

## **VERSATILITY OF THE SPORTS MANAGER'S ACTIVITY REFLECTED IN THE PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS**

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### **Abstract**

Modern sports management generates new requirements for human resources in this field, which must fulfill new functional tasks in accordance with the strategic objectives of the sports entity. The sports manager is a key figure in a sports organization that works in the market, as it carries out its activity for the benefit of other people. The sports manager leads the team, defines the general and specific objectives of the organization, communicates efficiently, makes decisions in the “people-purpose” chain of actions, negotiates and concludes partnerships, fulfilling a series of roles at the institutional level. All roles are interdependent and interact to create a coherent whole. The professional competence of a sports manager, his knowledge, skills is constantly manifested in two main directions: *technological and socio-psychological*. The main criterion for the success and quality of the sports manager activity, as a rule, is the financial performance of the sports organization. The introduction of professional standards will allow the development of new job descriptions, as well as the adoption of regulatory acts in this regard, while defining more advanced methods to ensure the motivation of employees, including certification of the qualification category award. The job titles included in the professional standards approved at national level can be used for the elaboration of the staff statements of the sports organizations, as well as for the elaboration of the job descriptions, the employment contracts concluded with the employees of the sports entity, coordinated with positions included in the Classification of occupations adopted at national level and of the qualifications for the functions and professions accordingly described.

**Keywords:** sports manager, managerial hierarchy, professional standard, qualification, sports entity.

The profession of sports manager should correspond to at least ISCED level 6, involving the formation and acquisition in the undergraduate educational path of theoretical-practical knowledge, specialized in a field of study (Sports Science field), including a wide range of cognitive and practical skills needed to design creative solutions to abstract problems. In addition, in advanced studies, it could contribute to the development of additional professional skills that could facilitate “advanced skills that show the control and innovation needed to solve complex and unpredictable problems in the field of reference, business management or complex technical or professional projects, by assuming responsibility for making decisions in unpredictable work or study situations, by assuming responsibility for managing the professional development of individuals and groups”[5].

In many national/international physical education universities, there are differences in approaches to training sports managers or there is not even a specialized curriculum in this regard. Thus, sports managers are not found (at least in Romania and the Republic of Moldova) in significant training profiles or in levels of qualification and certification, system and structure of the training organization, in the center of specialization programs, in the types of structural units responsible for training and graduation of sports managers.

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The purpose of the research is to analyze the versatility of the sports manager in accordance with the strategic objectives of the sports entity and the professional standard in the field.

**Research methodology:** literature review, sociological questionnaire, observation, data interpretation and graphic method.

The versatility of sports managers is reflected in the roles they play at the level of the sports institution, namely 10 roles, which are combined into 3 major groups: *interpersonal, informational and permissive roles*. The role is understood as a set of certain behavioral rules corresponding to a certain institution or position. These roles are interdependent and interact to create a coherent whole. Thus, interpersonal roles derive from the authority and status of a leader in an organization and cover the sphere of his interaction with people, which makes him, to a certain extent, a "center for receiving and processing information" and, in this sense, makes informational roles play. By fulfilling interpersonal and informational roles, the sports manager is able to play roles associated with decision making: allocating resources, resolving conflicts, identifying new opportunities for the organization, negotiating [4]

Table 1 presents the competences relevant to the qualification of the sports manager.

**Table 1. Competences relevant for the sports manager qualification**

Transversal competences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Flexibility in thinking (creativity and critical thinking competences)</li> <li>● Ability to solve complex problems of the sports entity (multilingual competences)</li> <li>● Coordination with the management team and the external environment (scientific and innovative competences)</li> <li>● Teamwork, interconnection, diversity and interculturalism (information, digital and leadership competences)</li> <li>● analysis and decision making (entrepreneurial competences)</li> </ul>
General professional competences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● self-knowledge skills and effective self-organization of specific carried out activities</li> <li>● Specialty knowledge aiming the concepts and modern general management approaches</li> <li>● Basic notions getting on the specificity of managerial activity</li> <li>● Knowledge of sports organizations, use and allocation of resources, functions and methods of sports management</li> <li>● Assimilation of basic notions about sports management and sports law technologies, communication, use and application of knowledge in practice</li> <li>● Use of management elements, marketing and sports law in competitive activities and management of the field</li> </ul>
Specific professional competences	<p>In-depth knowledge of the specialization area, theoretical, methodological and practical developments specific to the training of competences:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● managerial;</li> <li>● legislative;</li> <li>● economic;</li> <li>● leadership and coaching.</li> </ul>

