



# TENNIS COACHING AS A PROFESSION

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## TENNIS EUROPE COACHES' EDUCATION CONFERENCE

NEW CONCEPTS IN COACHES' EDUCATION

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# OUTLINE



Background

Definition of tennis coaching

Definitions of a profession

Criteria that define a profession

Terms of reference

Coaching as blended profession

Implications and challenges

Conclusions and way forward

# Background

- Numerous changes to the role, influence, professional standards and general social status of tennis coaches
- Tennis organisations have gradually become more open to support more profoundly professionalism in tennis coaching



(Lake, 2010)

# Background

- Recognised value and esteem of coaches increased advances in the vocation of coaching practices
- Testimony from players and officials reveals the fundamental importance of coaching to achieving success'



(Lake, 2010)

# Background

- Varied tennis coaching scenarios across the globe:
  - National Association Systems for coach education and accreditation
  - Government and University systems of coaches education
  - EU and the free movement of labour
  - International Council for Coach Education 1997
- Tennis coaching profession today:
  - Accidental occupation
  - Incidental occupation (volunteers)
  - Professional coaches



# Definition of tennis coaching



“The guided improvement of tennis players led by a coach during the various identifiable stages of their tennis career”

(adapted from ECC, 2008)

# Definitions of a profession

- Line of **work** requiring academic or practical **preparation** (Thes.)
- Any type of work which needs special **training** or a particular **skill**, often one which is respected because it involves a high level of **education** (Cambr.)
- A type of **job** that needs special training or skill, especially one that needs a high level of education (Oxf.)

