

European Commission

**Study on the training of young sportsmen
and sportswomen in Europe**

**Identification, evaluation and
comparison of the quality criteria**





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Introduction

- The objective of this document is to identify, evaluate and compare the main quality criteria of the different training systems in Europe.
- The quality standards of the training of young athletes mainly depend on external and internal control, as represented in Chart 1.

Chart 1. Sources of quality standards



- External control includes the legal and political frameworks, which makes mandatory for the training centres to take into consideration some critical aspects and the kind of control and assistance provided by sports organisations (which play a key role mostly through national associations), most of the time through books of specifications for quality standards and the training of coaches.
- Internal control refers to the fact that training centres run their own initiatives in terms of quality criteria and reach different levels of professionalisation.
- This document consists in a review of quality criteria related to the legal and political frameworks, to the specific measures taken by the sports organisations and to the own standards of training centres.



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A) Quality criteria related to the system and structures

I. Quality criteria related to models of organisation

- Models of organisation of youth elite sports training depend on a number of factors : history of national and local sports bodies / clubs, geography of the country, population of the country, economy of the sport / country, etc... The way national associations, sports clubs, national and local governments organise the sport to take into account the specificities of their country is key for a successful youth elite sports training system. Some models depend mostly on the sports clubs' involvement in the training of young athletes, while others depend more on the work done by the national associations or on the support from local and/or national governments.
- Policies and regulations
In some countries such as France, United Kingdom and Ireland, sports regulations (whether laws or provisions issued by the NGBs) relating to the organisation and promotion of physical and sports activities provide a framework for the organisation of the training of young high level athletes.
The majority of the Member States of EU take into account high-level sports in their educational system (flexible timetables, promotion of sport at school...). Sports classes may be found in 12 countries. There are sports schools in 19 Member States. In Belgium, Slovenia and Portugal, a specific status has been created for promising young athletes. Finally, training centres managed by professional clubs or private investors can be found in countries like France and the UK.
- Role of sports organisations
The national associations can issue some rules or incentives to control, promote and develop the training of high level young athletes.



Chart 2. Models of organisation – role of sports organisations

Country	Practice
France	<p>Team sports - the professional clubs need to sign an agreement with the association, which guarantees a minimum involvement in the training of young athletes. Decree n°2001-150 from February 16th 2001 specifies what this agreement must deal with.</p> <p>Football - Some French TV rights for Ligue 2 clubs are redistributed depending on the level of such clubs' football academies.</p>
United Kingdom	<p>Sport England launched the CLUBMARK system classifying amateur clubs into 5 groups depending on their development. The aim is first to promote a healthy and secure environment for young athletes. In addition, clubs may receive grants or equipments due to their level.</p>
Finland	<p>The Finnish Central Sport Federation creates together with the national associations and other bodies a national sports policy, which is updated every 3-4 years and includes a national high performance policy. Every federation has a "result" conversation every autumn with the people of the National Sport Federation from the Ministry of Education in order to analyse all areas of development.</p>
Spain	<p>Football - reserve teams can play second division football which is an advantage for the final steps of the training of young athletes.</p>

- **Role of the training centres**

Depending on sports, countries and bodies, the training centres can get full or little autonomy in their organisation and philosophy.



II. Quality criteria related to the existence of books of specifications

- The existence of books of specifications is key in the success of a number of countries in developing sports training. Those books of specifications can be very different from one another : in terms of contents, in terms of bodies in charge of the controls, in terms of advantages provided to the training centres which fulfil the specifications, etc.
- Policies and regulations

A few Member States have set out legal regulations relating to the necessary requirements to run training centres. They can include books of specifications which the national associations must adapt to the specificities of their sport.

As an example, in France, according to the sports law of 1999 (Loi Buffet), training centres must fulfil specific criteria which are checked by the Ministry before they receive its approval before they can welcome and train young high level athletes.
- Role of sports organisations

In some Member States, beside the legal framework, the national associations set forth specific obligations adapted to their respective sports.

This way to proceed has the advantage to cumulate the security offered by a legal framework and to take into account the specificity in each sport.

Chart 3. Books of specifications – role of sports organisations

Country	Practice
Several European Countries	Books of specifications for clubs or federal training centres including mandatory criteria (ex : football in Finland, football in Latvia, athletics in Lithuania...)
Portugal	Basket-ball - National training centres apply rules about coaches' special qualification, mentoring, full assistance, personal behaviour and academic success.
Slovenia	Judo - Training centres must respect a book of rules which sets the conditions under which competitors and coaches can compete and train. This book of rules includes aspects about education and ethical values.
Slovenia	Football - each regional centre includes an artificial grass pitch built under the UEFA standards
European Countries	Football - UEFA : Clubs Licensing System. In 2004 UEFA implemented a club licensing in order to implement minimum standards for clubs participating in the UEFA club competitions. The system requires that clubs meet minimum standards in the following areas: sporting; personnel and administration; legal and financial.

- Role of training centres

Some training centres build their own books of specifications.



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B) Quality criteria related to the population of training centres

- The population involved in training centres depends on a lot of factors : population of the country, rules of the sport, economy of the sport, organisation of the sport, etc. . The number of athletes involved has nevertheless a major impact on very important issues such as : the percentage of young athletes who reach elite level, the sports level of the young athletes, etc. .
- Policies and regulations
The limitation of the number of athletes is rather decided by the national associations and training centres.
- Role of sports organisations
National associations limit the number of athletes in the training centres they run directly and sometimes put in place regulations which limit the number of athletes in the training centres run by sports clubs.

Chart 4. Population – role of sports organisations

Country	Practice
Estonia	Audentes gathers the best young athletes from the country at the age of 15 in a multisports training centre and achieves great results with a very high percentage of the students making it to elite level.
Latvia	Basket-ball - most of the players at the main training centres reach elite level.

- Role of training centres
Some training centres are trying to limit the number of athletes involved in their training groups, in order to reach a higher degree of competition between athletes, to limit the costs and to increase the percentage of athletes reaching elite level.

Chart 5. Population – role of training centres

Country	Practice
Netherlands	Football - Heracles Almelo and FC Twente Enschede on the one hand, and AGOVV Apeldoorn and Vitesse Arnhem on the other hand will be training together young players from both clubs in order to better the conditions of training and to increase the level of the training group so that a higher percentage reaches elite level. Fortuna Sittard, FCVVV, MVV Maastricht and Roda JC are creating a joint venture to train the best talent from the whole region of Limburg.



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C) Quality criteria related to talent identification systems

- Talent identification is one of the keys for a successful youth elite sports training system. Talent identification systems, like models of organisation, depend on a number of factors : type of sport, history of national and local sport bodies / clubs, geography of the country, population of the country, economy of the sport / country, etc. . The success of talent identification systems depends on how they can fit to those specificities. It is also key that the system is not only based on sporting performance.
- Policies and regulations
Most of the policies or regulations regarding talent identification are decided and run within the national associations.
- Role of sports organisations
Very few countries have built multi-sports talent identification systems. When those kinds of systems exist, they need a strong support from schools.

Chart 6. Talent identification systems / multisport – role of sports organisations

Country	Practice
Malta	The Malta Olympic Committee implemented a Talent Identification Scheme to guide young athletes to develop into the right sport. It was co-ordinated by the Director of Youth, and guided through a number of schools in different parts of Malta. Sports teachers make the children go through a number of different physical exercises. The results of each child are then analysed by scientists (Functional Diagnostic Laboratory), and then three sports are identified as potential for the child to participate.
Greece	Each year, all school pupils of 9 years participate in a set of physical tests within their school. Based on their performance, the pupils are offered the opportunity to train with specialized coaches, three times a week, at the city where they live and then they can join a local club of their choice.
Slovenia	They present each sport to the pupils in order to allow them to discover the different sport practices.
Non EU (Qatar)	Qatar Aspire, Qatar Sports Academy school screening system. This system aims at screening a maximum number of young Qatari through the school system.
Non EU (Australia)	Training of sports teacher to identify the right sport for the right athletes under the coordination of a talent coordinator per region.



