



MAPINE project

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Massage professions and competencies

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1. Introduction

This report has been realised in the framework of MAPINE project (2009 – 1 AT1 – LEO04-01498 7 Italia: LLP-LDV-PA-09-IT-0262) started last August, 1st 2009. The project has a duration of 24 months and its objective are:

- to collect a status-quo of massage training in terms of its organisation, its target groups and legal frameworks
- to make light on these professions improving transparency for the comparison, accreditation and recognition of massage training programmes throughout Europe by means of a mutual cooperation within the participating institutions
- to compare massage training programmes, certificates, professions;
- to create pre-condition for mobility actions of the same workers.

2. Objectives

Main objective of this report is to set out a common competence framework focused on learning outputs for the comparability of the content and curricula of the different vocational and educational training programmes related to massage professions.

Others objectives are:

- To agree on a methodology for the development of a competence framework;
- To produce, only for a pilot test of methodology, a competence based framework for at least two different profiles in Italy, Germany and Hungary;
- To have a common discussion about the system.

3. Methodology

In order to achieve the pre-defined objectives the following methodology has been realized:

1. desk survey about competencies based framework related to massage profession already existing;
2. production of a synthetic competencies based framework for the comparability of the content and curricula of the different vocational and educational training programmes related to massage professions;
3. Common discussion about the system.

4. Results

Important results has been achieved from desk survey about other competencies based framework related to massage profession.

In particular in the International Federation of Orthopaedic Manipulative Therapist (IFOMT) web site is available a document named "Educational standards in orthopaedic manipulative physical therapy" with a detailed description of a specific competency framework for OMT (for further information, please, have a look on <http://www.ifompt.com/About+IFOMPT/Standards+Document.html>).

At the same time it is available a core competencies model (in Italian) for physiotherapist; it is realized by University of Bologna and it is accessible at the link http://corsi.unibo.it/fisioterapia/Documents/Core_Competence_2.pdf.

According to a Federal Law of Suisse schools another Physiotherapist competence model (in Italian) named "Profilo delle competenze del fisioterapista SUPSI" is also available at the link <http://www.supsi.ch/dsan/bachelor/fisioterapia-manno/competenze-e-professione.html>.

Further and more in general, a lot of works are available about "Core competency development model" and in particular very interesting are the production of English Agency "Improvement and Development Agency" available at <http://www.idea.gov.uk/idk/aio/6055695>.

Above models are very interesting even they are:

- too specific for 2 different professions; with reference to:
 - **physiotherapist** profession is included in Hungarian Qualification Framework and
 - **orthopaedic manipulative physical therapist** is not included in Hungarian Qualification Framework; or
- too generic as regards the production of Improvement and Development Agency

It is important to underline that according to previous investigation about National qualification framework in the three countries in Italy, Hungary and Germany, massage professions are the same shown in table 1.

In particular it needs to recognize that apart Physiotherapist profile, for which Bologna process is valid, all other profession identified in the table cannot compare each other even they have the same/similar names and they are on the same line.

Moreover it is important to recognize that:

- the list of professions shown in the table is not exhaustive;

- quite every day, following new and finer needs, new profession will be expected (a lot of focused on human services, personal health and wellness such as personal trainer, wellness operator and so on);
- new and innovative profiles are very important especially in this period of economic crisis and improvement of unemployment;
- massage profession are pulled directly from the labour market and it is quite easy to get a job (different is the situation where a new profile is pushed on the labour market without a concrete demand for services).

In this scenario, following the suggestions of European Union¹, a tools able to let compare the professions is the realization of a competency based framework with which it will be possible to translate all the profession (the old ones already ruled but also the new one arising from the labour market demand) in terms of learning outcomes.

In this direction, following the models already available a new and appropriate competence based framework has been realised hoping that the methods could make clear about profiles and activities (who can realise what) providing transparency among profiles and why not solve overlapping profiles problems.

