project there is a Report providing an overview of the training needs and the users' requirements in the fitness and health industry in Bulgaria, Sweden and Germany. The report identifies and analyses the European and the national systems for professional qualifications in the fitness industry, the employers' requirements and the trainees' needs.

Remarks, connection to the corresponding project result/s: There was a decision one direction in the need analysis to be followed, one report summarising the analysis to be produced. One common report was done and translated in all partner languages

Conclusion: With this result the first project objective (“Identifying and analysing user requirements of sport centres employees and managers, sport education providers and policy makers in Bulgaria, Germany and Sweden.”) was achieved.

Analysis and adoption of common certification principles

Definition of competencies of health and fitness professionals in two levels: group health and fitness instructor and personal trainer, have been prepared. The qualifications are described in terms of learning outcomes for knowledge, skills and competencies.

Analysis of the criteria for European certification for the course providers, consultations with EHFA and EOSE, have been performed. Consultations on the accreditation based on ECVET and certification based on EQF – 3d level for this case, have been made. The association EHFA which can perform accreditation in the European health and fitness sector had his statutes approved and published in the official Belgian Gazette "Moniteur Belge" on 25 June 2008.

A huge organisational work has been done to create Bulgarian Association for Health and Fitness, to invite representatives from the accrediting body EHFA in Bulgaria to evaluate the activities preparation of VET schools in the sector and to suggest the next steps.

Remarks, connection to the corresponding project result/s: Very brave and clever decision of the management of the project to start activities in creation of Bulgarian Association for Health and Fitness. A lot of efforts for activities not initially envisage in the proposal. Documents in Bulgarian, Swedish, German and English.

Conclusion: Achieved results: Criteria for designing VET programmes for fitness instructors mapping the qualification standards in transferable units of learning outcomes for knowledge, skills and competences for Europe-wide recognized certificates EQF. EHFA has developed the map of knowledge, skills and competences for the qualification. Qualifications in terms of learning outcomes for the qualification of a fitness instructor and rehabilitator (new development) in a fitness centre.

With this result the second project objective is achieved.

Selecting and analysing innovative VET content and training methods

Learner centred, modular structure of a portfolio of competences, performance support system approach. Courses of the VET programmes for managers: Organising sport in sustainable sports facilities, Controlling costs, steering revenues, Sustainable customer management in sports facilities, co-operations and partnerships, Building, reorganization, modernization - sustainable project management in sports facilities, With the user, for the user - planning, analysis and conflict discussions; for instructors: Ageing population; Communication; Gender equality; Integration; Physical and health education; Social competence; Sport in society; Sports coaching; Sports for disabled, Kinesitherapy; for technical staff: Supplier and craftsman in sports facilities, Cleaning, care, maintenance, repair –materials and fuels in sports facilities fair to the environment, health-preserving and economically sound, Building, reorganization, modernization.

Remarks, connection to the corresponding project result/s: Syllabi of three VET programmes for sport centres instructors, managers and technical staff in Bulgarian, Swedish, German and English are done.

Conclusion: With these results the third project objective is achieved.

Evaluation

Evaluation activities have been conducted during the whole project lifetime, from the learning needs analysis (peer review on the first virtual Flash meeting and on the meeting in Dortmund), qualifications description following ECTVET (on the second Flash meeting and the meeting in Dortmund), syllabi adaptation/design (expert review on the third Flashmeeting and on the meeting in Bosön), learning content adaptation, new development (expert review on the meeting in Bosön). Workshop for evaluation of syllabi and the usability test of first prototypes of the learning materials in Boson. Questionnaires have been distributed to the project partners - developers. On-going evaluation during the flash meetings was done as well.

The methods and techniques used were:

- For need analysis and constraints definition, as well as in defining methods, materials and media, interviews and questionnaires will be used.
- The qualifications description procedures and intermediate results were evaluated by the European experts in the sector Cliff Collins Director of the European Register of Exercise Professionals (EREPS).
- In course materials adaptation and in new development, a prototyping approach is used. Expert reviews and design walkthrough in the early stages of materials design and prototypes production provided information and corresponding feedback to developers for ensuring the quality of content. The expert review has found that the qualification of sport instructor is related to a single sport, but this of a fitness instructor- to health and fitness. Decision was made to upgrade the Sport coordinator including Sport instructor courses with content for a course for Fitness instructor.

External evaluator performed the quality assessment.

Monitoring by the Bulgarian National Agency was done during the second project meeting.

The users were involved from the first project meeting and invited to all meetings and seminars. All intermediate results, documents, prototypes are available on the project Web site for assessment by potential users and the LLP executive and national agencies, policy-makers, VET institutions.

Conclusion: Evaluation methodology and technology used during the project life are right and appropriate.

2.2.2 Questions regarding the management

- How smooth was the process of elaboration of management plan and to what extent do this plan reflect the main objectives to be reached? To what extent were the objectives, according to the changes in the management plan, achieved? How the management of the project has solved the problems – activities, roles, responsibilities etc.?