National associations are in charge of building the talent identification system (targeted population, scope of the talent search, means dedicated to the screening and selection, dedicated events, supervision of competitions...) in most of the non professional sports. Some of them lead original programmes.

Chart 7. Talent identification systems / by sport – role of sports organisations

Country	Practice
Portugal	Athletics - Huge promotion campaign for athletics: "Vivo o atletismo" (clubs+schools) : from 10 to 17 years competitions in all athletics disciplines
France	Athletics - The federation runs the "Urban athlé" operation, which includes a moving small stadium, promoting athletics and testing young athletes in urban areas.
Poland	Basketball - Open gates day in youth training centres and Sports school .This action is promoted through media and advertising.

- Role of training centres

Training centres play also a very important part in the talent identification. That's especially the case of sports clubs in professional sports, which dedicate a significant part of the budget of their training centres to talent identification.



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D) Quality criteria related to the funding

- The funding of youth elite sports training remains key for building a successful system. Funding depends also on a number of factors : the economy of the sport in the country, the popularity of the sport, results achieved at the highest level, the implication of public government and private companies, etc. .

- Policies and regulations

The level of involvement of public funding may vary a lot from one country to another. The State, through the Ministry, the national associations and the territorial communities, ensure such financing in nearly all European countries. The private part of the financing is ensured by the clubs (for example, this is the case in a lot of countries for football and basketball) and also by lottery funds in some countries (Austria, United Kingdom, Czech Republic, France, Portugal...).

Chart 8. Funding – policies and regulations

Country	Practice
Czech republic	A major part of the relevant associations' income is a dividend from the lottery company, Sazka a.s.. This joint stock company is a hundred percent owned by Czech sports associations

- Role of sports organisations

Most of the national associations (and some professional leagues) deliberately dedicate means and money to the sports training of young athletes.

Chart 9. Funding – role of sports organisations

Country	Practice
European Countries	Football - UEFA : UEFA Champions' League solidarity payments for youth development in professional clubs. Since the 1999-2000 season, UEFA has allocated 5-6% of the gross Champions League revenues for solidarity payments to the European clubs that did not participate in the group phase of this European competition. The purpose of these payments is to give financial support to as many first and lower division teams in Europe as possible. More in particular, these payments aim to encourage clubs to improve youth development. UEFA, via the UEFA Champions League, has therefore made available €290m for investment in youth training centres across Europe since 2000. Over 700 small and medium sized professional football clubs across Europe have their youth development programmes funded (either partially or fully) thanks to this solidarity system every year. In some Member States such as Poland, Romania – the system is funding between 30-50% of the youth development budget of those clubs receiving funding. In other Member States such as Lithuania – the system is funding 50-75% of the youth development budget of those clubs receiving funding.
European Countries	Football - UEFA : Principles agreed by UEFA and FIFA with the European Commission regarding the international transfer system and the FIFA rules regarding international transfers. One vitally important element in the range of different measures which form the conditions for good youth development across Europe is the international transfer system. Many of the provisions in this system exist in order to develop, protect and promote youth development. There are four main pillars of this system which directly contribute to encouraging youth development : solidarity mechanism (5% of the transfer fee paid to the former club shall be distributed to the club(s) involved in his training and education. This solidarity contribution will reflect the number of years he was registered with the relevant club(s) between the age of 12 and 23.), training compensation, maintenance of contractual stability and transfer fees (transfer fees provide a major incentive to many clubs, especially the smaller and poorer clubs, to invest in youth development).

- Role of training centres

Some sports clubs emphasize more than others the sports training of young athletes.



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A) Quality criteria related to the sports training of young athletes

The sports training of the athletes remains of course the core activity of the training centres.

I. Quality criteria related to the athlete

I.1) Training duration

The sports objectives of the training centres should never impact negatively the health, the psychological balance or the academic education of the athletes. In that sense, training duration can be an issue in some sports (mostly for early maturity sports) and the way training centres deal with it can be crucial in some cases.

- Policies and regulations

In some Member States, the training duration is limited through educational or labour law or collective bargaining agreements in the case of professional sports, or official guidelines issued by the State and the Sports movement.

The limitations will mainly be set forth in relation with the age of the young athletes and their agenda (especially between two competitions).

Chart 10. Training duration – policies and regulations

Country	Practice
Belgium	In some sports - the rules distinguish between the age at which sport can be started, and the age at which a youngster can start competition.
France	The collective bargaining agreements prohibit night trainings (0.00 – 07.00) and set compulsory resting times between matches and trainings.
Latvia	The number of hours and times a week during which young athletes can train are sets forth according to the age group, provided that the training content is accepted.
Slovenia	Training times for each of the 5 selected sports were carefully determined due the age of the athletes. Requirements are set forth by the National Branch Federation in agreement with the Ministry of Education and the Sports and Olympic Committee of Slovenia. The scope of training should not exceed the following limitations: 1. youngest athletes (6-8 years): 240 hours/year, 2. juveniles (9-11): 240-400 hours per year, 3. older boys and girls: 300 – 800 hours. For youth, i.e. athletes, which are 15-20 years old, the duration of yearly sports training should not exceed 400-1100 hours. The national sports programme sets the age of 6 years old as a general limit (Slovenia).

- Role of sports organisations

The training duration is very often set forth by the national associations as they have the best knowledge of the practise of their respective sports. This duration may substantially vary according to the type of sports and the age of the children.

Some books of specifications deal with this issue and identify both a minimum and a maximum duration for sports training.



In France, for basket-ball, the book of specifications for professional clubs' youth training centres includes mandatory criteria :

- Daily training.
- An average of 10/12 hours of training per week.
- Total duration of basket-ball practice should not exceed 18 hours (including competitions).
- 1 day or 2 half days per week without any sports training.
- 1 strength & condition session per week.
- An annual planning of the training will be established by the coach and approved by the Technical Federal Direction.

In England, depending on the age of the players, there is a minimum duration for coaching sessions (excluding games) required to be provided to registered students at football academies and at the same time a minimum and maximum of authorised games to be played in any season.

Moreover, for many sports, a distinction exists between the age at which a child may start practising a sport and the age at which he may start competition.

In countries where most of the intensive training is run by the federation, it is up to the federation to decide on the training duration.

Chart 11. Training duration – role of sports organisations

Country	Practice
France	Athletics : The federation makes sure the increase in the training workloads for athletes between 15 and 17 is made step by step. They avoid making mandatory a daily training and they try to adapt loads to individuals (the federation considers that it is a major threat to be too demanding for young athletes).
United Kingdom	Football: England FA rule C4 regulates the participation of minors in football. Rugby: lengths of training are reduced for minors, children protection plans are applied to all academies.
Italy	Each federation sets the maximum number of hours to be spent in sports training.

- Role of training centres

The training duration in elite sports mainly depends on the type of sports. Some of them require a higher daily training load. It is the case of very technical sports like tennis, or of very specific sports like swimming. The policy of the training centre can nevertheless impact the training duration. Apart from the training duration itself, the quality criteria lies in the capacity of the training centre to personalize the training duration depending on the specificities of each individual. Quality training is the key to limit the training hours. This is however more difficult to manage in team sports.



