

School Sports in Europe Seminar



Synopsis of the Seminar on “School Sports in Europe”

Description of the event

A European Physical Education Association (EUPEA) board meeting was held in Madeira Island, Portugal, from 12th to 15th June 2014. It was hosted by the Portuguese Society for Physical Education (SPEF) with the local support of the Education and Human Resources Regional Secretary (SRE). Representatives from professional and scientific associations in Europe participated in this reunion.

On June 14th, EUPEA, SRE and SPEF organized a public seminar on 'School Sports in Europe', which took place at Dr. Horácio Bento de Gouveia Elementary School, Funchal. Coordinated by the Regional Directorate of Education (DRE), this event was attended by Physical Education teachers of primary and secondary schools, School Sports coordinators, public administration officers and others.

Seminar agenda

The topic chosen by the partners focused on the educational component of the Sports School and its leading role regionally, which adjusted to a student's global education advocated by the Autonomous Region of Madeira educational policy.

In his opening speech, the Education and Human Resources Regional Secretary, Jaime Manuel Freitas, pointed out this issue and the school's role in granting children and youth equal opportunities to play sports. He also stressed the importance of the regional long-term investment on Sport.

The President of EUPEA, Claude Scheuer, presented this European organization and its cooperation with several international institutions. He focused also on the absolute need of Physical Education in the school curriculum and emphasized the importance of School Sports as a complementary means to the student's individual development.

Hélder Lopes, Professor at the University of Madeira (UMa), was invited to the opening proceedings. He presented the lecture "Schools of today Europe of tomorrow" about a

new paradigm on a school focused on the students. He suggested setting up an academy where new methodologies and organizational frameworks could be tested, and on preparing students for life in an articulated perspective of different knowledge areas.

The European association representatives presented different models of School Sports in Europe. They followed a shared common guide in order to facilitate comparisons between countries. In this way, they presented the concept of School Sports in their countries, its connection with Federated Sports and Physical Education, the institutional framework, the professional status of the human resources, and also the type of students, activities, facilities and weekly time involved.

The first panel included Nuno Ferro (Portugal), Martin Holzweg (Germany), Claude Scheuer (Luxembourg) and Riitta-Pääjärvi Myllyaho (Finland). Ruedi Schmidt (Switzerland), Vašíčková Jana (Czech Republic) and Bruno Cremonesi (France) took part in the second panel.

The final panel included a presentation about School Sports in Madeira by Mário Durão a DRE representative and a communication by Rose-Marie Repond on "Physical education and sport in Europe: From individual to collective desire reality" (study coordinated by the vice President of EUPEA, Marcos Onofre).

The seminar was concluded with a wide discussion on sport at school and its articulation with the curricular activities of Physical Education, which involved all participants: speakers and audience.

Summary table

	Portugal	Germany	Luxembourg	Finland	Switzerland
School Sports concept in each country	School sport is “the set of recreational and sportive activities and training of sports object, developed as a curriculum complementary activities and leisure time, in a system of participation and freedom of choice of activity integrated into the school plan and coordinated within the educational system”	“Learning to move” “Learning through moving”	“Learning to move” “Learning through moving”	Physically active and healthy lifestyle	Promotion of physical activity
Physical Education and School Sports connection	Same teachers; PE Mandatory; SS optional SS complementary to PE	PE is a part of SS	Same teachers; PE Mandatory; SS optional SS complementary to PE	SS optional	SS complementary to PE
School Sports and Federated Sport connection	Not much cooperation	Cooperation protocols to develop projects	SS National Associations members of the National Olympic Committee	Strong collaboration	Both framed by the Ministry of Defence
Institutional framework of School Sports: educational system or sports system	Educational System	Educational System	Official Affiliation: Sport System by the National Olympic Committee; Financement: Educational System	Educational System	Ministry of Defence – Federal Administration of Sport

Professional status of School Sports human resources	Teachers	Teachers, coaches or older students	Teachers, animators or older students	Teachers and instructors	Teachers and instructors
Age range of the students involved	From 10 to 18 years old	From 6 to 19 years old	From 4 to 19 years old	From 7 to 16 years old	
Promoted activities	Wide range of sports	Wide range of sports	Wide range of sports	Wide range of sports	Wide range of sports
School Sports location	Schools	Schools and clubs facilities	Schools or public facilities	Schools	Schools
Weekly duration	3 hours	3 hours		5 hours	