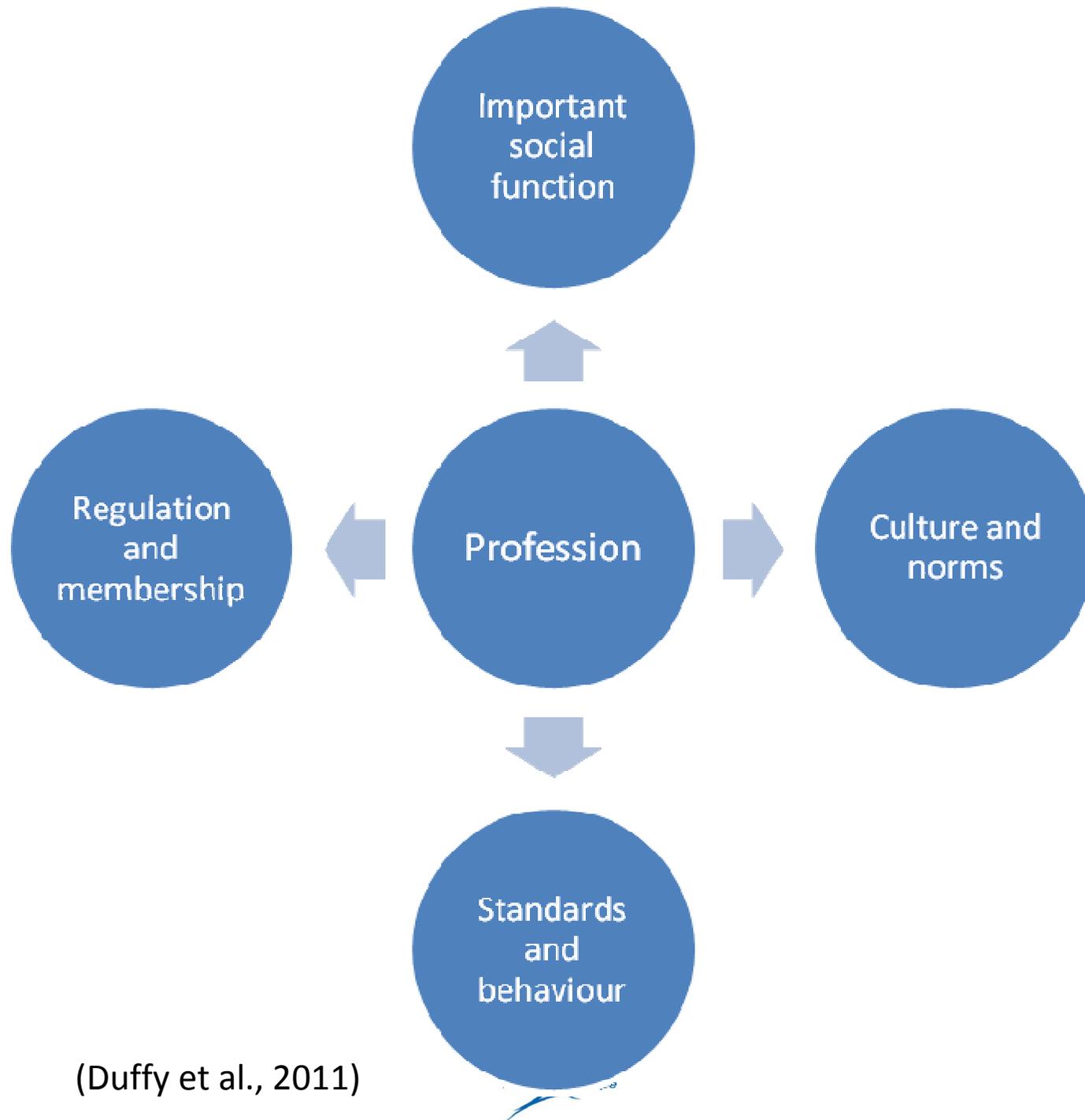
# Profession vs Occupation

- Interchangeable
- Minor differences
- An **occupation** becomes a **profession** when a person becomes **masterfully skilled** in their area of expertise.



# Criteria that define a profession

	TENNIS COACHING	
	YES - ✓	NO - X
THEORETICAL KNOWLEDGE		
AUTONOMY		
SERVICE MISSION		
ETHICAL CODE		
PUBLIC SANCTION		
FORMAL TRAINING		
CREDENTIALING		
SENSE OF COMMUNITY		
PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION		
SINGULAR OCCUPATION CHOICE		



(Duffy et al., 2011)

# Important social role



**Expertise**



**Something special  
for the society**



**Full-time job  
Remuneration**

# Culture and norms



**Professional norms**



**Common symbols and language**



**Learned behaviour**

# Standards and behaviour



**Dignified  
occupation**



**Testing of  
competence**



**“Social  
contract”:  
Coach - Player**

# Regulation and Membership



**Legal and  
social  
recognition**



**Licence**



**Interacting  
network**

# Too simplistic?

TENNIS  
COACHING

PROFESSIONAL

AMATEUR

PAID

NON PAID

# Tennis Coaching

	Professional	Amateur
Need Education?		
Need Certification?		
Degree of Responsibility?		
Receive Payment?		
Degree of Involvement?		

# Option

## TENNIS COACHING

PROFESSIONAL  
TENNIS COACHING  
- Paid  
- Full time  
- Full responsible  
-- Mandatory certification