The project has very experienced and competent coordinator, this partnership is a new one, without experience in working together, clever and right decisions are necessary to solve problems. Positive results and activities:

1. The web page of the project is done - <http://telearn.tu-sofia.bg/EuroSport/> (username - Euro; password – Sport).
2. All intermediate results, the presentations during the meetings, the minutes of the meetings are published on the Project Web page.
3. A site of the project in Bulgarian was established - www.leo-nsa.hit.bg. Results in Bulgarian, as there are such documents planned, were uploaded to this Web page.
4. The communication is done via e-mails. There are additional Flash meetings.
5. The detailed planning of the project was prepared. Tasks were distributed among the partners.
6. Quality assessment has been performed. On the basis of evaluation the management of the project has made clever and on-time decisions and planed activities for their implementation.

Problem:

Partner P3 – Ministry of Physical Education and Sports (P3) has withdrawn from the project. Reason as it is written in the Letter of withdrawal: “The engagement for participation in the project was undertaken by the previous authority responsible for sport, and namely the State Agency for Youth and Sport. As a successor, the Ministry of Physical Education and Sport cannot participate in this project due to the lack of human resources capacity.”

Solution:

There were problems with non-participation of P2 on the meetings after the first one and non signed agreement between P2 and the beneficiary P0. P2 sent a withdrawal letter to the beneficiary and with the help of the experts from the NA the amendment to the project was prepared and signed.

After the withdrawal of P2, the tasks were re-distributed among the other partners with the corresponding re-distribution of the budget.

National Sports Academy(P0) and Technical University of Sofia(P2) will undertake all tasks and budget of P3

Tasks taken:

The task taken over by the replacement the partner and redistribution of the tasks between the other partners were clear described by the coordinator at the stages of progress and final reports.

As results:

Redistribution and replacement of tasks and partners.

- Planned: Four work groups building: DAMS, NSA, Impulse, Bosön – work group for certification criteria definition and qualification description. Change: TUS undertook the task of DAMS.
- Planned: Analysis of the requirements of regional employment services, policy makers form the National governmental organisations of the sport and youth and in healthcare - DAMS, Impulse, Bosön. Change: Athletic performed the tasks of DAMS

- Planned: Analysis and adoption of the criteria for the Europe-wide recognized certificates of the three courses - DAMS, NSA, Bosön, Impulse. Change: The tasks of DAMS were done by TUS and Athletic.
- Planned: DAMS: Internal quality assessment Change: TUS with their expertise in VET development and evaluation, with the expertise of external evaluation of LLP projects will perform the internal quality assessment
- Planned: Collaboration with the Ministries of labour, the HRD National Agencies, Ministries/Agencies for sport and youth, Ministries of education for the development and adoption of common references and criteria for the qualifications of sport manager, instructor, technical staff and recognition of certificates - DAMS, NSA, TUS, Impulse, Bosön. Change: Helping dissemination of the courses in vocational sport schools – NSA will undertake the tasks of DAMS

Management of a project with a new partnership proved to be difficult and challenging, as it had to deal with unexpected difficulties and changes during the project life. During the first months of the project, the project's management faced difficulties with the non-active participation of one of the partners, which was beyond the prediction during the proposal development. A negative scenario after the withdrawal of a partner could be partnership's internal disagreements, delay and non-achievement of the results, or the decision how to proceed will take a long time.

The management of the project and its coordinator successfully solved the problem:

- No changes in the time of implementation due to this reason.
- Not allow the problem to disturb the management process and affected the smooth continuation of project activities.
- Not allow this to cause losing part of the information.

The coordinator managed to recuperate quickly the time lost, to improve coordination between the partners, as well as documentation of activities, and to assure outputs' delivery on-time.

2.2.3 Questions regarding the dissemination

- How effective and efficient is the capacity-building component of the project in its two dimensions – capacity building of staff and associates, and capacity building of the community members?

Significant dissemination and exploitation activities have been performed during the project life:

1. Attendance of the European and Health FA 2nd National Associations Forum which took place in Brussels on 17 and 18 November 2009 and presentation of the EuroSport project
2. Attendance of the European Observatoire of Sport and Employment which took place in Brussels on 17 and 18 November 2009 and presentation of the EuroSport project
3. With regard to the exploitation of project results and representation of Bulgaria in the European qualification body in the sector, the European Health & Fitness Association Athletic has made preliminary organisation, distributed information to the fitness centres in Sofia and in the country and has created the Bulgarian health and Fitness Association, invited the head of EHFA in Bulgaria.

The greatest achievement of the project for NSA and Athletic is the accreditation received by EHFA (European Health and Fitness Association) which leads to the incredible possibility for the successful trainees to be registered in the EREPS (the European register for exercise professionals).