I.II) Minimum age for practicing high performance sports

Just like for the training duration, the starting age for practicing high performance sports should never negatively impact the health, the psychological balance or the academic education of the athletes. This is quite sensitive in some sports (particularly in early maturity sports) and it is interesting to study the way training centres deal with that issue. It is all the more important as this issue of the minimum age for intensive training is very delicate as in many cases, the difference between the biological and the chronological age is not taken into account.

- Policies and regulations

A few countries drafted laws relating to the minimum age required for practising a sport. It must be noted that sometimes these rules only relate to the participation of the athletes in the national teams.

- Role of sports organisations

As this aspect is closely linked with the specific requirements of each sport, these rules, when they exist, are, in most Member States, stated by the national associations themselves. Nevertheless, regarding intensive training, most of the time, national associations issue recommendations but no mandatory obligations.

In countries where most of the intensive training is run by the federation, it is up to the federation to decide of the minimum age for practicing high performance sports.

- Role of training centres

In late maturity sports, most of the training centres understand that it is not necessary (and even non productive) to impose to the athletes to start intensive training at an early age.

In early maturity sports, it is necessary to start at a young age, which means that the solution may not consist in imposing a minimum age. In those cases, it is then all the more important to impose on the training centres that they provide high quality services to the young athletes often far from home (for academic education, personal development, medical surveillance, etc.).



I.III) Number of athletes

The number of athletes involved in the training centres may have a direct impact on the quality of the sports training. Depending on the sports (mostly in team sports), training centres sometimes get involved players who do not meet the requirements of elite sports and will not be able to reach the elite level. This is a serious issue as those players may easily partly sacrifice their academic education, without any chance to succeed in elite sports, and as it also means that the level of the athletes in those training centres is not homogeneous, which is a handicap for building a successful training programme.

- Policies and regulations

We have no data about such a framework.

- Role of sports organisations

In a number of books of specifications, the national associations created mandatory criteria to make sure either a minimum or/and a maximum of athletes is respected. This number of athletes is also sometimes to be related to the number of coaches.

- In England, the book of specifications for professional club youth training centres (football Academy) states a maximum number of students registrable by each club (age groups Under 9 to Under 14 inclusive : 30 in each age group ; age groups Under 15 and Under 16 inclusive : 20 in each age group ; age groups Under 17 to Under 21 inclusive : 15 in each age group).
- In France, in athletics, the book of specifications for regional training centres includes mandatory criteria which set up a minimum number of athlete (6) and a ratio athletes / trainers (4 to 15 athletes per trainer). In France, in basket-ball, the book of specifications for professional club youth training centres states that it is mandatory to host a minimum of 5 players and a maximum of 15 players.

In the countries / sports where the national association is the main responsible for the organisation of the training of young athletes, it decides of the number of athletes involved in the best training centres of the country.

- Role of training centres

Most of the team sports training centres have been reducing their number of athletes in order to focus on the most talented athletes. Some training centres are working on new kinds of arrangements which should represent great opportunities to maximize the percentage of athletes getting to elite level (cf. page 9 of the document). The objective is also to be able to improve the quality of the staff and services to the players.



I.IV) Recruitment according to the geographical place of residence

The place of origin of the athletes should be taken into account as a quality criteria because it can be very difficult and unproductive for athletes to leave home at an early age. This problem is stronger for early maturity sports (because children need to leave home earlier), for team sports (because it is not easy to remain near home if there is no team with the required level) and for countries where people may live far away from their training centre.

- Policies and regulations

In 22 Member States out of 27, there is no legal regulation on this subject matter.

In practise, however, due to the regional organisation of sports, young athletes are often members of clubs located near their parents' residence.

- Role of sports organisations

In one country, the football federation has enacted rules limiting the transfer of young players outside their region of residence until the age of 14.

In England, the book of specifications for professional club youth training centres (football academy) states that subject to the provisions of Art. 19 of the FIFA Regulations for the Status and Transfer of Players, on or after 1st January in any Season a Club may enter into a pre-registration agreement with a player who does not reside within one and a half hours' travelling time of its Football Academy or Centre of Excellence provided that such a player is then:

- In his Under 16, Under 17 or Under 18 year,
- In full time education,
- Not registered with another club or Football League club.

- Role of training centres

The policy of the training centres is very different from one country / sport to another. In some places, the training centres run policies which primarily focus on local athletes. In football for example, clubs act very differently (despite the fact that statistics would point out that the local players most often attain the professional level), with some of them focusing only on the regional players and some of them bringing players from the other side of the country or even from any other country of the world.



II. Quality criteria related to the staff

II.1) Professional and further education of the trainers

The trainers are the key actors in the sports training of the athletes. From the talent identification to the final stages of the sports training, they must be successful. The future of young athletes, both as sportsmen and as persons, is partly in their hands. It is therefore crucial that trainers benefit from a quality professional education (which enables the trainers to understand all types of risks that may be incurred by the athletes, and not only the risks directly linked to the sports training) and a quality further education (the science of training being quite a new science, there are new methods of training and new issues are identified every year).

- Policies and regulations

Some Member States have set out legal regulations relating to the requirements necessary to work as medical staff in specialised medical centres, to become a trainer (degrees, sports training,...), to manage training centres and national associations.

Some have also set out some regular necessary further education in order to revalidate the licences of the trainers.

- Role of sports organisations

In some Member States, beside the legal framework, the national associations set forth accurate obligations adapted to their respective sports.

The system has the advantage to cumulate the security offered by a legal framework and to take into account the specificity in each sport.

Most of the existing books of specifications from national associations include quality criteria related to the coaches diploma. Sometimes, books of specifications also make it mandatory to have a minimum number of coaches, depending on the number of athletes.

In France, in athletics, the book of specifications for regional training centres states that the choice of the trainers must be validated by the National Technical Direction and that they should hold valid athletics diploma. In basketball, the book of specifications for professional club training centres states that it is mandatory to involve :

- 1 full-time basketball coach only dedicated to the players of the training centre. This coach shall hold a valid coaching diploma (Level 2 out of 3),
- 1 basketball assistant coach. This coach shall hold a valid coaching diploma (Level 1 out of 3).

In England, the book of specifications for professional club youth training centres (football academy) states that the minimum level for coaches at football academies shall be :

- A sufficient number of coaches (full or part-time) to provide a minimum of one coach to every 10 students for each coaching session,
- 1 specialist goalkeeping coach (full or part-time).



- Assistant Academy Managers shall hold a valid UEFA “A” Coaching Award and other coaches employed at football academies shall hold a valid UEFA “B” Coaching Award together in each with:
 - A valid F.A. Youth Coaches Award – Junior in the case of those coaching students in age groups Under 9 to Under 12 inclusive.
 - A valid F.A. Youth Coaches Award – Intermediate in the case of those coaching students in age groups Under 13 to Under 16 inclusive.
 - A valid F.A. Youth Coaches Award – Youth in the case of those coaching students in age groups Under 17 to Under 21 inclusive.

Other quality practices are presented in Chart 12.