PROFESSION

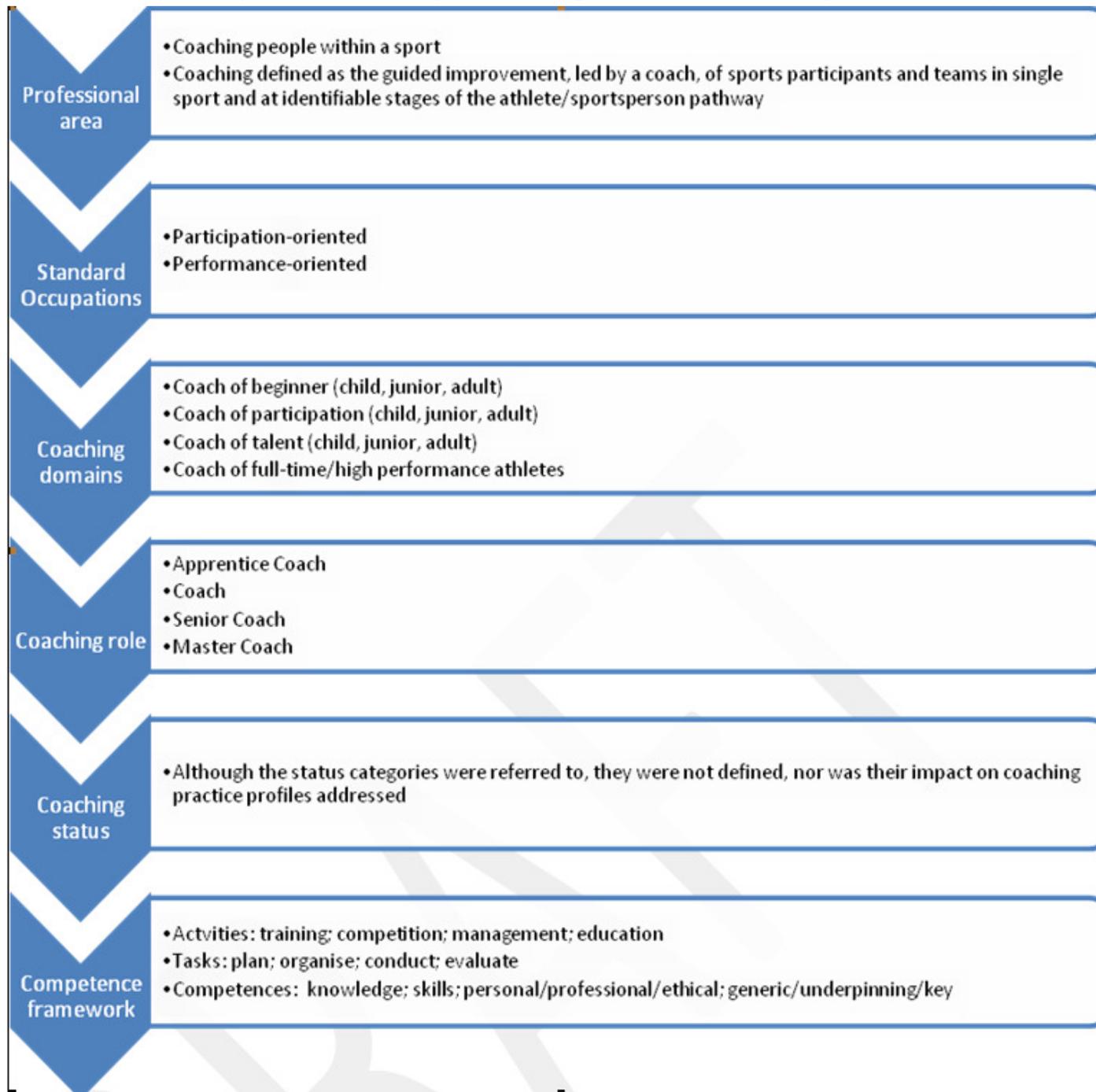
AMATEUR TENNIS  
COACHING  
- Unpaid  
- Part time  
- Less responsibility  
- No certification?

PARA-PROFESSION

# Tennis coaching as part of a wider profession



Core concepts (adapted from the European Coaching Council, 2007 and Duffy, Petrovic, Crespo, 2010)



# Competency

**KNOWLEDGE**

**SKILLS**

**RESPONSIBILITY**

**CONTEXT**

A competency  
is more  
than just  
knowledge  
and  
skills

The amount of information  
that has been acquired

The ability to apply the acquired  
knowledge in an effective  
and efficient manner