We realised the framework moving from Spencer and Spencer (Spencer, Lyle M. and Spencer, Signe M., *Competence at work, models for superior performance*, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., USA, 1993.), competence definition "*subagent characteristic of an individual that is casually related with a standard level of effectiveness and/or with a superior development in a work or situation*".

In other words, the core concept of all the system is "learning outcomes" that means "*statements of what a learner knows, understands and is able to do on completion of a learning process and which are defined in terms of knowledge, skills and competence*".

According to previous authors:

- "*casually related*" means that the competence origins or anticipates the behaviour and performance;
- "*Standard criteria*", means that the competence really predicts who is going to do something right or poorly in relation with a specific or standard criterion previously defined.

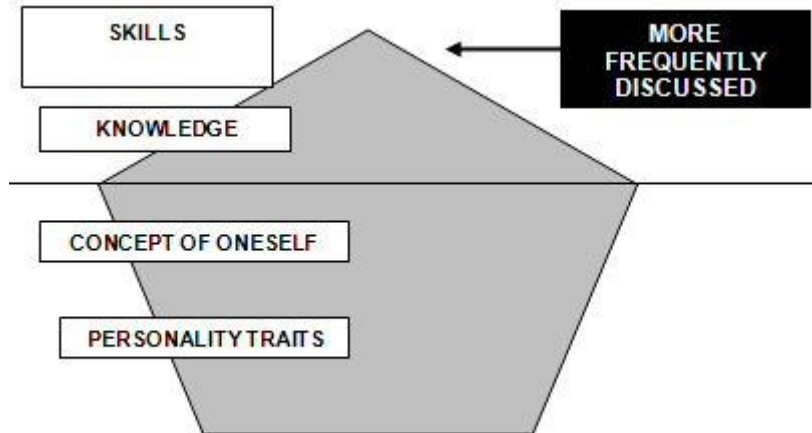
Following Spencer and Spencer model, we considered:

- competence a mix of skills, knowledge, (both perhaps quite easy to find out) the concept of oneself, the attitudes and the values and nucleus of the personality (all are characteristic very deep and crucial in the working world);

¹ European site of Education and Culture DG http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc44_en.htm

- competencies are strictly related to oneself personality and identity and through it can be possible predict behaviours in a huge variety of situations and work challenges.

Fig. 1 Competencies according to Spencer and Spencer²



Moving from the activities as well as from the Vocational and Educational Training of massage profession we identified the following core competencies related to massage profiles and we realized table 2.

Of course it is not an exhaustive table especially concerning specific knowledge and skill where we add only few ones.

² Op. cit

Table 2 core competencies related to massage profiles

Core competencies	
Communication and relationship	Communication and relationship with patient
	Communication and relationship with colleagues
	Negotiation and conflict management
Training and self training	Improve training and self training
Profession responsibility	Professional behaviour
	Respect of patients privacy
	Entrepreneur and management skills
Prevention	Prevention
Evidence Based Practice	E.B.P. evidence based practice study and and research
Rehabilitation treatments	Identify needs
	Provide general evaluation
	Product functional diagnosis
	Product functional prognosis
	Design therapeutic plan
	Implement treatment
	Assess results
	Supply with suggestion and guidance
Specific knowledge and skills	Orthopedic/Rheumatology rehabilitation
	Neurological rehabilitation
	Developmental age rehabilitation
	Cardio-respiratory rehabilitation
	Sphincter rehabilitation
	Visceral/Oncology rehabilitation
	Occupational therapy
	Patient positioning
	Therapeutic massage
	Sportive massage
	Functional rehabilitation in sports traumatology
	Manual treatment of soft tissue
	Orthoses and aids application
	First aid/assistance in field of athletes
	Acupressure
	Reflexologist
	Ayurveda
	Shiatsu
	Naturopathy
	Pranotherapy
Lymphatic drainage	
Trigger point massage	
Therapeutic education	Therapeutic education

Given that profiles are working at different level the following evaluation scale has been considered in order to assess with which level of competence has been realised a core competence.

