



EUROPEAN POLICIES FOR THE PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND SPORT DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT

The **purpose** of the present study is to outline the European policies for developing physical education and sport as important social factor towards organized, purposeful and systematic physical activities of the pupils. **Methods:** To perform the purpose and the tasks of the research, the following methods for collecting empiric information is applied - **system** approach, content analysis, functional analysis for studying and evaluating the execution of the activities.

By the help of the system approach, a theoretical model of the European policies for the development of the school physical education and sport is created. The model presents the first trial of the author for systematology and analysis of the physical education and sport as inseparable part of the general education of the pupils in all European countries and looking for possibilities about its development and perfection. The model is a subject of future enrichments and scientific perfection. **Results:** The analysis of the theoretical research in relation to the European policies for the development of the physical education and sport at the schools is multi-directional. **In conclusion**, the declarations, charters, appeals for the development of the school physical education and sport referred to in the paper impact positively the state policies of the countries in Europe.

Key words: European documents, strategies, schools, physical activity, pupils, monitoring.

INTRODUCTION

The penetration of the informational and computer systems and technologies in our everyday life has influenced important activities of mankind life. Tendencies are outlined during the last years where the influences of the scientific and technical revolution impact negatively the physical activity of the population. The decreased motive activity (hypodynamia) gradually is turned into a basic prerequisite for the unsatisfactory health condition of modern society.

Range of scientific studies related to the physical activity of the population in Europe and more concretely, the children and the coming up generation as part of it, announce

that nearly half of them do not reach the minimum requirements of motive activity recommended by the World Health Organization. The recommendations are around 30 min daily physical activities for grown up people and around 60 min for children and coming up generation (1). It is established that for the greater part of the latter the activities during the physical education and sport lessons at school appear as a base for starting an active and organized motive activity (2), and through the school subject a basic possibility is guaranteed for exercising regular and structured physical activity (3).

“Physical education and sport” school subject is a component of the school programs for all stages of the secondary schools in our country and in the world. According to some authors it is defined as a basic subject (4). By it, the pupils form and develop motive skills and habits which help their health status, establish their personal development and prepare them for an active way of life. The EC report related

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to the execution of the recommendations for promoting physical activity stimulating health accents the fact that “the physical activity and sport contribute to the physical, mental and social health of the children and the coming up generation” (5). Similar is the thesis of K. Hardman’s scientific study, who found that present intergovernmental initiatives, reflected in the EP Resolution of 2007 for the role of sport and education, set up the development of the physical education and sport in the political agenda (6).

There exist a range of institutions and organizations in Europe whose interests are directed to policies for the development of physical education and sport in the member countries. The following are part of them: International federation in physical education (FIEP - Federation Internationale d'Education Physique), created in Brussels during the remote 1923, European Physical Education Association (EUPEA), International Council of Sport Science and Physical Education (ICSSPE), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), European observatory of sport and employment, providing accent on the development of sport and the active motive activity and supporting the interrelation between education and realization and many others.

The institutions in Europe accept a range of important documents for the execution of the purposes towards the development of the physical education and sport, for solving the tasks, achieving qualitative and effective education (7). The above-mentioned Resolution of the European Parliament dated 13 November 2007 related to the role of sport and education is of definite strategic importance with the EU frames (8). Other important documents: “White Paper on Sport” accenting the role of the physical activity and sport for strengthening the social health (9), International Physical Education and Sport Charter, accepted in 1978, considered as a document of particular importance for the development of the physical education and sport in Europe. Decades later, in 2015, during the UNESCO conference, the Charter is updated and accepted with underlined accent on the use of the physical activity and sport.

Providing physical, mental and social health of the pupils is a common direction of the basic

strategic and specific aims of the “physical education and sport” school subject at the schools of all European countries. Physical education at the schools not only contribute to their better physical, psychic and emotional moment status and development but creates for them an attitude and motivation for taking physical activities thought all their life. Analyzing the “Development and perspectives of the community activities in the field of sport” EC report (1998), Chaucheva, R. and Bankov, P., define the basic functions of the physical education and sport - educational, health care, social, cultural, restoring (10).