The degree to which we can take  
decisions and initiatives ourselves

Familiarity with the complexity  
of environmental factors

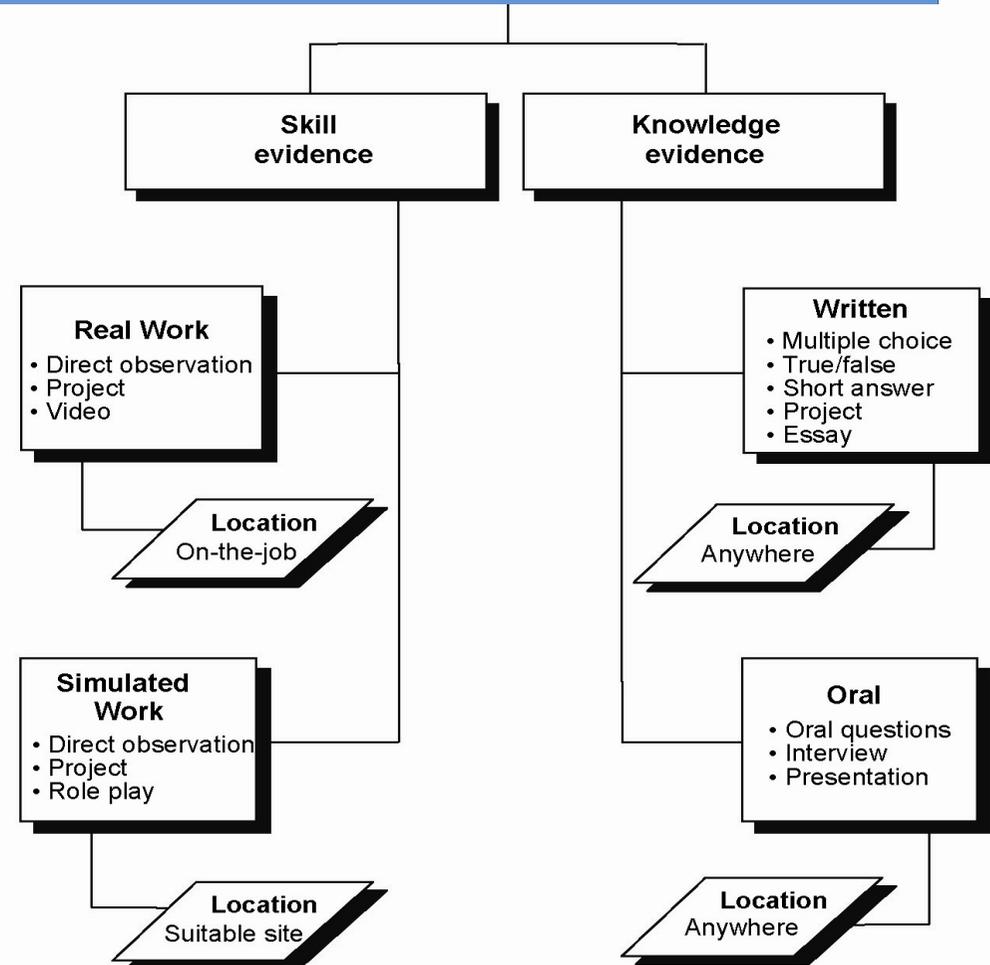
# Competency based assessment

QUALITY

EVIDENCE

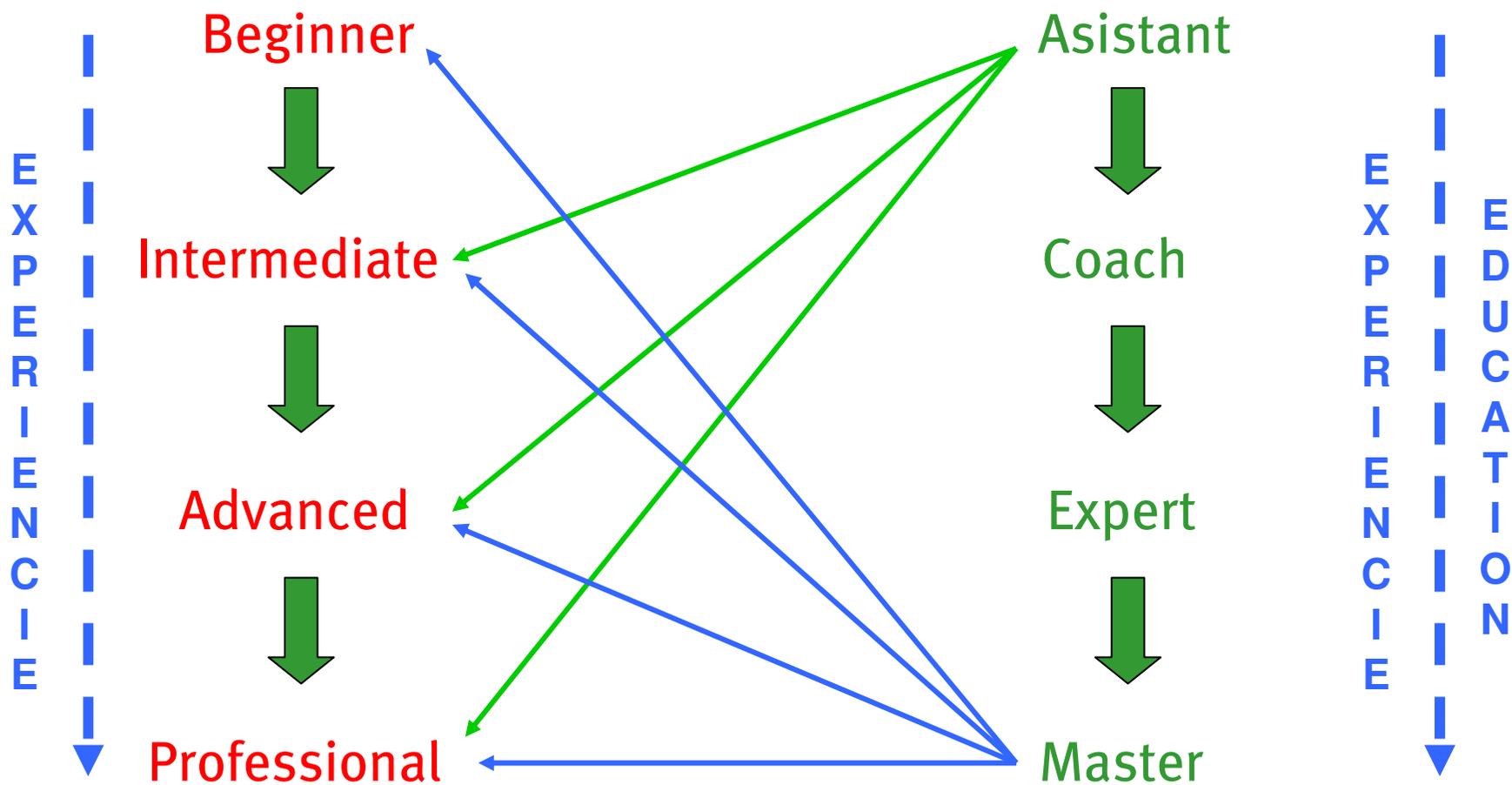
APPLICATION

KNOWLEDGE

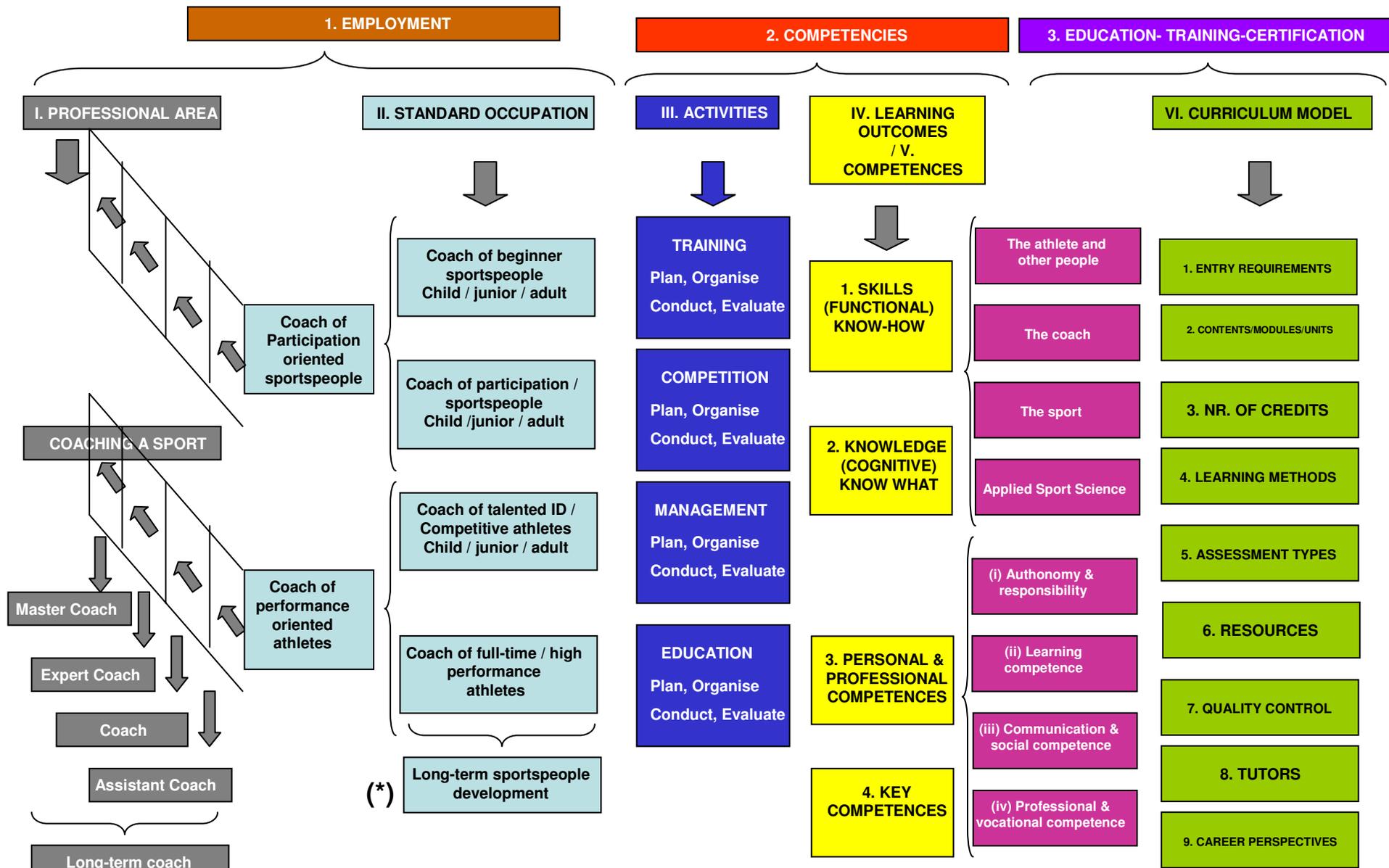