Table 3 competence level

1	Aware -getting started initiating -
2	Focusing – developing, prioritising -
3	Practicing – complying, executing -
4	Exploiting – sustaining, maximising within existing capability -
5	Transforming – advocating, achieving qualitative change -

Then it is possible to have, for each country a table with the competence level of each profession and this could be the first step for a comparison of profiles.

Table 4: Massage professions competence in Italy

Core competencies		Some massage profiles						
		Massofisioterapista	Massaggiatore sportivo	Fisioterapista	Agopuntore	Riflessologo	Massaggiatore Ayurveda	Massaggiatore Shiatsu
Communication and relationship	Communication and relationship with patient	Blue		Blue				
	Communication and relationship with colleagues	Blue		Blue				
	Negotiation and conflict management	Blue		Blue				
Training and self training	Improve training and self training	Blue		Blue				
Profession responsibility	Professional behaviour	Blue		Blue				
	Respect of patients privacy	Blue		Blue				
	Entrepreneur and management skills	Blue		Blue				
Prevention	Prevention	Pink		Blue				
Evidence Based Practice	E.B.P. evidence based practice study and research	Blue		Blue				
Rehabilitation treatments	Identify needs	Blue		Blue				
	Provide general evaluation	Blue		Blue				
	Product functional diagnosis	Blue		Blue				
	Product functional prognosis	Blue		Blue				
	Design therapeutic plan	Blue		Blue				
	Implement treatment	Blue		Blue				
	Assess results	Blue		Blue				
	Supply with suggestion and guidance	Orange		Blue				
Specific knowledge and skills	Orthopaedic/Rheumatology rehabilitation	Blue		Blue				
	Neurological rehabilitation	Pink		Blue				
	Developmental age rehabilitation			Orange				
	Cardio-respiratory rehabilitation	Pink		Blue				
	Sphincter rehabilitation			Blue				
	Visceral/Oncology rehabilitation			Orange				
	Occupational therapy			Blue				
	Patient positioning	Blue		Blue				
	Therapeutic massage	Blue	Blue	Pink				
	Sportive massage	Orange	Blue					
	Functional rehabilitation in sports traumatology	Blue	Blue	Pink				
	Manual treatment of soft tissue	Blue	Blue	Pink				
	Orthoses and aids application	Pink		Blue				
	First aid/assistance in field of athletes		Blue					
	Acupressure				Blue			
	Reflexologist					Blue		
	Ayurveda						Blue	
	Shiatsu	Green						Blue
	Naturopathy							
	Pranotherapy							
Lymphatic drainage	Pink		Yellow					
Trigger point massage	Orange		Yellow					
Therapeutic education	Orange		Blue					

Once individuate in each country the competencies of each profiles can be possible to compare: can be possible to put a Italian table onto German or Hungarian one in order to evidence where the competencies are the same, where are similar and where are different.

Following this method, according to what anticipated, it is not complex to compare profiles but the real challenge is to reach mutual agreement among all public and civil society recognising the competences for each professional profiles.

