

# SPORTS

2010

A career in sports appeals to a great many young people. But before they decide to follow their dream, they should know that there are no more than about 7,000 professional-level athletes in all of France at any given time. The competition is equally strong for jobs as trainers and coaches and for other positions on sporting teams and crews. On the other hand, some 34 million people in France engage in some form of athletics on a regular basis, and many jobs are created by their activities.

Most athletic jobs are in the private sector, including many with clubs and other nonprofit organizations, but graduates should not rule out public service. The national government has cut the number of positions for which holders of the CAPEPS credential were traditionally trained (CAPEPS is an exam used to certify instructors of physical education and athletics), but local governments still recruit professionals to support amateur athletics and sports teams in their area. Makers of sports apparel and equipment (such as Adidas and Nike), as well as distributors (such as Décathlon and Go Sport), offer many opportunities in their business operations. Sports and athletics are not just about physical competition—they are also about sales, promotion, marketing, communication, and management. In short, an industry that depends on many different skills and talents.

**Field:** Sports and athletics

**Professional opportunities:** professional athlete, athletic instructor, coach, public servant (parks and recreation), camp counselor, manager of athletic club, seasonal employee, ski patrol member, trainer, physical education instructor.

## ORGANIZATION OF STUDIES IN FRANCE

### University

France's universities offer degree programs in physical education and athletics that prepare graduates for careers as instructors, trainers, and managers of sports organizations and athletic activities. The programs are offered in university departments of physical education and athletics known as STAPS.

Initially designed to train instructors of physical education, the STAPS curriculum has become more diversified and now prepares students for other careers in sports and athletics. Athletics per se account for only about a third of the course content in STAPS programs, the rest being divided among the humanities, social sciences, and biological sciences. After completing a 3-year *licence* program, students may apply to a master's program (research or professional) or take the CAPEPS exam and become certified as an instructor of physical education and athletics.

The universities also offer vocational programs in sports and athletics. Two-year programs leading to a DEUST (*diplôme d'études universitaires spécifiques et techniques*, a postsecondary technical degree) train graduates to organize and lead athletic activities and sporting events. Programs leading to a *licence professionnelle* (requiring an additional 3 years of study), technical master programs (MST, begun after the second year of the *licence* curriculum), and professional master's programs are oriented toward the business aspects of sports and athletics: sales of equipment, organization and promotion of events, or management of teams and leagues.

University-affiliated professional institutes, known as IUPs (*instituts universitaires professionnalisés*) offer 3-year programs of technical education. Some IUPs that feature programs in tourism, leisure, and recreation allow students to specialize in sports-related fields, such as sports management.

## RESEARCH THEMES

Research teams in university athletics departments study the human body, employing concepts and techniques borrowed from cognitive neuroscience, anthropology, and psychology (psychosomatics).

French research efforts are oriented toward the development of a number of interdisciplinary projects. Complementary theories and models developed in the fields of the physiology and psychology of exercise combine to provide a better understanding of the complex effects of physical activity on health and overall performance, as well as of the adaptive capacities of human beings and the psychophysiological mechanisms at work in physical disabilities and fatigue.

## INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION

Some famous French sporting events:

- Grand Prix de France (Formule 1)
- 24 Hours of Le Mans
- Vendée Globe around-the-world yacht race
- Bol d'Or motorcycle race
- The Tour de France bicycle race
- The French Open at Roland-Garros
- 6 Nations rugby tournament
- Championnat de France soccer

## Useful Web sites

- Ministry of Health and Athletics  
<http://www.sante-jeunesse-sports.gouv.fr/>
- INSEP (Institut National du Sport et de l'Éducation Physique, national institute of sports and physical education) trains competitive athletes, <http://www.insep.fr/>
- Departmental associations of sports and recreation professionals, <http://www.profession-sport-loisirs.fr/>
- Careers in sports and athletics (job announcements, sponsorships, and agents), <http://www.sportcarriere.com/>
- Centre National Professionnel des Commerces de Sport (national professional center for sports-related business) <http://www.cnpc.fr/>  
CNPC offers training in the commercialization of sports gear and apparel. Programs are oriented toward salesmen and business owners.
- The European Network of Sport Science, Education, and Employment  
<http://www.enssee.de/>  
ENSSEE operates at the policy level to improve athletic education and training in Europe. The organization aims to encourage European cooperation in education, employment, personal mobility, and the transfer of knowledge by and among students, faculty, and professionals.

## Keywords

acrobatics – agent – aquatics – athletics – animation – biology – circus arts – climbing – coaching – commerce – communication – consulting – dance – diet and nutrition – education – equestrian – event management – exercise – facilities – games – golf – handicap – health – hiking – law – management – martial arts – medicine – motor functions – mountain guide – movement – muscle – nature – peak performance – performance – physical education – physiology – psychology – seniors – recreation – sports – sports medicine – sports psychology – staffing – training – urban sports – tourism – water sports – youth



A complete list of degrees, specializations, and institutions can be found on the CampusFrance Web site. CampusFrance's online catalog displays every program in France from the licence to the doctoral level (more than 180 programs).

Campusfrance.org > toutes les formations en France (all academic programs in France)

- Licence and master's levels: A search engine operating by degree level and field of study enables users to find degrees of interest and the institutions that offer them. <http://www.campusfrance.org/fr/search/etudes03-1.htm>
- Doctoral level: The online directory of doctoral departments uses its own search process. <http://www.campusfrance.org/ecoledoc/index.htm>
- CampusBourse, an online directory of grant programs: campusfrance.org > toutes les formations en France > programmes de bourses (grant and scholarship programs)