Chart 12. Professional and further education of the trainers– role of sports organisations

Country.	Practice
Finland	Football - coaches must participate to a refreshing course at least every two years in order to get their badges updated. Football - once a year, all the managers / coaches of the football academies are invited to the “talent academy seminar”, which takes place during the final tournament involving football academies, in order to share best practices.
Austria	Basketball - coaches must attend at least one coach education every year in order to get their license for the following season
Latvia	The certificates of the coaches have to be renovated every 4 years and coaches have to get 60 hours in coaching special courses for that.
France	Football - there exists a specific diploma for youth training ; there must be at least one trainer with this very high level diploma (includes 1.000 hours of lessons over 2 years) in each football academy.
Portugal	Gymnastics - training camps are organized with athletes and coaches from abroad to share experiences and best practices.
Greece	Basketball - coaches can be sent abroad to follow continuing education in FIBA seminars.
Hungary	Basketball - a DVD is sent to coaches for continuing training.
Slovenia	Judo - every 14 days, trainers and athletes from regional centres, can assist to lectures/practice training to share best practices.
Poland	Fencing - continuing education is organised in two weeks sessions, including written exams and the preparation of a thesis.
European Countries	Football – UEFA : regarding coaches' qualification, UEFA set up a convention on the Mutual Recognition of Coaching Qualifications (A&B licence Level – 120 hours of tuition; Pro level - at least 240 hours of tuition). UEFA also organises many forums, conferences for European Associations coaches in order them to improve their skills and share experiences with top coaches, National Association Technical Directors. The final purpose of these conferences is to improve the development and the training of the elite youth players in every member association



Some national associations also organise part of the further education of coaches together with other sports, as shown in Chart 13.

Chart 13. Professional and further education of the trainers / multisports – role of sports organisations

Country	Practice
Latvia	It was recently founded the Latvia Coach Further Education Centre, which is multisports and provides lectures for coaches (“C level” seminars mainly deal with young athletes).
Slovenia	Olympic Committee organises annual education programmes for each sport
Denmark	Team Denmark offers training programmes for trainers and other sports officials for each discipline.

- Role of training centres

The training centres give importance to the qualification of the coaches but are mostly dependent on their budgets, which, except for professional team sports (and mostly for football), is not a guarantee for the development of a quality education of the trainers.



II.II) Other staff

The quality criteria for other staff members is also very important as they have a direct relation to athletes. Some of the staff members are involved in subjects which are directly linked to the health and the psychological balance of athletes and which need to be handled carefully. The qualifications of medical practitioners, physiotherapists, psychologists, mental preparators, nutritionists, strength and conditioning coaches who are in daily contact with the athletes should be clarified. It is also important that athletes get common messages from their different interlocutors (in terms of objectives, time to rest, period of rehabilitation after an injury, etc.).

- Policies and regulations

Only two Member States seem to regulate the education of the staff working with young athletes. In several other Member States, those professionals are submitted to general law relating to their activity, as these professions are often regulated (medical,...).

Chart 14. Other staff – policies and regulations

Country	Practice
Hungary	Government regulation 157/2004 (V.18) lists required qualifications for exercising certain sports professions.

- Role of sports organisations

In some countries, the requirements are set out by the national associations themselves.

Their requirements most of the time are about medical practitioners.

In France, in athletics, the book of specifications for regional training centres (“Pôles Espoirs”) states that it is a mandatory criteria to benefit from :

- A medical practitioner : a general agreement has to be signed with a medical practitioner (certified by the medical practitioner of the federation). A priority access for medical appointment will be included in this agreement. This medical practitioner will work with the federal medical practitioner for the mandatory follow-up of the athlete.
- A physiotherapist : a same kind of general agreement has to be signed with a physiotherapist.



In England, the book of specifications for professional club youth training centres (football academy) states that :

- Staff employed at football academies shall, each calendar year, undertake a minimum of 36 hours continuing professional development training provided by the club and shall maintain a record thereof and produce the same for inspection by an officer of the League upon request. Those members of staff to apply are Heads of Education and Welfare; Therapists; staff assisting Academy Managers.
- The minimum staffing levels of football academies shall be :
 - 1 Academy Manager (full-time) who shall hold a current Academy Manager Licence.
 - 1 Assistant Academy Manager for age groups Under 9 to Under 16 inclusive (full time).
 - 1 Chartered Physiotherapist (full time).
 - 1 full time therapist (or more than one, together employed on a full time equivalent basis) who, in each case, shall be either a Chartered Physiotherapist or shall hold the Football Association's Diploma in the treatment and management of injuries.
 - 1 Head of Education and Welfare (full time) who shall be a qualified teacher who has taught in a primary or secondary school or college of further education.
 - 1 qualified medical practitioner (on call).

Chart 15. Other staff – role of sports organisations

Country	Practice
France	Basketball - The book of specifications for professional club training centres states that a manager of the centre must be named, who will insure any matters except those regarding basketball practice.
Belgium	In the Walloon Region, directors, trainers, monitors or managers of clubs or national associations have to take specific courses.
Latvia	The Latvian Olympic Unit is especially important for individual sports which are not always in capacity to provide athletes with full support : athletes undergo regular functional tests and are given recommendations.
Lithuania	Promotion of the professionalization of the staff by awarding premiums to successful doctors, masseurs and scientists.
United Kingdom	Rugby, Football - The Football Association and the Rugby Football Union require that codes of practice regulate the conduct of staff in academies.

- **Role of training centres**

The choices of the training centres in terms of staff mostly depend on their budget (which mainly depends on public support in amateur sports and on the popularity of the sports for professional sports) on one side and on their philosophy on the other side. In many countries, in football, the training centres would have the money to have a psychologist working with the players, but only some of the clubs decide to go for it.



III. Quality criteria related to the facilities

The quality of the facilities is not a “sine qua non” issue, except for some kinds of sports which require specific facilities (e.g. skiing). In any case, it is a subject which needs to be addressed as facilities should be safe and allow young athletes to train in good conditions.

- Policies and regulations

In most countries, the State has a substantial influence in the financing of the sports facilities available to young athletes for training.

- Role of sports organisations

In some countries, the national associations may, through books of specifications, impose on the training centres the building / maintenance of sports facilities and the supply of equipment so as to improve the training of young athletes. Most of the books of specifications do mention quality criteria for the facilities.

For example, in the English football, the book of specifications for professional club youth training centres (football academy) states that the minimum facilities and accommodation to be provided by a football academy are the following:

- The number of grass pitches is fixed in accordance with the number of teams. For instance, for 5 or 6 teams, the club must provided a minimum of 3 grass pitches,
- 1 outdoor Artificial Surface pitch,
- 1 indoor playing area measuring 60 yards by 40 yards,
- Adequate medical treatment and examination areas,
- Adequate changing rooms, washing and toilet facilities,
- Adequate homework and study area for 40 students,
- Parents’ lounge,
- Computerised registration and student records,
- “E” Mail and Internet links to the Football Association and the League.

Chart 16. Facilities – role of sports organisations

Country	Practice
Slovenia	Football - each regional centre must include an artificial grass pitch built under the UEFA standards.
France	Athletics - the book of specifications makes it mandatory to benefit from : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 full synthetic athletics tracks certified IAAF (400m / Throwing Areas / Protection) • Related equipment (Hurdles / throwing engines) certified IAAF • Strength & Weightlifting room : regular access to a facility with at least 3 different equipments.
France	Basket-ball – the book of specifications makes it mandatory to benefit from : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 pitch certified for official competition, • 1 strength & conditioning room, • 1 meeting room, • 1 trainer office including the necessary furniture.



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B) Quality criteria related to academic education

The academic education of young athletes is a crucial issue as :

- A majority of the young athletes involved in the training centres will not reach the elite level;
- Only part of those who reach the elite level are able to make a living out of sports;
- Most of those who can make a living out of sports will need to quickly succeed in their post-career life.

I. Compulsory education

The first quality criteria for academic education is compulsory education.

Compulsory education is key as elite sports today represent so much in our society that a number of athletes (and their families) would be ready to stop school believing they would get more opportunities to succeed in sports. This kind of decision can be dramatic as it is taken at a moment when athletes may not know if they will ever succeed in reaching the elite level.

