

## Good Practice Example: Croatian Skating Federation – Education of artistic and short-track skating coaches

### **Background**

Croatian Skating Federation, a member of the Croatian Olympic Committee, initiated the education for coaches. In Croatia, there are six artistic skating clubs, one synchronised skating club and one short-track skating club.

Three hundred and eighty (380) skaters are registered with the Croatian Skating Federation. All three skating disciplines consist of:

- short-track skating – three coaches
- synchronised skating – five coaches
- artistic skating – eight coaches.

All the coaches coaching at the public sports infrastructure are former skaters who, at the end of their sports careers, tried to achieve the qualifications to work on ice. Some of them completed university studies not related to the Faculty of Kinesiology, and thus did not acquire the necessary education for skating training.

The Faculty of Kinesiology did not have a department and skating-oriented education. Therefore, all our skating coaches completed the Croatian Olympic Academy courses.

The modifications and amendments to the Sports Act prescribe that coaching in all sports (including skating) must be done exclusively by coaches with college or university education. It was subsequently established that there are not enough trained people to work within the public sports infrastructure.

### **Description of the activity and main goals**

The Croatian Skating Federation initiated as follows:

- In collaboration with the Faculty of Kinesiology in Zagreb, the study programme of skating sports was created.
- The experts from the countries having such studies and rich experience have been provided.
- The procedure for the nomination of coaches who will be educated was established.
- The criteria for financial assistance of studies has been made.

In 2013, the preparations and negotiations with the Faculty of Kinesiology were finalised, and the first seven female coaches began the specialised study of skating.

In order to provide an equal and equitable future system, four key criteria have been set:

- Each club has the right to train one coach.
- The coaches who start the studies must be employed.
- The advantage will be given to women.
- The advantage will be given to the former competitive skaters.

## **Budget**

Every other term, tuition, as well as the enrolment fee, were financed by the Croatian Skating Federation. Every candidate who had not attended the programme at the Faculty of Kinesiology regularly lost the right to be financed.

The Croatian Skating Federation provided 105.000,00 kn (14.000 €) in the first phase of training for seven female candidates, and 55.000,00 kn (7.335 €) in the second phase for five female candidates.

## **Impact**

Since we consider our programme to be good practice, we invited the clubs and the Zagreb Skating Federation to join it in the beginning, but unfortunately not a single organisation wanted to take part, although such organisations should have funds designed for personnel training. Following the fifth term, the clubs and the Zagreb Skating Federation joined the programme, having already taken up the challenge of a completely new attitude to coach training.

It is our pleasure to announce that the first generation completed the undergraduate studies and that it will continue the postgraduate ones. It should also be noted that the new generation (five female candidates) has been admitted to the specialised skating study at the Faculty of Kinesiology.

In particular sports, the problem of coach training could not be solved following the example of the Croatian Skating Federation. For example, in football, 800 trained coaches are missing, and in such cases, more incentives are needed.

The Croatian Skating Federation's example shows how new ideas, unconventional attitude and quick response can open possibilities for continuous coach training, because the specialised study will not be cancelled and the new trained personnel will contribute to the progress of skating, and to the training of athletes, once they finish their sports career.