

# YouSports Kick Off Report

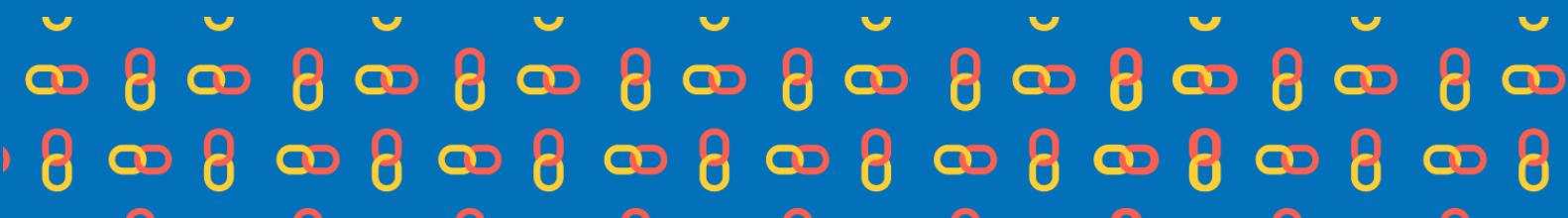
12-16 JUNE 2023, ANGLET, FRANCE





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# YouSports: Kick Off Event

## THE NEW STRATEGIC NATIONAL AGENCIES COOPERATION PROJECT

This new Long Term Activity on social change through sport looks at how youth work can use sport to support value-based learning in communities and reach different audiences to get involved in international projects. Sports projects have the potential to change lives, communities and society. Through non-formal education, sport can be used as a tool for competence development - including physical skills and social skills. Sports educators should be upskilled to include more and different learning in their projects. There is a need for the recognition of the impact and change that non-formal learning can have on people through sports projects. Using sport as a method, through value-based and experiential learning, there is huge potential for social change. Many practitioners are implementing exercises of different kind and use the concept of education through sport consciously or instinctively. However we should have a more scientific discourse on quality and impact in Europe.

At the conference, practices were explored, gathered and shared between social sports organisations that have experience and expertise in social sports with young people, to be multiplied and built on further by others.

The Kick-Off event was hosted by the French National Agency and was co-funded by the German (Jugend für Europa) and Turkish (The Centre For European Union Education And Youth Programmes - CEUEYP) National Agencies of Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps. In total there are 14 National Agencies involved in the Long Term Activity 'YouSports'. It is a Transnational Activity funded through Erasmus+ that constitutes the official starting point for the Strategic Cooperation project. The Kick Off Event gathered over 100 participants from grassroots organisations active in the field of social sport all across Europe to build a common frame together around Youth, Sports, Non-Formal Education and define the European scene on social sports. This Event was also a unique opportunity to exchange best practices, to learn from the experiences of other organisations and to build new ways to use sport as a tool to achieve a positive impact. The Kick-Off event took place in Anglet, France, between the 12-16th of June, 2023.





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*"The overarching aim of YouSports is to forge connections between Sports, Non-Formal Education, and Youth Work, with the goal of increasing the impact of social projects on individuals and communities across Europe.*

*Through this collaborative effort, we aspire to unlock the full potential of social sports and use them as powerful tools for positive change. "*

**- GRÉGORY CAZALET  
DIRECTOR  
AGENCE DU SERVICE CIVIQUE**



# Exploring the concept of social sports

Sports, as an activity, is known to have many benefits such as improving physical fitness, mental health and well-being, social life and self-confidence. However, when we talk about social sports, there are more advantages that come into play and it's helps you to go beyond the physical.

Sports projects have the potential to change lives, communities and society. Through non-formal education, sport can be used as a tool for competence development - including physical skills and soft skills.

Social sports are a great way to have fun, meet new people and develop our competencies, while we can also enjoy the health benefits of doing sports. Social sports are usually less competitive than traditional sports and the focus lays more on the experience itself that the activity can offer, rather than winning.