- Policies and regulations

In the 27 countries, legal rules are setting out the duration of compulsory education. It may go from age 5 to 18. The average duration in the 27 European countries is 9 years. In Lithuania, Italy, the Netherlands and in United Kingdom, compulsory education starts at 5. In Hungary, it ends at 18 and may also end at such age in Ireland and Poland depending on the path of each child. In most countries, compulsory education stops at 15 or 16.

- Role of sports organisations

Generally speaking, the books of specifications issued by a number of European national associations do not make it compulsory to get academic education besides the local age for compulsory education. The few examples of book of specifications with compulsory criteria regarding academic education include football in Finland, all sports in France, sports schools / football in Latvia.

In a number of countries, the best training centres are sports schools. These schools impose to follow studies, therefore, in such institutions, young athletes have to combine studies and sports, even after the period of compulsory education.

Chart 17. Compulsory education – role of sports organisations

Country	Practice
European Countries	Football – UEFA : Club Licensing System : licence applicant must ensure that every youth player involved in its youth development programme has the possibility to follow the mandatory school education according to national law and that every youth player involved in this youth development programme is not prevented from continuing his non-football education (complimentary school education or profession).
France	Rugby : The book of specifications issued by both the professional league and the federation makes compulsory to follow academic or professional education for all the rugby players registered in the professional clubs youth training centres. This compulsory criteria is put in a concrete form by the signing of an education convention between the player and the club.



- Role of training centres

Training centres generally do not make it compulsory for young athletes to study besides the mandatory age for academic education, but a good proportion of them make significant efforts so that they can finish secondary school.

II. Arrangements to combine sports training and school success

The main quality criteria for training centres should be their capacity to make significant arrangements to combine sports training and school success.

The arrangements to combine sports training and school success can be of different kinds :

- less hours of education - possibility of exemption from lessons/classes
- individual study programme (e.g. spread one study level over two (or more) years)
- individual coaching for study (tutoring)/ assistance to catch up with lessons
- distance learning
- special arrangements towards planning of exams, possibility for postponing exams
- etc...

Arrangements are key for the school success of athletes. In order to get to the elite level, in all disciplines, athletes need to sustain intensive workloads (from a very young age in case of early maturity sports), requiring a substantial personal investment.

- Policies and regulations

At secondary level : Many Member States try to favour the combination of sports training and school success in creating sports schools where the young athletes may benefit from an educational programme adapted to the sports training (this is the case in several countries : Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, France, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, the United Kingdom...). The athletes may benefit from various type of arrangements. These sports schools may be either multi-sports or dedicated to one sport. Other countries where those sports schools do not exist have created a specific status granting rights to their beneficiaries. The athletes who benefit from this status may be granted scholarships/bursaries, flexible timetables and exam dates, be more absent than classical students at school because of competitions.

Chart 18. Arrangements to combine sports training and school success– policies and regulations

Country	Practice
Austria	Special school system for high schools, which usually start around 11:30am and last till 4:30pm, including an additional year of school.
Estonia	At Audentes, which is the main training centre for young athletes, the learning period can be extended.
Spain	Big cities / Athletics : The best training centres have secondary schools on site, which limits the loss of time in transportation.
Finland	In Finland, both specialized schools and institutes of sports are very flexible and offer young athletes a good combination between sports training and school.



At university level : Some universities have created sports diplomas whereby students may obtain sports diplomas so as to become trainers or choose another sports related profession. Nevertheless, generally speaking, there are very few existing arrangements.

Chart 19. Arrangements to combine sports training and university – policies and regulations

Country	Practice
Germany	Over a 100 Universities allow prolongations of the standard period of studies for athletes

- Role of sports organisations

Some national associations have created sports academies so as to help young athletes to combine school and sports training. Those academies are networks of educational institutions, local clubs and other organisations offering support services to the athletes such as health services or career planning.

Not all books of specifications / systems of quality standards have a direct impact on the arrangements to combine sports training and school success. For example, in England, “clubmark” has no direct impact on this subject ; it is the football federation which makes mandatory some educational requirements, through its book of specifications for professional club youth training centres : each football academy shall provide appropriate and adequate educational support for its registered students at primary, secondary and tertiary levels.

France is one of the few country where mandatory educational requirements are imposed by books of specifications / systems of quality standards for all sports. Each regional training centre must sign a general agreement with any educational structure where athletes may follow their academic education ; the aim of the agreement is to ease time schedule of the athletes, allow personal planning of exams during competition time and provide tutoring. In basket-ball, one employee must be dedicated to the academic education follow-up of the players. This person must hold significant experience in this area. In case of difficulties, a personal tutoring should be set up. In rugby, national training centres allow several arrangements to combine sports and studies including distance learning throughout competition periods.

In Portugal, in national training centres, special classes and timetables are set up for young talents and individual academic support is granted.

Those books of specifications mostly deal with secondary schools and university level is not often part of it.



- Role of the training centres

Training centres generally do make efforts to support their athletes.

Quality criteria mainly depend on :

- The existing relationships with schools at national and local level,
- The available budget,
- The choices and the philosophy of the training centres.

Some training centres deal really well with that issue at secondary school level, but it is much more difficult at university level. This is a very sensitive problem as athletes who stop school for a 2 or 3 years period between 18 and 21 years old will find it very difficult to start school again if they do not go on with their sporting career. The impact is also negative for the level of the sports in a number of countries / disciplines, as a significant percentage of elite athletes decide to stop sports training at that age in order to go on with their academic studies.

Chart 20. Arrangements to combine sports training and school success – role of the training centres

Country	Practice
France	Rugby: National training centres allow several arrangements to combine sport and study including distance learning throughout competition periods.
Portugal	Basketball: In national training centres, special classes and timetables are set up for young athletes and individual academic support is granted.
Non EU (Senegal)	Football - Diambars association is working on a state of the art software for distance learning, which is a new kind of pedagogy.



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 - Social security and pension plans



C) Quality criteria related to other athletes' services

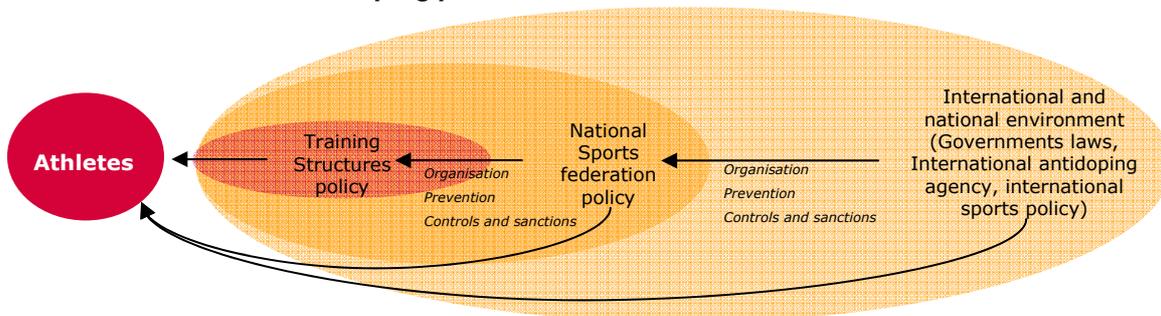
I. Health and psychological balance

I.1) Specific doping prevention

Doping is currently one of the main threats for the future of sports and for the athletes themselves. The prevention of doping should therefore be one of the major challenges for the training centres involving young athletes. Nevertheless, depending on the countries and sports, it is not always the first priority of the training centres, which have to deal with a lot of daily tasks and do not always benefit from the appropriate means to do so.