UNESCO “International Physical Education and Sport Charter”, in its Article No. 2 cites the importance of the physical education and sport for the wholesome educational system. The important, meaningful part of the document is expressed by the following:

- school physical education and sport is a factor for measuring the education and is directed to developing the abilities of each human individual and its integration in society.
- at individual level, physical education and sport contribute to the maintenance and improvement of health and filling up leisure time by useful activities. At social level – teaches moral virtues and ethic style of behavior.
- each global educational system should provide the needed place and importance of the physical education and sport in order to strengthen the integrative relations between the physical activities and the other components of education (11).

METHODS

The purpose of the present study is to outline the European policies for the development of the physical education and sport as important socially meaning factor towards organized, purposeful and systematic physical activities of the pupils.

Tasks of the research:

1. Study and analysis of the literature sources and normative documents.
2. Analysis of the political directions for the development of the physical education and sport in Europe.

Subject of the research: the activities of leading European organizations and normative documents directed to the development of the physical education and sport and its system-

forming components – general-educational school preparation (teaching plans, programs and teaching contents), material, technical, HR, scientific, financial, informational security, monitoring, etc.

Methods of the research: To perform the purpose and the tasks of the research, the following methods for collecting empiric information are applied - system approach, content analysis, functional analysis for studying and evaluating the execution of the activities.

By the help of the system approach, a theoretical model of the European policies for the development of the school physical education and sport is created (figure 1). The model presents the first trial of the author for systematology and analysis of the physical education and sport as inseparable part of the general education of the pupils in all European countries and looking for possibilities about its development and perfection. The model is a subject of future enrichments and scientific perfection.