Long-term coach  
development

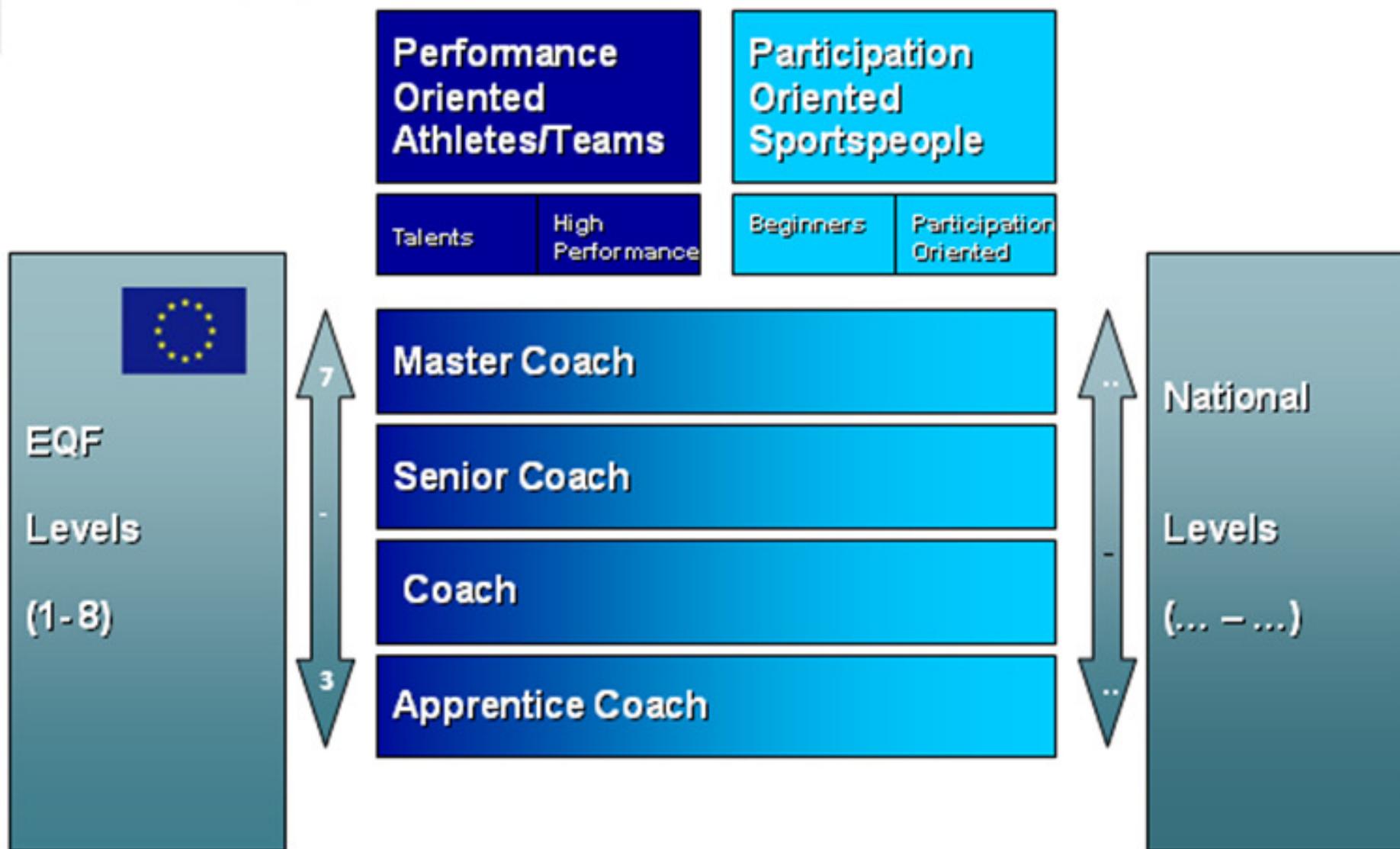
Long-term player  
development



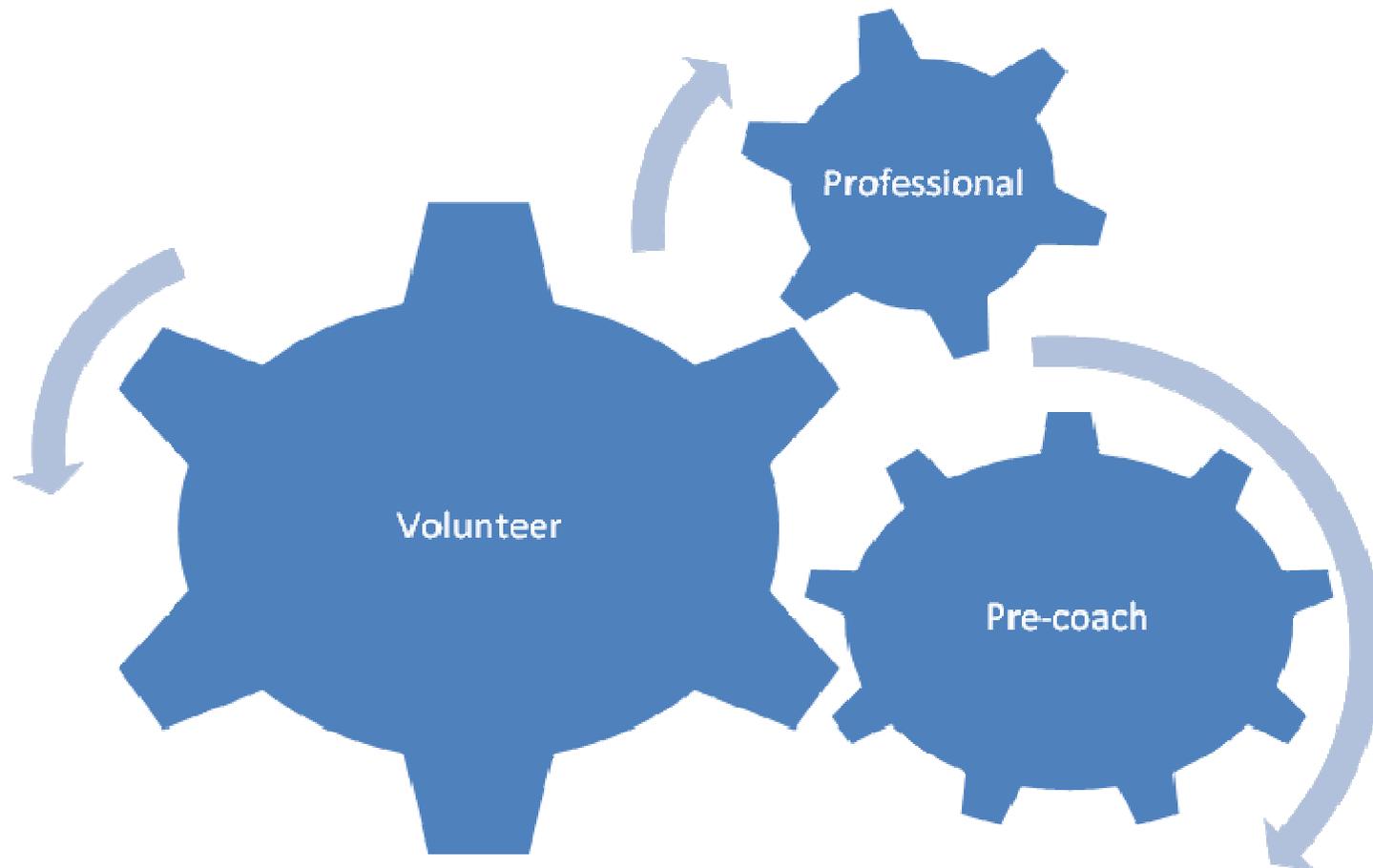
# OUTLINE FRAMEWORK – REVIEW OF COACHING QUALIFICATIONS / CURRICULUM BUILDING



Revised Framework (EFRCCQ) ECC, 2007



# A blended model of professional identity in sports coaching



## Pre-coach

- These roles will support assistant coaches and coaches in children's and participation domains. Pre-coaching roles are often played by parents or young adults in helping out with coaching, without having made a commitment to play a coaching role or to obtain formal qualifications. These roles are voluntary and provide an important pathway into coaching, as well as supporting the delivery of coaching at local level. The roles are subject to basic safety and child protection guidelines and should operate under the supervision of a qualified Coach. Many sports participants also play pre-coaching roles, supporting or taking on the role of the coach on occasion.

