



Thematic Network Project

AEHESIS

'Aligning a European Higher Education Structure In Sport Science'

Report of the Third Year

- Summary -

2006

OVERVIEW OF THE PROJECT¹

On 01 October 2003, the ERASMUS Thematic Network Project AEHESIS started fulfilling the task 'Aligning a European Higher Education Structure In Sport Science' focussing on the sectors 'Physical Education', 'Health & Fitness', 'Sport Management' and 'Sport Coaching'. Since then, sport education experts from 28 European countries, precisely from 70 partner organisations (see figure 1), held various meetings and conferences, and exchanged numerous working papers in order to produce new collective standards and references for curricula in the sport sector – always bearing in mind the Bologna Declaration, the Lisbon objectives, the related Education & Training Agenda 2010 and the European Qualification Framework (EQF).

The project was coordinated by the Institute of European Sport Development & Leisure Studies at the German Sport University Cologne on behalf of the European Network of Sport Science, Education & Employment (ENSSEE). To lead the project, a management group, an expert group and four research groups in the identified key areas in sport education, namely the sectors Physical Education, Sport Management, Health & Fitness and Sport Coaching, were implemented.



Figure 1: AEHESIS Partner Organisations

¹ Based on: Petry, K. & Froberg, K. (2006). *Overview of the project*. In: Petry, K., Froberg, K. & Madella, A. (2006). *Thematic Network Project AEHESIS - Report of the Third Year*. Cologne.

The main outputs achieved till the end of the third year (30 September 2006) are:

- (1) a database, as a key tool for identifying specific information on preliminary questions for starting the development of common curricula
- (2) a Curriculum Questionnaire, for gathering information on European programmes in all four sport sectors,
- (3) the project's methodological concept, the Six-Step-Model, reflecting the key principles of the Bologna process (see www.dfes.gov.uk/bologna) based on the Tuning methodology (see www.unideusto.org/tuning) and
- (4) four sector specific Curriculum Models to be used as reference models.

Furthermore, 'mapping' and evaluating sport education and training providers in Europe as well as developing guidelines for the identification of 'models of good practice' were objectives of the project.

Overall, main focus within those innovative sport sector specific guidelines and quality assurance systems was set on the combination of academic quality and the European dimension each with relevance to the labour market. The basic educational approach focussed on is life-long-learning (see www.ec.europa.eu/education/policies/III/III_en.html) with a high impact of inter-activity between education and training providers and employers. Target groups are primarily curriculum developers in sport education, sport science teachers and students as well as policy makers in universities and institutions dealing with education in the said sport sectors.

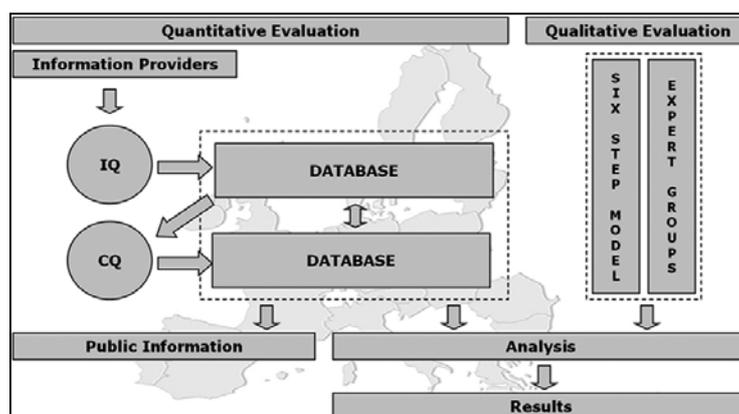


Figure 2: AEHESIS Project Model

The overall project model is illustrated in figure 2. Besides gathering information from practical experience via two electronic questionnaires, via a qualitative strand sport education experts followed the theoretical Six-Step-Model. Then information of both strands was coalesced in order to work out the sector specific reference models.

MAPPING EUROPEAN SPORT EDUCATION PROVIDERS & PROGRAMMES²

One of the main objectives of the AEHESIS project was to map and to evaluate sport education and training programmes/degrees and their providers in Europe. Therefore, two electronic questionnaires were developed: the Institutional Questionnaire (IQ), which was used for gathering basic information only, and the Curriculum Questionnaire (CQ) that was going into more detailed information on the specific curricula.

In September 2006, the database (IQ) comprised approximately 540 sport education/training programmes/degrees offered by 156 organisations in 32 countries. Key information of the database can be seen at www.aehesis.com/database or related to stakeholders, e.g. students at www.aehesis.com/StudentArea.

Summarizing the information briefly, most of the institutions that entered programmes are working 'non sport specific' coming from the 'public non profit' sector and dealing with 'education & training as main activity'. Overall, most of the programmes are entered by 145 universities, the remaining percentage of 5% (28 programmes), by only eleven non-university organisations, mainly training organisations. Leaders by entries broken down by country are Germany (73 programmes), followed by France (60), Turkey (53) and the United Kingdom (52). Besides the interdisciplinary area of Sport Science gathering the highest rate of 186 programmes, the identified key areas reflected their importance in the evaluation: There are 165 health & fitness programmes, 156 physical education programmes, 145 sport coaching and 131 sport management programmes in the database. The majority of programmes (264) entered in the database are on Level IV finishing off with a Bachelor's degree. 172 Level V programmes (Master degree) and 67 Level V+ degrees (PhD) have been enlisted.

² Based on: Petry, K. & Gütt, M. (2006). *Mapping European Sport Education Providers & Programmes*. In: Petry, K., Froberg, K. & Madella, A. (2006). *Thematic Network Project AEHESIS - Report of the Third Year*. Cologne.