4. EHFA General Assembly - Friday, 23 April 2010 Essen BAHF was announced new member of EHFA.

Others:

European accreditation of the two Bulgarian partner institutions for training of fitness instructors
BAHF became member of the European Association for Health and Fitness. The project results were largely disseminated in Bulgaria through BAHF and in Europe through EHFA and on all their meetings.
Implementation of training materials in four languages
Attendance of the EASE round table with employers' organizations in fitness in London on 03.03.2011 and presentation of the EuroSport project
Dissemination of the project results during 16th congress of the European College of Sport Science
Dissemination of the project results during 11th ENSSEE Forum and 8th ICCE Global coach conference – conference meeting “Innovation and practice”
Dissemination of the project results during 16th International WCPT congress
Dissemination of the project results during 5th International Scientific congress “Sport, stress, adaptation – Olympic sport and sport for all”
Dissemination of the project results during 6th National congress of the Association of the kinesiologist and rehabilitators in Bulgaria
Dissemination of the project results during International Conference on sport for development and peace
Dissemination of the project results during General assembly of EOSE

Conclusion according to the question: EuroSport project targets sport centre managers, instructors and technical staff, training providers, employers, sports association, national governmental organization, project management experts, developers of e-learning systems.

For the dissemination activities the above mentioned and governmental and professional organisations in the sport sector are the targets.

The users and decision-making bodies were involved in the project activities. They participated in all project meeting and the pilot tests. The pilot test was performed with small groups of students (a total of 76 trainees) from the NSA which studied some modules of the three VET programmes. The field trial was performed with 287 trainees from the sport centres: 118 in Bulgaria, 49 in Sweden and 120 in Germany. Successful learners obtained the approved European certificate.

The results were disseminated in the participating countries (VET schools, new users for the sport sector), BAHF was founded, and all over Europe – through EHFA meetings, conferences in sport, health, educational sciences.

The impact on target groups and the sector: meeting the needs of SCs employees of recognised Europe-wide qualification, and providing them opportunity for further career development and increased mobility. The impact on VET systems: support in the development of national and sectoral qualifications systems and frameworks.

In short term the project improved the individual qualifications of the participants in the VET-program and made them more competitive and attractive in the labour market. Indicators: European certificates, certified trainees become members of EREPS. In long term this will definitely improve standards, transparency and raise the quality level at European Sports Centres. It will improve the possibilities to better meet the needs of the community.

The project supports the development of the Bulgarian national and sectoral qualification system and framework. The project is the basis for a EU wide acknowledgment of the training programme in the sector of

sport and leisure with common criteria and the EU instruments EUROPASS and ECVET and its integration in the European reference frameworks for the qualification levels.

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The plan for the implementation of the certified VET courses in the national and European VET systems in the sector is indicator for the exploitation and sustainability of project outcomes.

The positive pilot test report and the evaluation report of the external evaluator indicate the success of the whole project. Minimum 80% of the participant in the pilot courses certified is the indicator for the impact on target users.

New users of the system and the enlarged project partnership (see the valorisation report) is the indicator of its impact and successful dissemination.

Thanks' to the project the mutual recognition of qualifications of the vocational training for sports facilities and their acceptance on the respective labour market of the European countries is improved and the existing instruments for transparency and comparability for vocational qualification systems adapted.

Impressive list of dissemination activities!!!

All performed dissemination activities answer to the **capacity-building component in EuroSport project and the impact on target groups and sector**: meeting the needs of SCs employees of recognised Europe-wide qualification, and providing them opportunity for further career development and increased mobility. The impact on VET systems: support in the development of national and sectoral qualifications systems and frameworks. The project created the basis for EU wide acknowledgment of the training programme in the sector of sport with common criteria and the EU instruments EUROPASS and ECVET and its integration in the European reference frameworks for the qualification levels.

3. Conclusions

Identifying and analysing user requirements of sport centres employees and managers, sport education providers and policy makers in Bulgaria, Germany and Sweden is achieved.

Analysis and adoption of common certification principles based on the ECVET system and description, via national qualifications frameworks and systems, of the VET qualifications in terms of learning outcomes have been performed.

Selecting and analysing innovative VET content and training methods to reach these outcomes and to meet the specific user requirements have been performed.

Syllabi of three VET programmes for sport centres instructors, managers and technical staff in four languages (EN, BG, SV and DE): “Sustainable management of sport centres”, “Active aging”, “Kinesitherapy” was designed

e-Learning training materials for the three VET programmes in four languages (EN, BG, SV and DE) were developed and pilot

Evaluation methodology and technology used are right and appropriate.

Management of a project with a new partnership proved to be difficult and challenging, as it had to deal with unexpected difficulties and changes during the project life. During the first months of the project, the project's management faced difficulties with the non-active participation of one of the partners, which was beyond the prediction during the proposal development. A negative scenario after the withdrawal of a partner could be partnership's internal disagreements, delay and non-achievement of the results, or the decision how to proceed will take a long time.

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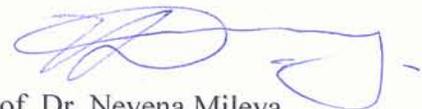
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