

European Skills, Competences & Occupations (ESCO)

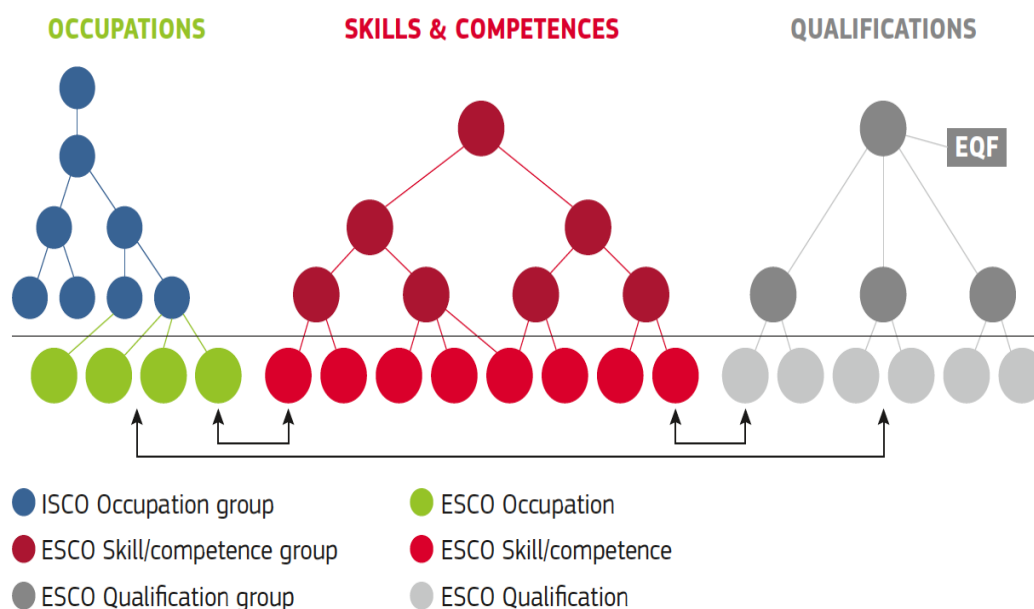
Breakdown of the 'active leisure' sector

(31/08/2014)

Introduction

For the past 2 years EC-OE has been working with an EU expert group that is re-classifying sectors of economic activities through a new process called European Skills Competences and Occupations (ESCO). This is a joint initiative at the EU Commission between DG Education and Culture and DG Employment and the European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training– further details are available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/esco/home>

More importantly, the pillars are interlinked to show the relationships between them. Occupational profiles show whether skills and competences are essential or optional and what qualifications are relevant for each ESCO Occupation. Alternatively, the user can identify a specific skill and see which occupation or qualification this skill is relevant to.



The three pillar approach

ESCO is the multilingual classification of European Skills, Competences, Occupations and Qualifications and is part of the Europe 2020 strategy. The EU Commission services launched the project in 2010 with an open stakeholder consultation.

The ESCO classification identifies and categorises skills, competences, occupations and qualifications relevant for the EU labour market and education and training. It systematically shows the relationships between the different concepts. ESCO has been developed in an open IT format, is available for use free of charge by everyone and can be accessed via the ESCO portal.

In the expert group covering “Arts, Entertainment, Sport and Active Leisure” EC-OE has helped to develop an organogram that positions the main outdoor occupations that are part of the outdoor Sector Qualification Framework.

For each of these job roles there will be a description of the occupation together with a listing of essential skills and competences that are added to the ESCO portal. As part of the ESCO classification the fitness and outdoor sectors are combined into “**active leisure**” and it is now quite distinctly separate from sport.

Definitions

The development work within the context of ESCO obviously required some definitions to be fine-tuned.

Apart from consulting the members of the European Confederation of Outdoor Employers (EC-OE) and the European Health and Fitness Association – Employers (EHFA-e) the validation of the definitions on ‘active leisure’, ‘fitness’ and the ‘outdoors’ was also put forward to some 150 European delegates from both the fitness and the outdoors sectors. The latter process was conducted during 8 successive DIAL meetings (2014) throughout the EU. ¹

¹ DIAL: Social **D**ialogue in **A**ctive **L**eisure. A EU sponsored consultation project to build capacity in social dialogue in the active leisure sector across the EU.

DG EMPL (ref. VP/2012/001, bud. 04.03 03 01)

Definition of active leisure:

Active leisure is a combination of fitness and outdoor-based activities that are generally unstructured and non-competitive. They promote active, healthy lifestyles through activities, events and exercise. They are commonly provided under the direction of qualified animators or instructors so that the activities are tailored to match the abilities of the participants and meet their needs in an enjoyable and safe way.

Definition for the fitness sector:

The fitness sector uses qualified instructors and trainers to deliver diverse, structured exercise programmes that help people of all ages and abilities to improve their health, muscle and cardiovascular endurance, coordination, balance, agility and flexibility. Fitness programmes also build a feeling of individual wellbeing that establishes and helps to maintain a healthy balance of mind, body and spirit.