Social sports are an international language that transcends borders, races and cultures. Whether it's a game of football or badminton at the local park or a tournament for karate in Romania, social sports bring people together from all walks of life. **Social sports have the power to change the world by bringing people together.** This way social sports can help us to make friends with people from different kind of backgrounds and cultures. This will help us to gain a better understanding of others, their culture and background. By bridging communities, social sports has the power to promote social cohesion. Playing sports with others creates an atmosphere where everyone feels part of something bigger than themselves. This communal spirit encourages teamwork, cooperation, trust and respect between teammates.

Sport can be an educational tool as well to transfer different kinds of values. For example, it can teach young people how to behave in society, it can help them to learn how to work with others, it can teach them the value of teamwork and the importance of good communication or fair play, but it can be also used by youth workers to transfer different kinds of values such as respect for other people, fairness, discipline, inclusion, human rights, equality or the importance of environmental protection. In terms of building relationships, sport can be used as a tool to help young people understand themselves better. It gives them the opportunity to learn more about what they're good at and what they enjoy doing; it helps them become more aware of their strengths and weaknesses; and it helps them develop strategies to deal with difficult situations or feelings.





## Goals for using sports in the youth field

Fight against poverty	Inclusion	Empowerment	Developing democratic values
Quality education	Diversity	Equality	Encouraging decision making
Prevention of school dropout	Promoting peace	Developing life/social skills	Development beyond competition/winning
Anti-racism	Sustainable development	Promoting better health	Gender equality
Prevention of violence	Environmental protection	Human rights	For dialogue, respect and collaboration
Engagement and participation	Learning how to cope with stress	To teach other subjects	Conflict management

# How to use sport as a tool in the youth field?

IF WE USE SPORTS AS A TOOL FOR DIFFERENT AIMS, WE CAN REACH MANY BEAUTIFUL GOALS.

01

02

03

## To develop emotional Intelligence

Sport helps to develop emotional intelligence. The ability to understand and express your feelings and feel empathy for others can be especially important in group environments. Sport also teaches young people how to manage their emotions and how to deal with pressure.

## To develop social networks

Youth work builds on relationships, understanding self, connecting with others and having fun (Griffiths & Sharp 2001). The use of sport in youth work helps to achieve these outcomes by providing an opportunity for young people to engage with each other through informal settings. (Bennett 2005). Therefore sports brings different people closer together from different field of life and promote social cohesion.

## As a tool for building trust

Youth work works on relationship building and sport can be a great tool to build trust between groups, clubs and individuals. Sport can also be used as a tool to address some of the underlying issues that cause conflict in neighbourhoods and communities. Sport can help to open up young people's minds by allowing them to speak about their feelings, thoughts and experiences with others who have been through similar experiences.

04

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## Soft skills development

Sport activities are a great way to develop competences (knowledge, skills, attitudes, values). Sport can be used as a tool for soft skills development because it is a holistic approach that includes a variety of different activities and challenges. It offers opportunities to learn new things, develop existing skills and discover new talents. The focus is not only on doing well, but also on having fun while learning new things and improving our performance. These soft skills include for example: team work, confidence, self-esteem, leadership etc.

## As a tool for conflict management

Sport is an activity that can bring people together from all walks of life. It's a tool for conflict management, for example: bridging differences, understanding others, seeing things from other perspectives, having common ground that brings people together and where we can build on. Sport also provides an opportunity to channel energy through physical activity. This is a great way to manage conflict, especially in young people who are easily distracted and restless. Sport can also help reduce prejudice and discrimination.

06

**To encourage environmental protection**

At the YouSports Kick-Off event participants mentioned how important it is to appreciate the potential of local areas and to improve the facilities and use the environment in order to create opportunities for young people to get involved in more sport activities while learning about the protection of nature through recycling, planting trees or cleaning up beaches. Many youth groups have dedicated themselves to protect the environment, whether it be through volunteering or raising awareness about climate change and sport events such as football tournaments or running events are a great way to do that. Turning local 'rugged' areas into sport facilities was also an example raised by a participant at the Kick-Off. )

07

**To support policies development**

Sport can be used as a tool to support policy development by connecting youth work with research and policy makers. Youth can learn how to communicate / lobby for improvements around needs and interests through sport, which can develop their active participation in the society and encourage them to take part in decision making. "Sport cultivates effective citizenship by instilling the values of respect, fairness, responsibility, and friendship into young people around the world. By teaching these values we can teach young athletes the importance of caring for your community and giving back to it in any way that we can." (<https://www.sportanddev.org/latest/news/sport-and-citizenship>) It is important that young people can express themselves through sport, which might be limited in some cases at schools or other places of learning.