## Volunteer Coach

- These roles will include Apprentice Coach and Coach roles that are carried out on a volunteer basis in children's; participation; performer development and high performance domains. Minimum standards in relation to safety; child protection and qualifications will apply to these coaching roles. All those playing coaching roles will be expected to register with their national federation and to comply with a Coaches Code of Ethics and Good Practice. Volunteer coaches will also have a responsibility to support the deployment and development of pre-coaches.

## Professional coach

- Professional coaches will include all coaches who are paid in any coaching capacity. It will also include coaches operating at senior and master coach levels across the four coaching domains, whether in a paid or volunteer capacity. Volunteer coaches operating in these roles will be regarded as 'professional volunteers'. All professional coaches will be expected to comply with minimum standards in relation to safety; child protection and qualifications. They will also be subject to a licensing process that will be introduced on a sport by sport basis and in the context of a core set of guidelines. Professional coaches will adhere to Professional Coaches Code of Ethics and Good Practice and will have a key responsibility to support the development of other coaches.

# Tennis Coaching Major Challenges

- Can the ability to attract, develop, and retain tennis players become more difficult due to the problems in taking coaching seriously as a profession?
  - Industry standards
  - Assessment criteria
  - Accreditation processes
  - Education programmes



# Tennis Coaching Major Challenges

- Should the profession of tennis coach be regulated by Law in the states?
- Should tennis organisations only hire / recognise certified tennis coaches?



# Tennis Coaching Major Challenges

- Is research → Applied research?
  - Innovative
  - Scientific
  - Evidence based
  - Practical/Applicable for coaches
- Is there enough research on professionalisation of tennis coaching?
- Is innovation and technology user friendly for coaches?



# Tennis Coaching Major Challenges

- Has tennis coaching an important social role?
- Is there a sustainable proportion of ‘professional tennis coaches’?
- Is it appropriate to treat full-time paid; part-time paid and volunteer tennis coaches in the same category?



# Tennis Coaching Major Challenges

- Do tennis coaches need legally recognised professional associations / Chartered Institutes that would regulate membership?
- Are tennis coaches interested in having a legally recognised profession?



# Tennis Coaching Major Challenges

- Is the tennis coaching Code of Ethics appropriately implemented?
- Is there enough interaction between national federations, sports authorities, governing bodies, universities, on these issues?



# Conclusions and way forward

- Unique nature of coaching
- Global framework
- Awareness:
  - Professional development & CE
  - Standards of coaching
  - Certification



(ICCE, 2011)

# Conclusions and way forward

- Voice of coaches
- Coaches charter:
  - Rights
  - Responsibilities
  - Licensing



(Dick, 2011)

# The profession of tennis coach

Criterion	Definition	Rating
Social role and purpose	Defined purpose and 'crucial' social role, taking responsibility for the welfare, health and safety of the community it serves	Moderate-strong
Knowledge base and standards	Defined body of knowledge and skill, derived from education, training and research.	Moderate
	Education, certification, qualifications at degree level and post graduate level	Weak
Organisation, regulation and membership	Exclusive group with privileges, a 'right to practice', social and legislative recognition, paid employment status.	Weak
	License to practice with on-going continuous professional development.	Weak
	Interacting network of people and institutions.	Moderate-weak
Culture, ethics and norms	Culture of norms, symbols and values that promote trust.	Moderate
	Autonomous and ethical decision making by practitioners.	Moderate-strong
	Self-regulation.	Weak

# Recognition Process

ITF sends the approval criteria to the nations concerned

Nations provide ITF the information in advance

An ITF expert visits the country:

- The Director of Education of the country provides the documents
- The Director and the technical staff explain the system and highlight the resources used
  - The ITF expert raises issues and makes recommendations
    - The criteria are checked

The ITF expert should be able to evaluate the system and / or suggest changes to be made before the approval is formally given

# There is so much to do!