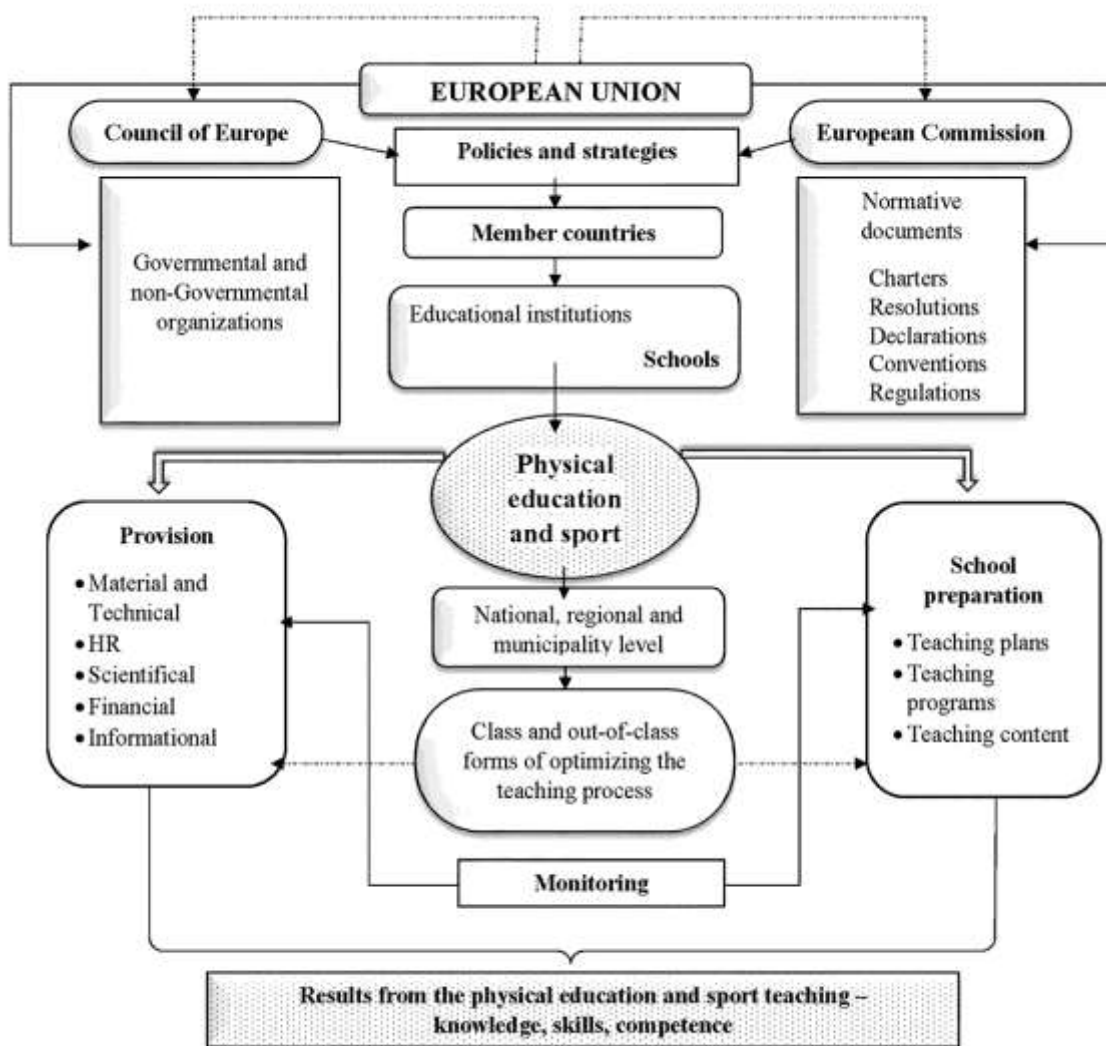


Figure 1. Theoretical model of the physical education and sport development at the schools in Europe

RESULTS

The analysis of the theoretical research in relation to the European policies for the development of the physical education and sport at the schools is multi-directional. Decision for the optimization of the school subject has to be looked for in several

basic directions – status and tendencies for the development of the physical education and sport as school discipline, update of the teaching programs and teaching contents according to the interests and preferences of the pupils towards given sport, necessity of adequate material and

technical, HR, scientific, financial and informational provision of the teaching process with the purpose of achieving higher effectiveness, modifications in the organization and contents of the out-of-class and out-of-school activities as a factor for a full value use of the leisure time, satisfying the needs of the children and the coming up generations and finding sport talents, monitoring and control on the execution of the separate activities and structures. In that direction, and Eurydice study (2013) shows that considerable part of the EU countries accept national strategies for encouraging and developing physical education and sport at schools (12).

Physical education and sport is also in between the obligatory teaching subjects in all national teaching programs of the European countries (12). The 2014 UNESCO final report in relation to the studies on the physical education and sport says that the latter is a part of the general educational preparation of the pupils from 98% of the countries in Europe (13).

The basic directions of study in that extensive research are related to concrete key fields providing information about the possibilities of developing the physical culture and sport:

- Status of the „physical education and sport” teaching subject at school – national policies, lesson and out-of-lesson forms for exercising the teaching classes, teaching programs.
- teaching contents of the physical education and sport – purposes, tasks, fields of competence (obligatory and voluntary sports), quality and effective teaching criteria, monitoring of the teaching process.
- resource provision – professional preparation and qualification of the pedagogical cadres, material and technical basis, equipment and appliances.
- public position of the physical education – status of the teaching subject and of the sports pedagogues, active and

public sports activities in the out-of-lesson and out-of-school environment.

- examples about “good practice” in the school physical education and sport.
- Basic needs and requirements for development in perspective (13).

Special attention is paid to the global and national policies for the development of the physical education by the fifth and sixth international conferences of the ministers and higher officials responsible for the physical education and sport (MINEPS), which take to the front in their agenda several basic issues:

- regulations for the stable development of the physical education and sport as the only school subject providing for healthful way of life and improvement of the wellbeing of the children of all age;
- provision of incorporating and quality education and encouragement of the possibilities for studying during their whole life for all under education;
- achieving equality between sexes and possibilities for practicing sports activities by all girls and women;
- decreasing the inequality in relation to the social status of the subject in the separate countries. In that aspect, Hardman’s scientific research says that in separate European countries, physical education and sport as school subject is rejected as part of the “academic subjects” (14), which speaks about marginalization in that direction.

At the same time, available are the positive and proactive actions of the global platform MINEPS. The sixth international conference of the ministers and higher officials responsible for the physical education and sport (MINEPS) held in 2017 in Kazan, Russia, approves a plan known as “Kazan plan of action” by which the ministers note the realization of the political intensions towards measurable actions (15). In support of that is K. Hardman’s standing point, according to which “the transformation of the “promises” into reality” shall provide a safe future for the school physical

education and sport (14). MINEPS recommendations accentuate to the continuous strengthening of the educational, cultural and social measurements of the physical education and sport and at the same time manage the implementation of effective policies and practice both in Europe and the world.