08

**To promote inclusion**

Many people have different needs. Not all societies are adapted to different needs and not all people have access to suitable sports facilities. Sport can help overcome these obstacles by providing opportunities for people with different backgrounds and abilities to take part in activities they enjoy and build confidence in their abilities with others. This will lead to improved health and wellbeing, greater independence and social inclusion. Sport also makes us equal when playing / our gender, our political view our age doesn't matter - rules are applied in the same way to everyone no matter what. Social sports fight stereotypes from an early child age and practicing sports together, these social barriers can vanish.

09

**Using sport as a tool to empower and encourage to do more, explore more**

Sport can be used to encourage young people to do more, explore more, outside of their comfort zone. It can provide an opportunity for them to stretch themselves in new ways and learn new skills and not just physically. And the more you do, the more you can do. Sport teaches us that it's OK to fail sometimes; it's part of the journey. It teaches us how to deal with failure, how we respond when things don't go our way. Sport also teaches us that failure is never final – it's just one step on our journey towards success.

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**To develop discipline**

Sport is a powerful tool in the hands of youth workers, who can use it to help young people develop discipline, self-awareness, self-control, power over their own decisions and collaboration with others. Sport is one of the most effective ways of helping young people discover their strengths and weaknesses.

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**To achieve goals/ to learn goal setting**

Doing sports can enhance concentration, release stress and teach us to be persistent which can help us in achieving our goals in other fields of our lives as well as help us to get better grades. Sport can provide opportunities for NEET youth as well, as it can help keep them out of trouble by giving them something constructive to do with their time instead of hanging around on street corners or getting involved in crime.

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**To encourage participation**

When young people take part in sport activities, then they are more likely to become active members of the society who make good choices about how they would like to live their lives and how they will treat others around them. This helps them to learn about respect for themselves and others which encourages them to actively take part in initiatives and decision making processes

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**To transfer the knowledge we gained through sport for life**

Youth work often uses Kolb's experiential learning cycle (<https://www.simplypsychology.org/learning-kolb.html>) and we can do this through sport activities as well. We can use the sport activity as the experience and use the method of debriefing to discuss what has happened during the game and transfer learning outcomes into our own realities or other parts of our lives or mirror experiences with our real life experiences, in order to grow personally and/or professionally, because sport settings can create a safe learning environment for youth.

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**A way to connect - without language barriers**

Sport is a powerful tool for connecting people, especially youth. It can be used as an entry point for other programmes and services and is a good way to engage with both genders and all age groups. Sport gives young people an opportunity to learn, develop and grow in a safe environment. Encouraging children and youth to participate in sporting activities will encourage them to work together with others to achieve a common goal. Social sports also provide opportunities for young people from different backgrounds or cultures to meet and interact with each other in a safe environment where they can learn about each other's culture. Erasmus+ youth exchanges are a great tool for this purpose. Many projects include sport practices already in these kind of projects to promote different kind of values, raise awareness of various topics through sport and to promote intercultural learning. E-sports also provide opportunities for cross-cultural communication and opportunities for social change interventions that go across national boundaries and demographics, without travelling.

# Links between sport and NFE - Why youth work is a good environment to use sport as a tool

Using sports as a tool in non-formal education has many advantages over other methods because it is fun and engaging for youth and it creates a safe learning environment for them. Youth who participate in sports are more likely to learn because they enjoy what they are doing.



It's a way to reach objectives and transfer values in youth work by using sport as a tool and by using Kolb's experiential learning cycle. Sport is a great bridge to connect different kinds of topics with a fun and safe learning experience.



NFE opens a creative way for movement and exercising (which supports physical and mental health)



NGOs often offer sport for free to financially disadvantaged youth/kids (Which promotes inclusion, diversity and equity)



Sport can provide a sense of success/achievement in NFE activities. Thinking of 4 different levels of recognition, there can be self-celebration "I'm happy I succeeded", social recognition from others: "you did really well" or "we are proud of our town team" formal recognition with certification of achievements and political recognition of those.



