

# **Decade Challenge: Are the Core Competences for Sport Managers Remaining the Same?**

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## **Aim**

The aim of this paper is to analyze the change of the competences required for sport managers in Lithuania during the last decade.

## **Theoretical Background**

Rapidly changing society is directly influenced by the quantitative and qualitative processes of the labour market. The dynamics of the sport sector justify the necessity of the competent sport manager which activity is concerned with the coordination of limited human and material resources, relevant technologies, and situational contingencies for the efficient production and exchange of sport services (Chelladurai, 2017; Chelladurai & Kerwin, 2017). During last decade we observe the continued growth of the interest in sport managers education across Europa and worldwide. EU ERASMUS Thematic Network “Aligning a European Higher Education Structure in Sport Science” (AEHESIS, 2003-2007) was created in order to integrate the programmes and time frames of the educational structures and to ensure that identified structures relate to the needs of the labour market (Camy et al, 2008). The main task of the investigation was to reveal current and future generic competences as well as specific competences required for sport managers, as one of the four selected occupations, in Europe. While analysing professional qualifications and competences in sport sector (Cingiene & Laskiene, 2007; Gouju & Zintz, 2014) always were considered to remove the gap between the needs of the job market and existing skills as well as abilities of the workforce.

## **Methods**

The survey is a part of the EU funded project “New Age of Sport Management Education in Europe” (2017-2019) with the involvement of 9 European countries. Investigation in Lithuania was carried out in January-February, 2018. Representatives (secretary general, administrator, sales and marketing person) from national sport bodies, sport federations, municipality sport divisions, clubs, etc. responded to on line questionnaire (N=35). The questionnaire consists of three parts: 1) eighteen open questions; 2) the list of the current and future competences (72) of sport managers and 3) sociodemographics. The Likert scale was used for the evaluation of the competences (1=weak, 2=fair, 3=satisfactory, 4=good, 5=excellent). The method used analysing the research findings was Importance-Performance Matrix.

## **Results and Discussion**

The survey results revealed that the respondents in the area of sport management identified nine current competencies with an average mean value of 4.0 and above: ability to work autonomously, desire to succeed, flexibility, ability to work in an interdisciplinary team, oral and written communication, team work, capacity for applying knowledge into practice and organizational skills. The last two competencies remain important for sport managers among the eleven mentioned by the respondents with an average mean value of 4.42. The answers of the respondents show the difference between the current competencies and the future requirements that lays a background for future sport management education development. So,

are there any changes identifying the importance of the sport manager's competences during the last decade? Referring to Tunning approach (Camy et al., 2008) the following *systematic* competencies remain the same importance as: desire to succeed, capacity to adapt to new situations. The most important *instrumental competences* remain as: capacity for planning and organizing and *interpersonal competence*: teamwork. Research results showed that two core competences Capacity for applying knowledge into practice and Ability to work autonomously are the most important for current and future sport managers in Lithuania. Current competences of professionals in the area of sports management are very much personality oriented. As for the future requirements in the area of sport management it looks that efforts are more oriented to a team work, analytic abilities and orientation to the efficiency of the activity outcomes.

## Conclusion

Taking into consideration a national reform of a higher education system sport programmes in general and sport management programmes in particular are in a certain danger. The main idea is to reduce the number of bachelor and master degree programmes across country. But sport sector is not rich neither study programmes or competent professionals. Dialog among all stakeholders is needed. Sectoral skills alliance could be one of the possible solutions to start open discussions about the future professionals of sport management (as well as the other occupations), to revise and upgrade study programmes and keep analyzing European and global trends of future sport manager's education.

## References

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