Optimal and non-optimal performance, psychophysiological states, and stress-recovery balance

1. Main objective of the teaching unit

The module contributes to the fulfillment of the educational goals of the Euromental project, by providing knowledge and competences which characterize the psychophysiology discipline and the stress-recovery balance applied to the mental training. Particular emphasis will be devoted to decisional processes and stress and recovery theory, and to the basic methods for understanding brain-behavior and performance relationship, stress-recovery balance, and performance relationship.

At the end of the class, the student will have to demonstrate the acquisition of:

1)Knowledge and understanding of the theoretical and methodological bases of the discipline, that is the psychophysiological mechanisms and the stress-recovery balance underlying performance.

2)Knowledge and understanding of the most employed experimental protocols in psychophysiology, and the most employed questionnaires in stress and recovery.

3)Ability to assemble and integrate the knowledge and to handle the complexity about brain-performance relationship.

4) Ability to report, interpret, and discuss original research findings to expert and naïve audience, in a clear way and through disciplinary lexicon.

5)Ability to analyze topics of interest in a critical and autonomous way.

2. Contents

The course provides theoretical, methodological, and applied frameworks to understand optimal, non-optimal, and poor performance (flow & peak performance; integrated model of flow, clutch states, IZOF model, MAP model, MuSt theory), taking also into account the specificity of the sport (e.g., task, person, environment).

The course provides also basic knowledge in the field of psychophysiology, stress, and recovery, with particular reference to theoretical approaches, methodology of the discipline, and by focusing on the application of them into the sport field, in order to understand the basis of optimal performance and mental skill training.

By developing critical thought in both theoretical and methodological domains, the course provides the crucial cognitive and applied instruments for a productive integration within the Euromental project.

3. Recommended bibliography

Scientific articles and books to be defined.

4. Teaching methods

The course contents are presented through lessons in the lecture hall, taking advantage of power point slides (made available to the students), reading and discussion of scientific articles, and videos.

50 % of the courses will be in presence and practical, 50% of the course will be at distance (80% synchronous and 20% asynchronous).