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Professional standards provide the employer with the additional opportunity to determine the qualitative composition of staff. Their regulation and adoption at national level allows the development of new job descriptions, as well as new performance descriptors of the sports manager's reference. In this context, the generalized functions of the activity included in the professional standard of the sports manager could be those reflected in Figure 1.

For each managerial function, the professional standard introduces requirements for education and training, for practical experience and special conditions for holding such a managerial position. Structurally, the professional standard consists of units, which correlates with a specific job function and a specific level of qualifications that contains requirements for fulfilling a profession in terms of competences, knowledge, abilities, levels of responsibility, independence and complexity [2].

**GENERALIZED FUNCTIONS OF THE ACTIVITY INCLUDED IN THE  
PROFESSIONAL STANDARD OF THE SPORTS MANAGER**



- managing activities in the field of physical culture and sports
- management of planning, analytical and methodological activities in the field of physical culture and sports;
- management of technical operation, ensuring maintenance and modernization of sports and technological equipment / facilities, sports facilities;
- managing counseling and testing activities in the field of physical culture and sports;
- ensuring the management of sports training;
- management of complex activities in the field of reference;
- developing the strategic management of specific activities in order to ensure the support for the development of physical culture and sports;  
strategic management of the training of sports teams, performance athletes and the Olympic reserve.

***Figure 1. Generalized functions of the activities included in the professional standard of sports managers***

Each unit of the professional standard should clearly describe the following parameters:

- the name of the position/unit of work in the professional standard;
- the actions necessary to ensure the fulfillment of this function;
- qualification level characteristics;
- knowledge, and skills reflected in the necessary competences.

In turn, the necessary knowledge and skills cover three groups of competences: professional (related to the actual field of professional activity); transversal skills (related to health and safety, professional communication and the improvement of the working environment and the workplace); key/specific competences related to all types of activities, where the employee is involved and suggesting his / her ability to acquire new knowledge and adapt it to new contexts,

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as well as to adapt to the changing situation of his / her own professional and personal development (intellectual, social and interpersonal, entrepreneurial ones) [3,4].

In conclusion, we can say that sports managers are versatile in their professional field, which allowed them to develop organizational skills. Moreover, the success of the athlete or the entire management team depends on the talent and art of the sports manager, his self-control, discretion and sociability in different contexts. The profession of sports manager is chosen by people who have higher education in the field of sports or management. In the state universities of the Republic of Moldova and Romania, specialized fields of training and requalification are implemented, which will contribute to the consolidation of the specialty of "Sports Manager" under the conditions required in the Nomenclature of professional qualifications for which training is ensured through the level 6 of qualification. At the same time, through a professional requalification program "Management in sports institutions", implemented by the higher education institution, the conditions will be created for the continuous improvement of specialists in the field. The generalization of the professional training experience of sports managers in the university, corroborated with the market demand of specialists in this field, reflects that a growing number of organizations in the sports industry needs managers with a certain set of skills, abilities and additional competences (knowledge and the ability to use modern technology and software, knowledge of English, ability to form the organization's information policy, ability to organize and direct the activities of the executive office of the sports organization, knowledge and implementation of marketing and management strategies, knowledge and enforcement in the field, including regulations and provisions on competitions and sports events, etc.). Unfortunately, so far, the mechanism of market demand and offer of sports management specialists in the Republic of Moldova has not yet been regulated, which is why the professional training of specialists is found only in Cycle II. In this context, the introduction of professional standards for employees in the sports industry and the mandatory certification procedure for sports managers would be an opportunity in the field of reference. This will allow, on the one hand, an inventory of management personnel in the sports industry, and on the other hand, will help to identify the priorities of management specialties in the general list of sports management positions.

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