We can divide antidoping measures into three types of actions : antidoping policy (structures, laws,...), prevention and control, disciplinary measures.

Chart 21. Framework of the anti-doping policies



- Policies and regulations

22 Member States have ratified the International Convention against Doping in Sports signed in Paris on October 19, 2005.

w1 Unanimously adopted by the UNESCO general conference, this convention harmonises the regulations relating to doping in all sports and in all countries. With its binding public law authority, it offers a legal framework to all governments so that they may take actions and it obliges the signatory States to take all necessary measures in order to ensure the compliance with the principles of the World Anti-Doping Code adopted by the World Anti-Doping Agency in 2003.

The World Anti-Doping Agency yearly sets up prohibited product lists.

Most countries have anti-doping legal regulations applicable to all athletes and not specifically to young athletes.

Some Member States have an independent national anti-doping agency that works together with the World Anti-Doping Agency, the International Olympic Committee and sometimes apply specific rules in the country.

In some countries, athletes must accept to sign an anti-doping charter and to be submitted to controls when their club/training centres or themselves get funds from public entities.

- Role of sports organisations

In some Member States, the authority in charge of the prevention of doping may be the national associations.

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- w1** Adopted unanimously by the General Conference of Unesco, this agreement harmonizes the rules concerning the doping in all the sports and in all the contries. Endowed with a legal character of binding public law, it provides a legal frame to all governments to act and it forced the signatory states to take the necessary measures so that the principles of the world anti-doping code adopted by the World Anti-doping Agency in 2003 is respected.

w.devauchelle; 23/06/2008



The role of the national associations is mainly divided into :

- An organisational role :
 - All countries / sports implement International Sports Federation Rules.
 - Coaches have to play a huge role to fight doping and promote clean sports. In some countries, anti-doping prevention can be included in coaches qualification.
- A prevention role :
 - In many Member States, the national associations distribute flyers/brochures to clubs/training centres.
 - In some countries, they organise seminars for training centres managers, coaches, and national team coaches.
- Controls and sanctions :
 - In most countries, there are controls performed on national team members.
 - In some countries only, there are some unexpected controls realized during competitions and training.
 - In Greece, in athletics, the recognition of any new youth record needs anti-doping control.

Some books of specifications include mandatory criteria relating to the prevention of doping. In France, in athletics, in regional training centres, at the beginning of the season, all athletes should assist to an anti-doping information session performed by both the manager of the centre and the medical practitioner of the federation.

Chart 22. Specific doping prevention – role of sports organisations

Country	Practice
Romania	The Romanian Anti Doping Agency in cooperation with the anti doping committee of the Romanian Football Federation organises courses with club doctors, coaches and young players to explain the dangers of using illegal substances. Flyers are published and distributed. Random doping controls are performed during training and matches.
Slovenia	Training centres organise special anti doping lectures for the young athletes.
Hungary	Athletes involved in National programmes must sign an anti-doping statement.

- Role of training centres

The role of the training centres is mainly divided into :

- An organisational role :
 - Most of the training centres run medical surveillance on a regular basis, but, most of the time, exams do not provide enough information to detect doping.



- A prevention role :
 - In most of the countries, there is a good communication between the athletes and the coaches regarding anti-doping issues (nevertheless, the coaches do not always have the necessary background to do it perfectly).
 - In some countries, all athletes have to sign a charter against doping.
 - Quality prevention also includes the warning of the athletes by the medical staff about general substances that are on the doping lists or not.
 - In some training centres, the management proposes extra-sports persons intervention regarding anti-doping issues (police officers, firemen, doctors, nurses) during specific courses/conferences.
 - Training centres can distribute flyers/brochures to young athletes each year regarding general and internal anti-doping rules (most of the time they relay the national associations' initiatives).
- Controls and sanctions :
 - Most of the training centres apply strong sanctions towards sportspersons caught with forbidden substances (tobacco, doping, alcohol).

I.II) Medical and nutritional surveillance

A strong medical surveillance is necessary for young athletes as high performance sports are very demanding for the athletes' bodies.

In some sports, training centres should pay specific attention to the medical surveillance of young sportswomen.

- Policies and regulations

The situation of the 27 Member States is very divided : while some countries have very detained regulations on this subject matter, others do not benefit from any mandatory rule and the surveillance is often left at the discretion of the national associations, which may represent a risk for the young athletes. Five Member States do not have any regulations on this point.
- Role of sports organisations

Regarding this point, a few Member States have set out rules.
Some books of specifications include mandatory criteria related to the medical surveillance.



In France, in athletics, in regional training centres, a general agreement with a public or private hospital must be signed in order to perform 2 or 3 times a year a specific and personal follow-up. When the regional training centres is located in the Ministry of Sports regional training structures this follow-up will be performed directly in the structure.

In France, in basket-ball, in professional club training centres, numerous mandatory criteria exist :

- For prevention of injuries :
 - 1 medical practitioner named medical practitioner of the centre ;
 - 1 personal medical file per player updated by the medical practitioner ;
 - Players must have a possible daily access to the medical practitioner ;
 - The medical practitioner will visit the centre at least once a week;
 - Physiotherapist care must be performed by the physiotherapist of the club or with chartered physiotherapist
- For health follow-up :
 - 1 clinical check-up at the beginning of the season including : 1 clinical meeting with a medical practitioner including past injuries, families, 1 effort test, 1 electrocardiogram, 1 cardio MRI at the entry in the centre to be renewed every 4 years and a biological blood exam.
 - 1 mid season clinical exam with simplified tests
- For nutrition :
 - 1 interview per year with a nutritionist.

Chart 23. Medical and nutritional surveillance – role of sports organisations

Country	Practice
Netherlands	The NBB federation is making a draft of quality criteria related to athletes' nutrition in cooperation with the Olympic Network.

- Role of training centres

Most of the training centres run medical surveillance on a regular basis, but the kind of exams can be very different from a training centre to another.

Medical and nutritional surveillance is in some cases fulfilled by the own staff of the training centre and in some cases by agreements with local clinics / hospitals / universities.

Chart 24. Medical and nutritional surveillance – role of training centres

Country	Practice
Portugal	Athletics :a new protocol was signed with some universities in order to have support from nutrition specialists next to athletes.



I.III) Preservation of the psychological balance of young athletes

Training for elite sport is very demanding on a physical point of view but also on a psychological point of view, especially for young athletes. Most of the intensive training period happens while young athletes are teenagers. Young elite athletes are living a very specific life at a period which is already delicate, which sometimes can be a threat on the short or long term.

In some sports, young athletes also start to win money and get a specific status in the society at a young age, for which they are not always prepared.

Over the recent years, the training of young athletes has been changing. In order to reach the necessary level of elite sport and in order to take into account the settled way of life of the society, it appears necessary to start earlier the sports training in the sports clubs. It means that some athletes could be training in the same training centre during all their childhood and teenage years, which is not easy to manage.

For all those reasons, the preservation of the psychological balance of young elite athletes is one of the key challenges for the future of the sports training.

- Policies and regulations

There are very few existing programmes.

Poland is one of the few countries to benefit from a governmental programme “psychological sports training”. The main goals are acquiring and perfecting concentration, relaxing skills, dealing with stress as well as planning and strategy.

- Role of sports organisations

Very few books of specifications deal with mandatory criteria regarding psychological support for athletes.

In France, in basketball, it is mandatory for professional club training centres to hold an interview with a psychologist per year and per athlete.

Nevertheless, some national associations have implemented mandatory rules aiming to limit the negative impact of not living at home from a young age by setting geographical criteria to enter a given training centres.