Table 5: Massage professions competence in Germany

Core competencies		Some massage profiles						
		seur und medizinische/r Bademeisterin	Physiotherape ut	Acupressure	Reflexologe	Ayurveda massage	Shiatsu massage	
Communication and relationship	Communication and relationship with patient							
	Communication and relationship with colleagues							
	Negotiation and conflict management							
Training and self training	Improve training and self training							
Profession responsibility	Professional behaviour							
	Respect of patients privacy							
	Entrepreneur and management skills							
Prevention	Prevention							
Evidence Based Practice	E.B.P. evidence based practice study and research							
Rehabilitation treatments	Identify needs							
	Provide general evaluation							
	Product functional diagnosis							
	Product functional prognosis							
	Design therapeutic plan							
	Implement treatment							
	Assess results							
	Supply with suggestion and guidance							
Specific knowledge and skills	Orthopaedic/Rheumatology rehabilitation							
	Neurological rehabilitation							
	Developmental age rehabilitation							
	Cardio-respiratory rehabilitation							
	Sphincter rehabilitation							
	Visceral/Oncology rehabilitation							
	Occupational therapy							
	Patient positioning							
	Therapeutic massage							
	Sportive massage							
	Functional rehabilitation in sports traumatology							
	Manual treatment of soft tissue							
	Orthoses and aids application							
	First aid/assistance in field of athletes							
	Acupressure							
	Reflexologist							
	Ayurveda							
	Shiatsu							
	Naturopathy							
	Pranotherapy							
	Lymphatic drainage							
	Trigger point massage							
	Therapeutic education	Therapeutic education						

Table 6: Massage professions competence in Hungary

Core competencies		Some massage profiles							
		Gyógymasszőr	Sportmasszőr	Fizioterápiás szakasszisztens masszeur	Gyógytornász	Akupresszőr	Reflexológus	Alternatív mozgás- és masszázs terapeuta	Alternatív fizioterapeuta
Communication and relationship	Communication and relationship with patient								
	Communication and relationship with colleagues								
	Negotiation and conflict management								
Training and self training	Improve training and self training								
Profession responsibility	Professional behaviour								
	Respect of patients privacy								
	Entrepreneur and management skills								
Prevention	Prevention								
Evidence Based Practice	E.B.P. evidence based practice study and research								
Rehabilitation treatments	Identify needs								
	Provide general evaluation								
	Product functional diagnosis								
	Product functional prognosis								
	Design therapeutic plan								
	Implement treatment								
	Assess results								
	Supply with suggestion and guidance								
Specific knowledge and skills	Orthopaedic/Rheumatology rehabilitation								
	Neurological rehabilitation								
	Developmental age rehabilitation								
	Cardio-respiratory rehabilitation								
	Sphincter rehabilitation								
	Visceral/Oncology rehabilitation								
	Occupational therapy								
	Patient positioning								
	Therapeutic massage								
	Sportive massage								
	Functional rehabilitation in sports traumatology								
	Manual treatment of soft tissue								
	Orthoses and aids application								
	First aid/assistance in field of athletes								
	Acupressure								
	Reflexologist								
	Ayurveda								
	Shiatsu								
	Naturopathy								
	Pranotherapy								
Lymphatic drainage									
Trigger point massage									
Therapeutic education	Therapeutic education								

Conclusion

Even each country is different, has different professions and has its own educational system using a same competence based framework it could be possible the comparison of profiles.

The experience to individuate and test a same competence framework in Italy, Germany and Hungary it was really successful. Of course it was not easy because of every partners had his/hers own knowledge, background.

Only the great flexibility of partners unit with a huge awareness to find a common way allowed to reach the competence framework.

Of course tables 4, 5 and 6 realized in this report can be considered like an exercise. The framework it was agreed by experts of the 3 countries but it was not for the competencies level individuated in each table. In facts le levels should be agreed at national level with all stakeholders of the sector and this is "the real challenge". Each profile has its own interests and it could be difficult to reach a final result. In this sense the competencies framework it is a very delicate tools able to solve overlapping profiles and/or a detailed tool for transparency in the labour market.

The competencies framework it is not the final solution for mobility of personnel but only an initial tool. Beside the definition of core competencies, in order to have a whole idea of a profession, it needs the individuation of job description (professional activities and work-processes, work place description, responsibilities, quality assurance measures).

Once individuated competencies and job description the profile is clearer³.

Looking on vocational and educational side it is possible for each organization working in the sector to assign learning activities to each above competencies in terms of:

- contents e.g. assignments, knowledge...;
- methods e.g. frontal lessons, internship, tutorial, seminar, colloquium ...;
- tools e.g. books, multimedia document, ...