	Czech Republic	France	Madeira	EUPEA study
School Sports concept in each country	Physical activity as a right for all; Form positive attitude toward sport and PA	Physical activity as a right for all		A right for all to access quality Physical Activity; Always related to school
Physical Education and School Sports connection	Mandatory; SS optional	Same teachers; PE Mandatory; SS optional; SS complementary to PE	Same teachers; PE Mandatory; SS optional; SS complementary to PE	Both PE and SS contribute to the same educational purpose; SS complementary to PE
School Sports and Federated Sport connection	Cooperation protocols to create sports centres	Pursue for the same goal: More children practicing and better sport	Protocols	
Institutional framework of School Sports: educational system or sports system	Educational, Youth and Sport System	Educational System	Educational System	Educational Systems in general except Switzerland
Professional status of School Sports human resources	Teachers	Teachers	Teachers	Usually teachers, sometimes instructors or coaches
Age range of the students involved	From 6 to 19 years old	From 3 to 18 years old	From 3 to 18 years old	Usually from 10 to 18 years old, but sometimes from 3 up
Promoted activities	Wide range of sports	Wide range of sports	Wide range of sports	Wide range of sports
School Sports location	Schools and clubs facilities	Schools	Schools, public and clubs facilities	
Weekly duration		3 hours	3 hours	Actual: 1 to 6 hours; Minimum desirable: 2 hours

Contributions

The concept of School Sports in different countries is wide. Nonetheless, despite variations, it is mostly based on a broader point of view which lays on the citizens' rights to health and learning.

Countries like Portugal, Czech Republic and France consider the access to sport as a right of all citizens, in order to create a positive attitude in children towards sport and physical activity in general. In Germany is established the access to sport by learning movement and through movement, while in countries such as Finland and Switzerland the health benefits provided by the School Sports (SS) are enhanced.

Almost all European countries have School Sports.

School Sports and Physical Education (PE) are understood as two different realities. Sometimes they cross or SS is an extension of PE, other times SS includes PE. Physical Education is always considered as part of the curriculum.

The widespread access to SS can complement the role of PE throughout life learning education.

In most countries, teachers are the same, SS is optional while PE is mandatory (Portugal, France, Luxembourg and Switzerland). Still on the professional status of human resources in SS, in other countries, there is the possibility of having a tutor for SS such as instructors, coaches and youth workers, in countries like Finland, Germany and Luxembourg.

The relationship between SS and Federated Sports is based on cooperation protocols in all countries except Luxembourg, where a closer relationship is recently being pursued.

Generally, the participation of federated athletes in School Sports competitions is not restricted, despite the exception registered in some cantons of Switzerland where competitive participation is limited to one or two federated athletes per team. In Madeira, the participation of federated athletes is not allowed at the competitions.

The SS is institutionally integrated in the educational system in all countries except Switzerland, where is framed by the Ministry of Defence. Both in Switzerland and in Germany, the federative political organization leads to specific regulation on SS as well as in the rest of the educational curriculum, depending on local specificities.

Students start their participation in the school sports system between three years of age and adulthood, generally up to the age of eighteen years or until dropping out of the educational system.

In Madeira and France, students integrate the School Sports system at the age of three. In Luxembourg, it begins at the age of four, whereas in the Czech Republic and Germany it starts at six; Finland starts at seven and in mainland Portugal, school sports offer only starts at age of ten.

In all countries, the availability of sports offer needs to articulate the students' demand with the physical and human conditions available at school. This results in a wide variety of formal and informal sports.

School facilities are the places of choice for school sports activities, combined with the facilities of sports clubs through cooperation arrangements and protocols.

The weekly duration of these activities ranges from a minimum of one hour in Switzerland to three hours in Portugal, France, Germany, and a maximum of five hours in Finland.

Competitions occur mostly at specific moments during the week: for example, on Wednesdays afternoon in France and on Thursdays afternoon in Luxembourg. In Madeira, competitions occur mainly on Saturday mornings.

UNESCO established the universal right of citizens to quality physical education and access to sport. The school provides this equality of opportunities because it gathers all infant and youth population.

Physical Education and Sport are, at the moment, part of the political agenda in Europe.

Sports training centers, academies and other spaces which combine school and sport are a current and future option in order to develop sport amongst school population.

The school can meet the needs of sporting excellence. It gathers all the conditions to be at the foundation of the "sporting edifice" and broadening the participation at the base, but also to allow individualized work and scouting. Excellence can also mean the realization of the potential of each student.

On the age for school sports initiation issue, the approach must start with the development of basic motor skills, and pursue into a progressive formal practice.

More specific studies on School Sports are needed.

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Rapporteurs:

André Fernandes da Cunha

Mário Durão

Translation:

Carla Ferreira

Documentary Support:

Marina Ornelas

Regional Government of Madeira

Education and Human Resources Regional Secretary