THE SIX-STEP-MODEL: FROM MODEL TO PROCESS³

Trying to find a methodological approach coherent with the logic of competences used in civil society, the European policies in the area of education and higher education as well as with the guidelines defined by the Bologna Declaration, the AEHESIS thematic network followed the marks of the Tuning project, and, on that base, developed the Six-Step-Model (see figure 3). In this spirit, the Six-Step-Model was considered to close the gap between social needs in relation to the job market and the related ‘academic curricula’.

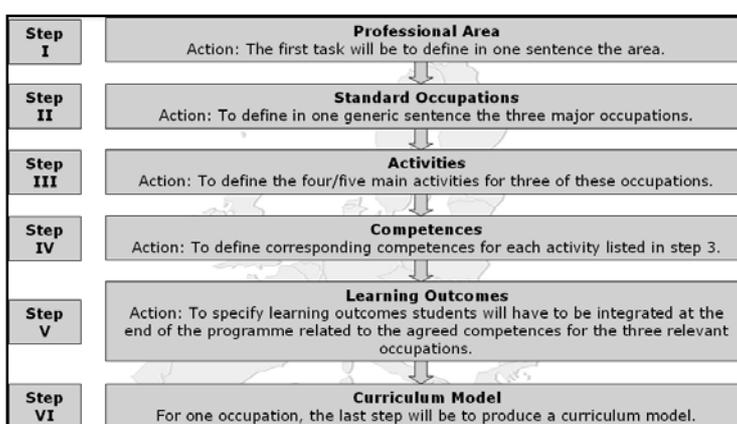


Figure 3: AEHESIS Six-Step-Model

In 2006, one of the challenges was to propose area specific curriculum models including the designed learning outcomes expressed in terms of student’s competences expected at the end of the programmes. Implementing the Six-Step-Model and incorporating practical data was done under the responsibility of each sector individually. Those curriculum models and all details regarding the sector specific realization of the overall methodology can be seen at www.aehesis.com and can be read in the full version of the AEHESIS – Report of the Third Year. In this regard, the Six-Step-Model allows a common approach, but should not be used as an object to imitate or to reproduce, but as a framework or set of categories allowing development and interpretation. Therefore, it was not surprisingly that, due to specifics in the sectors, differences in interpreting the model and own group strategies, the model was used in different ways.

³ Based on: Camy, J., Madella, A. & Klein, G. (2006). *The Six-Step-Model: From Model to Process*. In: Petry, K., Froberg, K. & Madella, A. (2006). *Thematic Network Project AEHESIS - Report of the Third Year*. Cologne.

Briefly summarizing those group interpretations the following headlines could be stated:

- Sport Coaching: *From a generic model to a specific one*
- Health & Fitness: *From the generic model to a tree of the sector*
- Physical Education: *A generic model for only one standard occupation*
- Sport Management: *An adapted model useful to classify the competences and to analyse the future*

The elements proposed to be included in the curriculum model were standard occupation, period of time, learning outcomes, curriculum objectives, key contents, programmes, study load, method, assessment and training routes. The following standard occupations for the different areas were identified:

Health & Fitness

- Advanced Gym Instructor/ Personal Trainer
- Health related Exercise Instructor/ Specialist
- Public Health Promoter
- Health and Fitness Manager

Physical Education

There is only one standard occupation with 3 major functions:

- Teaching
- Teaching PE including extra-curricular sport PE with emphasis on delivery of a broad and balanced curriculum fostering knowledge, skill and understanding
- Teaching PE including health and lifestyle

Sport Coaching

Two main standard occupations within the professional area have been identified, each with two sub-components:

- a) Coach of participation-oriented sportsperson
 - Coach of beginners (child, junior, adult)
 - Coach of participation oriented sportsperson (child, junior, adult)
- b) Coach of performance-oriented athletes
 - Coach of talent identified/performance athletes (child, junior, adult)
 - Coach of full-time/high performance athletes

Sport Management

- Local Sport Manager or director in a city or municipality
- Sport club Manager or Director
- Manager or Director in a National Sport Federation
- Manager in a Fitness Club

One of the next steps in the future is to complete the work in all professional areas of the sports occupation landscape and to adapt the outlined Curriculum Models for these eleven standard occupations to the European Qualification Framework (EQF). Naturally, the main challenges derive from the question whether those education and training systems existing in E.U. countries that are responsible for training the human resources are well adapted to social and economical needs.

CONCLUSION & PERSPECTIVES⁴

In order to give perspectives for the future regarding challenges for universities and further training providers in sports, key references such as the European Education Policy and sport related sectors including their key standard occupations must be considered (see AEHESIS – report of the Third Year).

All these elements then constitute a base for building a common strategy related to education and training in sports and sport related sectors as well as important references for all sport education and training providers.

Considering future directions, mainly four challenges are expected to be faced: Firstly, to develop initiatives regarding building a ‘knowledge society’ in terms of competences in the sport sector. Then, to rebuild training and education activities progressively in regards of the European Commission’s Life Long Learning Programmes. Thirdly, to apply the Six-Step-Model in all sport sectors, in particular based on a systematic mapping of standard occupations in sport and their related tasks, functions and competences. And, last but not least to give serious guidance to education and training providers in sport related areas and to foster further cooperation in the sector via a ‘European Information Platform’. That describes the most important challenge in the future for the European Network of Sport Science, Education and Employment (ENSSEE) and a key prolongation of the AEHESIS project.

⁴ Based on: camy, J., Klein, G., Madella, A. & Petry, K. (2006). *Final Conclusion & Perspectives*. In: Petry, K., Froberg, K. & Madella, A. (2006). *Thematic Network Project AEHESIS - Report of the Third Year*. Cologne.