Chart 25. Preservation of the psychological balance of young athletes – role of sports organisations

Country	Practice
France	Basket-ball : Players can only apply for the regional training centre of their own region
France	Football : Youth elite sport training begins at the age of 13. Before that, there are around 1000 sports schools, which makes it possible for French players to benefit from a training centre combining football and school 10 or 20 km away from their home ; also, until the age of 14, clubs cannot pick players living outside their department.
Italy	Football : The football federation has set out that the athletes under the age of 14 may not move from their region, unless a special derogation
UK	Football : There are several mandatory rules regarding the fact that a club can only enroll a player from a definite geographical area.
Greece	The particular system is following the principle that talented athletes remain with their families, train locally and follow the typical school system as all the remaining children.



- Role of training centres

Training centres are starting to offer more and more psychological services to the young athletes.

There are still very few examples of training centres which offer opportunities to the young athletes to open their minds through activities outside sports and academic education. This should be done in the future, even if time is already very difficult to manage for young athletes.

Chart 26. Preservation of the psychological balance of young athletes – role of training centres

Country	Practice
France	Rugby National Training centre for U20 : Players attend 2 personal meetings with a psychologist per year. In addition several mental training sessions are organised by the trainers in cooperation with a psychologist.

I.IV) Protection of young athletes in case of injury

Intensive sports training includes a number of risks, of which the risk of injury is the most common one. It is therefore key that the training centres offer quality services for athletes to prevent / recover from injuries and that athletes get insurance coverage.

- Policies and regulations

The majority of the 27 Member States have set forth regulations relating to the protection of young athletes in case of injury while training or apply general legal regulations. These regulations involve the medical care, social security, insurance coverage of injury and illness, accident care, specific funds.

In some countries, such as Belgium, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, France, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden, the athletes may not compete if they do not have been medically examined. This examination shall be renewed on a regular basis.

Chart 27. Protection of young athletes in case of injury – policies and regulations

Country	Practice
Slovenia	Article 44 of the Sports Act provides that no one may request that an athlete compete or train during the time of injury or illness.
UK	UK Sport recommends that NGBs take specific measures in order to counteract the risk of injuries in the form of codes of practice, risk assessments and insurance.



- Role of sports organisations

Some national associations subscribe insurance policies concerning the injury of the athletes they register.

- Role of training centres

Depending on the sports, it is more or less easy for an athlete to come back from an injury.

The quality criteria at the training centre level mostly depend on the staff, which means that the professional education of the staff is key.

Chart 28. Protection of young athletes in case of injury – role of training centres

Country	Practice
France	<p>Athletics - All regional training centres run a weekly follow-up of athletes (including physiotherapists) and twice a year, athletes go through full medical check-up at a regional institute.</p> <p>Full medical check-up is mandatory for all training centres.</p>



II. General protection of minor athletes

- Policies and regulations

The majority of the 27 Member States have a general legislation protecting minors with regards to civil, labour and criminal laws. Such legislation also applies to minor athletes.

In four countries, there are legal rules protecting minor athletes. Such rules mainly concern the minimum age required to practise a sport, the minimum age required to compete, the duration of training / competition, the laws on child labour and the conditions of affiliation of a minor athlete with a sports club.

- Role of sports organisations

The protection of minors may also be ensured by the national associations, especially regarding the contracts entered into by those athletes with sports clubs during their traineeship.

- Role of training centres

Training centres should do their best, in that environment, to protect minor athletes.



III. Labour law aspects

- Policies and regulations

In the 27 Member States, young athletes generally enter into legal relationships with sports clubs or with their respective national associations, depending on the organisation of the relevant sports. The relationships are very often concluded on a contractual basis. Those contracts may have several forms: non-employment contracts, apprenticeships contracts and labour contracts.

Furthermore, most of the 27 countries apply the EU regulations relating to the free movement of citizens within the territory of the EU but these regulations may only apply to professional young athletes since the EU is only competent in economic matters.

- Role of sports organisations and training centres

National associations and training centres must apply existing labour law.



IV. Transmission of ethical values

Ethical values include fair-play, prevention of doping, anti-racism... They should be part of the sports training education but also depend on all the persons in contact with the young athletes : families, agents, teachers, doctors, physiotherapists, psychologists, mental preparators, nutritionists, strength and conditioning coaches. The quality of the transmission of ethical values is mainly related to the daily quality of the relation between the athletes and their environment. It is then up to the training centres and national associations to provide the right information and the right tools to the athlete entourage. The transmission of ethical values can also be performed, as a complement, through seminars / meetings involving young athletes.

- Policies and regulations

A third of the Member States have set forth legal regulations relating to the transmission of ethical values mainly under the form of codes. This is the case in Flanders (Belgium), in Ireland, Bulgaria, Denmark, Estonia, Hungary, Luxembourg, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia and the United Kingdom. These regulations mainly relate to the transmission of such values in educational programmes and regarding the health of the young athletes. Moreover, several Member States set out Codes of Ethics, including fair play and behaviour rules.

- Role of sports organisations

Even if the State is deprived of legal regulations, those values are most of the time transmitted by the trainers in charge of the sports education of young athletes. Furthermore, as ethical values are an important aspect regarding the practise of sports, the national associations and clubs often draft their own regulations in this area.

- Role of training centres

The training centres are the main responsible bodies guaranteeing the transmission of ethical values. The quality mostly depends on the quality of the professional education of the staff and on the organisation of the training centre, especially to deal with time management.



V. Personal development

Besides academic education and sports training, young athletes need to receive an education which will help them building themselves as persons. A quality personal development programme will ensure that the young athletes remain open-minded despite living in a closed environment and will prepare them to their life outside sport. It will also participate to educating future sports role models.

- Policies and regulations

There are no elements regarding personal development in the legal and political frameworks of the Member States.

- Role of sports organisations

There are no elements regarding personal development in the books of specifications.

- Role of training centres

As there are no rules at national or federation levels, it is up to the training centres to organise the personal development of young athletes.

The quality of personal development is very dependent on the time that athletes can get free (which depends on the quality of training, on the quality of arrangements to combine sports and education, on the quality of housing, etc.).



VI. Promotion of career and post career management

For athletes who succeed in getting to the elite level, it is crucial that they can manage their career properly, which can be very short (for example, in football, many players only get a first professional contract for 2 or 3 years and will not play as professionals anymore after that). They also need to prepare their post career soon enough, as in most sports / countries, only a few sportsmen and sportswomen earn enough money during their career to be able to start unprepared their post-career.

- Policies and regulations

9 Member States provide after career programmes legally regulated. They often consist in financial aids and support for integrating the labour market. Also, in many countries, achieving high level practice offers equivalence to pass a coaching diploma in a given sport.

In Italy, Italia Lavoro S.p.A, a stock company owned by the Ministry of Work and the Social Security, provides training courses and e-learning subjects. The ADECCO foundation in collaboration with the CONI has set up a Master programme which should allow retired athletes to enter the job market after the end of their career. Currently, there are more than 300 former athletes who are employed in private companies as part of this programme.

Chart 29. Promotion of career and post career management – policies and regulations

Country	Practice
Spain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Spanish Sport Council concludes agreements with companies in order for them to provide athletes with jobs compatible with their demanding way of life. These measures are dedicated to the integration of former athletes in the labour market. - ADECCO gives assistance to athletes who are looking for a job. - High level athletes have tax benefits if they are admitted in universities.
Hungary	In Hungary, the Olympic Life programme was started in 2002 by the Hungarian Olympic Committee. This programme concentrates on the standardisation of the sports career and the civil life of the young athlete, helping him/her through school. It is based on the cooperation of the educating institution, which gives certain preferences to the athletes, while the HOC gives financial support from its budget to the training and the education of the athletes.
UK	Performance Lifestyle Service provided by UK Sport through the UK Institute of Sport regional centres offers self-management and professional services. Support is available for: Time management; Budget & finance; Dealing with the media; Sponsorship & Promotion Activities; Negotiation/ Conflict Management. This service is only available for athletes on the World Class pathway (England list of high performance athletes) plus those nominated by their respective home country institutes.