An examination should give the possibility to evaluate the competence level reached for a single training unit. At the same time a training unit can be expressed in credit points (ECVET).

³ Of course competencies and job description are dynamics and varies according to the technology evolution

Each competence is a learning outcome and the sum of competencies is a vocational and educational training pathway. At the same time, according to Bologna process, the sum of learning outcomes reached in a vocational and educational training pathway can be articulated in credits (ECVET) and each competence has a credit value.

At the end of a vocational and educational training unit a guy should provide, through an examination, his/her competence that means the achievement of a specific and personal credit (ECVET).

Pre-requisite for a vocational and educational training organization is enter in a network signing a Memorandum of Mutual trust where the organization self-declare:

- competencies recognition has been assessed and identified according to criteria and processes defined in the competencies framework;
- credits acquired in each Vocational and Educational Training organisation signing the same Memorandum are valid for any kind of transparency of training contents, professional qualifications personnel mobility;
- memorandum always refers to the agreed competencies based framework as well as to the profiles job descriptions.

Once vocational and educational training organization entered in a network it can provide a certificate ECVET declaring that a guy has a predefined competence. The certificate is valid at international level.

The system has not a direct link to National Qualification Framework and/or European Qualification Network but once implemented the link is easy.

In particular in Germany as well in Italy the assessment of National Qualification Framework (levels 1- 8) is not carried out yet for the occupations of the masseur and physiotherapist.

The specifications done in this project are based on technical appraisal of the instructors and headmasters of the schools for masseur and physiotherapists involved in the project.

What realized in MAPINE project is only an exercise has no obliging character.

A pilot implementation of the system in the area of the massage occupations is appreciate and in this context:

- a detailed evaluation of core competencies should be realized as well as a thorough job description of profiles is compulsory;
- then a large stakeholders involvement is recommended.

Table 1: Massage professions within National Qualification Framework in Italy, Hungary and Germany

Name in English	Italy		Germany		Hungary	
	Name	References	Name	References	Name	References
Masseur	Massofisioterapista	CCNL 09.04.1999	/	MPhG May 26, 1994; MB-APrV from the December 16, 1994, the last change of February 19, of 2007	Gyógymasszőr	Decree of Health Ministry 32/2008. (VII.14.)
Masseur lifeguard in idrotherapy establishment	Massaggiatore ed assistente bagnino	R.D.31.05.1928, n. 1339, art. 1.	Masseurin/Masseur und medizinische/r Bademeisterin/Bademeister		Sportmasszőr	Decree of Health Ministry 32 /2008. (VII.14.)
Sport masseur	Massaggiatore sportivo		None		/	/
Physiotherapist assistant	/	/	/	/	Fizioterápiás szakasszisztens	Decree of Health Ministry 32 /2008. (VII.14.)
Physiotherapist	Fisioterapista	D.M. 14.09.1994, n. 741(G.U. 09.01.1995, n. 6)	Physiotherapeut	MPhG May 26, 1994; Phys.Th-APrV from the December 16, 1994, (BGBl. I S. 3786	Gyógytornász	36 /1996. (III.15.) Governmental decree
Acupressure	Agopuntura	/	Acupressure	/	Akupresszőr	/
Reflexologist	Riflessologo	/	Reflexologe	/	Reflexológus	/
Ayurveda maseur	Massaggiatore Ayurveda	/	Ayurveda Massage	/	Alternatív mozgás-és masszázstherapeuta	/
Shiatsu maseur	Massaggiatore Shiatsu	/	Shiatsu Massage	/	Alternatív fizioterapeuta	/

Source: our elaboration for MAPINE project

P.S. please note that apart Physiotherapist profile, for which Bologna process is valid, all other profession identified in the above table cannot compare each other even they have the same/similar names and they are on the same line

In bold the profiles which competencies had been identified in the tables, 4 , 5 and 6