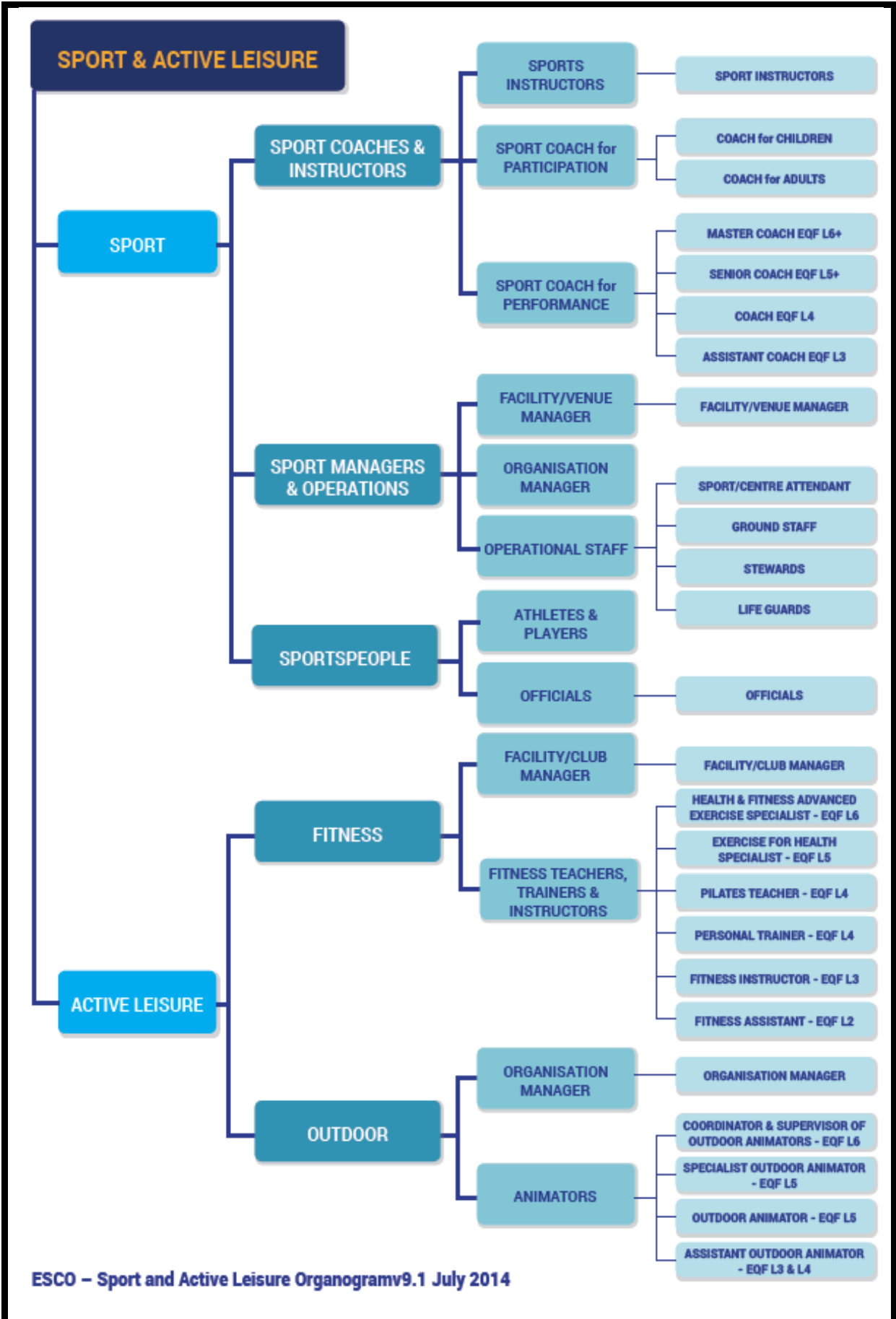
Definition for the outdoor sector:

The outdoor sector uses outdoor related activities (canoe, rafting, horse riding, ... etc.) as the basis of delivery of a recreational or personal development service. Outdoor providers do not generally offer competitions. The outdoor sector uses qualified animators or instructors to deliver these outdoor activities in a context of fun, recreation, tourism, outdoor learning or engagement with the natural environment.

Sector breakdown

Alongside the validation of the applied definitions, the sector breakdown of the active leisure sector was also validated during the (above mentioned) DIAL capacity building consultations.

The agreed sector breakdown for sport and active leisure is:



ESCO – Sport and Active Leisure Organogram v9.1 July 2014

Conclusions

The work that EC-OE has completed with ESCO now determines, for the first time, the main occupations in the outdoor sector and their relationship to other sectors and economic activities. The work that the outdoor sector has been doing since 2006 (EQFOA, CLO2 & ELESA projects) has provided the detailed breakdown of the necessary knowledge, skills, competences and learning outcomes that are required by professionals in the outdoors and that form the European Outdoor Sector Qualification Framework which is fully referenced to the European Qualification Framework.

The ESCO work represents a significant move forward for the European outdoor sector and especially in the recognition of qualifications for outdoor professionals, which in turn helps to improve levels of mobility for employment and learning.