Country	Practice
UK	Education Guidance provided by UK Sport services is only available for athletes on the World Class pathway plus those nominated by their respective home country institutes. Guidance is available on part time or professional courses; gaining flexibility in an existing study programme; making the right education choices to fit with sports requirements.
UK	(Especially relevant for DISABLED SPORTS) Olympic and Paralympic Employment Network- managed by the British Olympic Association.
UK	The English Institute of Sport (EIS) offers £ 1.000 for postgraduate studies. The British Olympic Association collaborates with the EIS through its OPEN programme, a network which matches athletes with companies
Austria	Programme “Sports in the army” (“Sport im Heer”) governed by the Ministry of Defence is available to high-performance athletes. Sportsmen attending the “Sports in the army” programme are employed by the army as soldiers. After having finished a basic training, their military duties are generally limited to representation matters. The benefit of that program is that the sportsmen/women are paid a regular salary as soldiers, whereas they can use the military sports facilities for their training purposes.
Greece	Athletes with the best results in the national school championships have the possibility to register in any university department without exams and international athletes can be hired in the public sector, as full time employees.
France	Contracts for professional integration (CIP), allow athletes to get professional experience.

- Role of sports organisations

In 9 Member States, the sports related organisations (State, national associations, clubs...) created specific programmes aiming at helping athletes after their sports career. The assistance may consist in financial aids but also in counselling and guidance aiming at future career.

In France, in athletics, the book of specifications for regional training centres indicates that it must be a priority task of the manager of the mission to define with each athlete an individual professional and sports project. The manager will be assisted in this task by the local representation of the Ministry of sports and the French Athletics Federation.



Chart 30. Promotion of career and post career management – role of sports organisations

Country	Practice
UK	The Scottish and English PFAs run after-career programmes to offer education programmes to footballers and also offer career guidance and advice to former footballers.
Finland	In Finland, there are at the moment 12 sports academies founded on a non-profit basis. They have been created to help athletes in combining studies in the universities or polytechnic institutions with their sporting career. These academies are networks of educational institutions, local clubs and national associations and organisations offering support services, like health services or career planning. This is a voluntary system supported by the national associations and the Olympic Committee.
France	The athletics federation runs a national career planning programme for high level athletes.
Ireland	In Ireland, regarding football, there is a benevolent and education trust which provides funding to footballers and former footballers to facilitate their placement into educational programmes with colleges or universities or other educational establishments.

- Role of training centres

The training centres should provide their athletes with assistance from the world outside sports, which is not systematic.

In Germany, Olympic training centres have at least one career management advisor who is in charge of both dealing with the academic institutions and provide personal advice to the athletes.

Chart 31. Promotion of career and post career management – role of training centres

Country	Practice
Netherlands	The Jonathan Cruyff University provides lectures in business administration and prepares athletes for a post career in the sports industry. Consultants of the NOC or the NSF can help them to find a job.



VII. Lifestyle and financial support

VII.I) Sports remuneration and scholarships/bursaries

Sports remuneration is not a priority quality standard. Scholarships/bursaries are necessary for talented young athletes whose families cannot afford to have them living away from their home. In that sense, they are an important quality criteria for training centres.

- Policies and regulations

In the majority of the Member States, the athletes may only be entitled to receive compensation if they sign a contract. In most cases, the contracts are signed within professional collective sports and the compensation will be granted by the clubs.

In some countries, a compensation may be awarded to the athletes by the State under the form of financing against sports results or scholarships/bursaries granted independently from sports results or payment upon participation to tournaments.

Scholarships/bursaries are allocated to athletes in almost every Member State by the State itself, by local authorities or by the universities.

- Role of sports organisations

In some Member States and particular sports, it may happen that the young athletes enter into contracts with their respective national associations. The contracts are often non-employment contracts.

National associations and sports clubs allocate scholarships/bursaries to young athletes in almost 6 Member States. The amount of those scholarships/bursaries are not uniform.

In England, the book of specifications for professional club youth training centre (football academy) states that on or after the 1st of January in the year in which he attains the age of 14 years and in any event on or before the 1st of March in his Under 16 year, a club may offer to enter into a scholarship agreement with a student, whose registration it holds.

- Role of training centres

The training centres act differently depending on the economy of the sport and on the competition between training centres.



VII.II) Housing/equipments

It is important that training centres can offer a quality environment to the young athletes. Housing represents a significant part of this environment, as young athletes will spend part of their life there.

- Policies and regulations

It may happen in some Member States that the State itself provides sports equipment to young high level athletes.

- Role of sports organisations

Very often, the national association will incur the expenses linked to a part of the equipment of the young athlete.

In a number of books of specifications, national associations include mandatory criteria regarding the housing of the athletes.

In France, in athletics, the book of specifications for regional training centres states that in the case of a boarding school, the minimum standard should be set up as follows : 2 stars standard (in compliance with the French classification), 2 athletes per room, 1 employee dedicated to the night surveillance.

Still in France, in basketball, the book of specifications for professional club youth training centres includes mandatory criteria for :

- The housing of the athletes :

- could be specific housing facility, family hosting, flats for 18 years' old or more players.
- In the case of a specific housing facility, the minimum requirements are : No collective dormitory. Maximum of 2 players per room. 1 employee dedicated to night surveillance. Furniture is also defined (desks, adequate size of the bed, washing machine room...).

- Catering/ food :

- The club must supply the catering of the players in the centre or next to it.

- Transportation :

- The club is in charge of the transportation of the athletes between the training, catering and housing facility.

- Role of training centres

The training centres apply different housing formula, depending on the geographical origin of the young athletes. Housing facilities are located inside or next to the training centres in most cases.



VII.III) Social security and pension plans

Social security can be an issue for young athletes, whose status is different from one sport / country / time to another : professional, amateur, student...

Pensions plans are also an issue, especially for late maturity sports and amateur sports : athletes may spend a significant part of their life training, without getting any pension plan.

- Policies and regulations

Only 3 Member States have passed specific legal regulations relating to such theme. Furthermore, a distinction has to be made between professional and amateur athletes: in 16 countries, professional young athletes may benefit from the general local regime of social security whereas the amateurs are not covered.

In 3 Member States, the social security contributions relating to the young athletes may be paid by the State.

In four countries, there are specific social security regimes applicable to specific sports.

Some Member States oblige the young players to subscribe private insurance policies and plans.

Chart 32. Social security and pension plans – policies and regulations

Country	Practice
Luxemburg	According to a law dated August 3, 2005, the social security contributions for high level athletes are paid by the State when those persons do not otherwise benefit from Luxembourg social security schemes
Czech Republic	The social and health security insurance premium for pupils and students are paid by the State
Slovenia	Top athletes are included in the pension insurance if they are at least 15 years' old.
Several European countries	(Especially relevant for Professional Sports) In four countries, there are specific social security regimes for specific professional sports. This is the case in Belgium regarding football and cycling, in Germany regarding football and basketball, in the Netherlands where professional football players may enter into a contract with the KNVB and the United Kingdom regarding professional players.

- Role of sports organisations

National associations depend on the legal and political frameworks.

- Role of training centres

Training centres depend on the legal and political frameworks.