Important strategic documents determining the European policies for the development of the physical education and sport is the Declaration of Berlin, approved at the fifth international conference of UNESCO by 121 representative members (16). The Declaration of Berlin is a powerful factor imposing the effected later on changes in the International Charter for Physical Education and Sport. Issues related to the popularization of the physical education and sport in between girls and women to its incorporation and adapting to the needs of disabled people have been discussed at the meeting. The following aspects are taken to the front: development of policies for the development of physical education and sport at the national level as a social phenomenon and sharing good practice between the countries; financing various programs for physical education and sport as a safe investment which is to bring to positive social-economic changes; establishment of accessible infrastructure for encouraging physical activity; helping the creation of unions listing all interested parties, including state organs, schools, parents, teachers, and cultural organizations, coaches and athletes for the development of a national vision for the physical education and sport programs; increasing the role of the national, regional and local organizations for presenting quality physical education and sport programs (16).

The European Parliament Resolution related to the role of sport in education also addresses the member countries giving directions for improving the policies in the field of physical education. Accents are directed first of all to the provision of quality sports equipment, paying special

attention to the pupils having special educational needs, as well as offering a wide range of sports activities and a sufficient number of lessons so that each pupil will get his/her real possibility of practicing physical activities (17).

The Ministry of Youth and Sport of the Republic of Bulgaria creates in 2018 a program for the development of the physical education and sport in between those under education. The program is directed towards motivating those studying to systematic physical activity, physical education and practicing sport as means for healthful way of living, physical and spiritual development. The program is coordinated with the purpose and tasks of the National strategy for the development of the physical education and sport in the Republic of Bulgaria 2012-2022 (18). The program is subjected to the following basic principles:

- o „Legitimacy – management and performance according to the effective normative arrangements.
- o Publicity and transparency of the actions – management and administration of the activities, accessible for observation and control.
- o Effectiveness – system, differential approach to providing conditions and possibilities for physical activities as a base for physical perfection and manifestation.
- o Perspective and stability – the activities of the program are according to the perspectives of the practices envisaged in the field of the physical activities of those studying.
- o Provision of resources – financed by the state budget.
- o Coordination and partnership – interaction with other institutions and organizations contributing for the performance of the purposes.
- o Responsibility – the creation of the possibility for system accountancy, control and publicity.” (18).

The “European School Sport Day” is confirmed by the practice initiative

directed towards developing physical education and sport at the schools; its basic principles are: popularization of the physical education and sport at school, creation of conditions for entertaining the young people through physical activities, improving their health and attitude for studying during all their life, encouraging the social incorporation of the pupils, connections and communications between the various European countries (19). It started in 2015 in Hungary with the help of teachers and pupils. Up to now, the European School Sport Day provides possibilities for pupils from 20 countries in the European Union to be active physically at school. A similar initiative, but outside the school physical education, is the “European Sport Week”, part of the responsibility of the EU to make physical activity popular between the population. European Sport Week is an example of good practice on large scale. In 2018, nearly 14 million Europeans from countries all over Europe have participated in more than 50 0000 sport events (20).

Dasheva, D. and Aleksandrov, G., generalize that good practices in relation to the development of physical education and sport are supported by the changes effected by the state in due time, namely – “serious state support for the development of sport between the young people, financial support for the schools for providing appropriate sports infrastructure, free access to the school infrastructure for practicing sport activities, education of sport ambassadors and making the school sports club mass practice, etc.” (21).

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the declarations, charters, appeals for the development of the school physical education and sport referred to in the paper impact positively the state policies of the countries in Europe. Taking decisions in relation to the changes directed to increasing the quality of the physical education, to the school plans, programs, content, material, technical, HR, financial and so on provisions are directly

connected to the fundamental changes taking place in the global educational system.

Future scientific studies in the field of physical education and sport related to its development and perfection should pay attention on several basic aspects of the interaction between governmental and non-governmental organizations for the development of the physical education on the national, regional and municipal level, stimulating the coming up generations towards everyday physical activities and sport, improving the forms, means and methods for purposeful and organized motive activity, monitoring and control, vision for integrity and interdiscipline of the key skills and competence of the pupils acquired during the physical education and sport teaching.

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