BALTIC JOURNAL OF SPORT & HEALTH SCIENCES
6(Supplement 2); 2025; p. 14; eISSN 2538-8347
DOI: https://doi.org/10.33607/bjshs.v6iSupplement2.2121

S06-4: Exploring Online Health Promotion Training Programmes for Sports Coaches in Europe

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Purpose: Sport plays a vital role in promoting the health and wellbeing across all ages and backgrounds. While the benefits of sports participation are widely acknowledged, positive outcomes are not automatic. Sports coaches, as key sports figures, shape participants' experiences, foster healthy behaviours and long-term involvement in sport and physical activity. However, many coaches lack the necessary skills, knowledge, and support to promote health. To bridge this gap, incorporating health-related education into coach training programmes is crucial. Understanding the extent to which health promotion is integrated into coach education helps strengthen its implementation in sport settings.

Methods: This study explores existing online health promotion training programmes for sports coaches across various European countries. The analysis assessed key characteristics of these programmes, including the type of the organisation offering the training, target audience, course duration, access requirements, cost, and health topics covered. Data were collected via an Excel sheet shared with 38 HEPA Europe *Promotion of Physical Activity & Health in Sports Clubs* Working Group members.

Results: This study, conducted as part of the Erasmus+ Sport Cooperation Partnerships project *"Health Promoting Sports Organisations: Capacity Building for Coach Education across Europe"*, identified 62 online courses from 18 organisations. Among these, 26 courses are freely accessible, 21 require registration, and 18 are available in English. The courses were offered by sports federations, non-profit organisations, universities, and sports administrative bodies, with durations between 30 minutes to several days. Course content varied from single-topic health courses (n = 15) to multiple topics, with the most common themes being physical activity promotion, inclusion, healthy eating, injury prevention, and mental health. In contrast, violence prevention and first aid/CPR were rare.

Conclusion: The findings highlight the diverse landscape of online health promotion training for sports coaches in Europe. While various training approaches exist, there is a clear need for more comprehensive health-related education. Expanding the range of health topics covered and improving access to training programmes can better equip coaches to integrate health promotion into their practice, ultimately enhancing the overall wellbeing of sports participants.

Support/Funding Source: This study is funded by the EU Erasmus+ Sport Cooperation Partnerships #101184822.

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