NFE gives chance for free self organised sport activities (which can develop independence, responsibility and passion of young people)



Through NFE it is easier to reach youth and young people who are eager to learn



Sport can serve for developing internal motivation



Sport can develop an environment for a different way of learning (learning to learn)

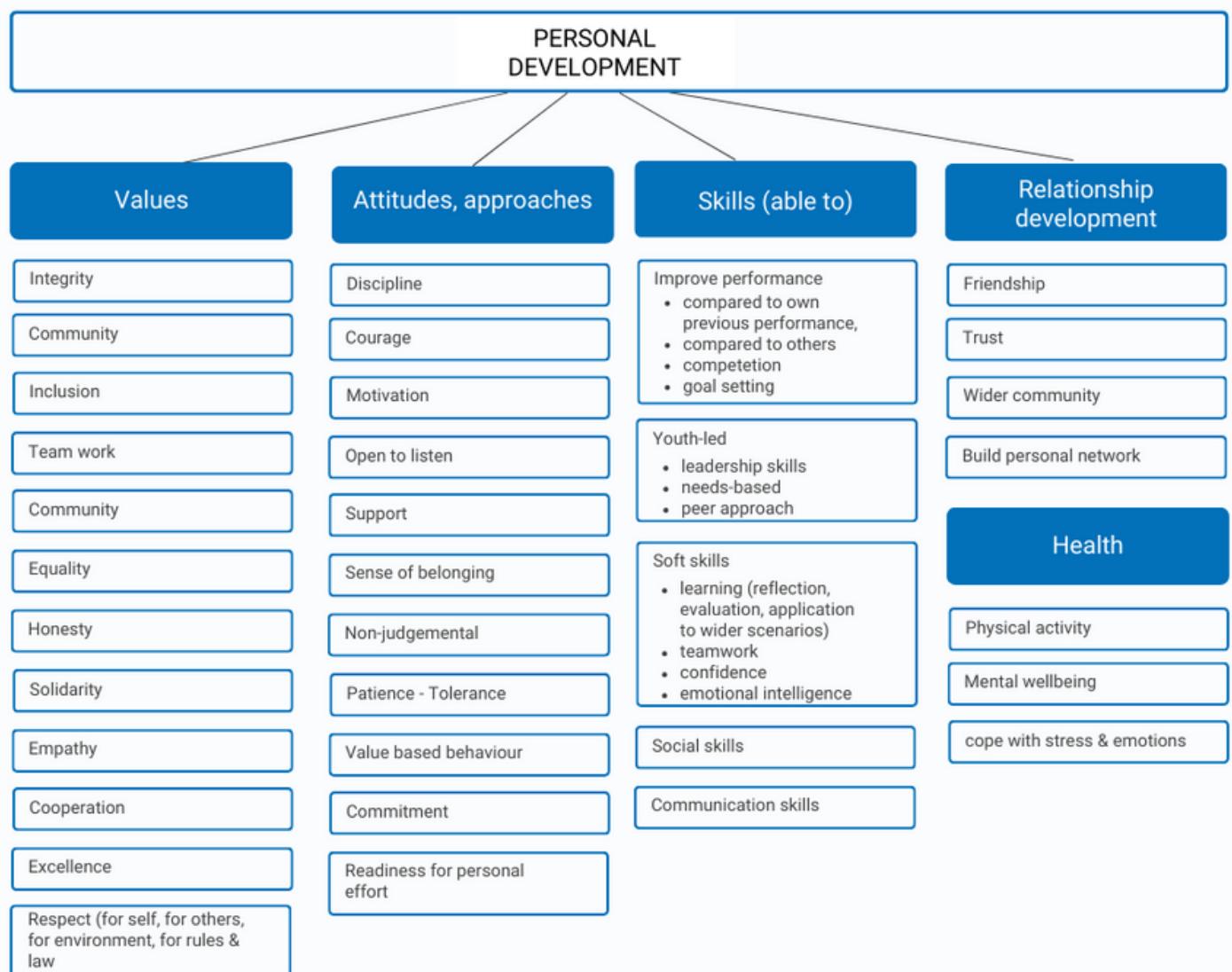


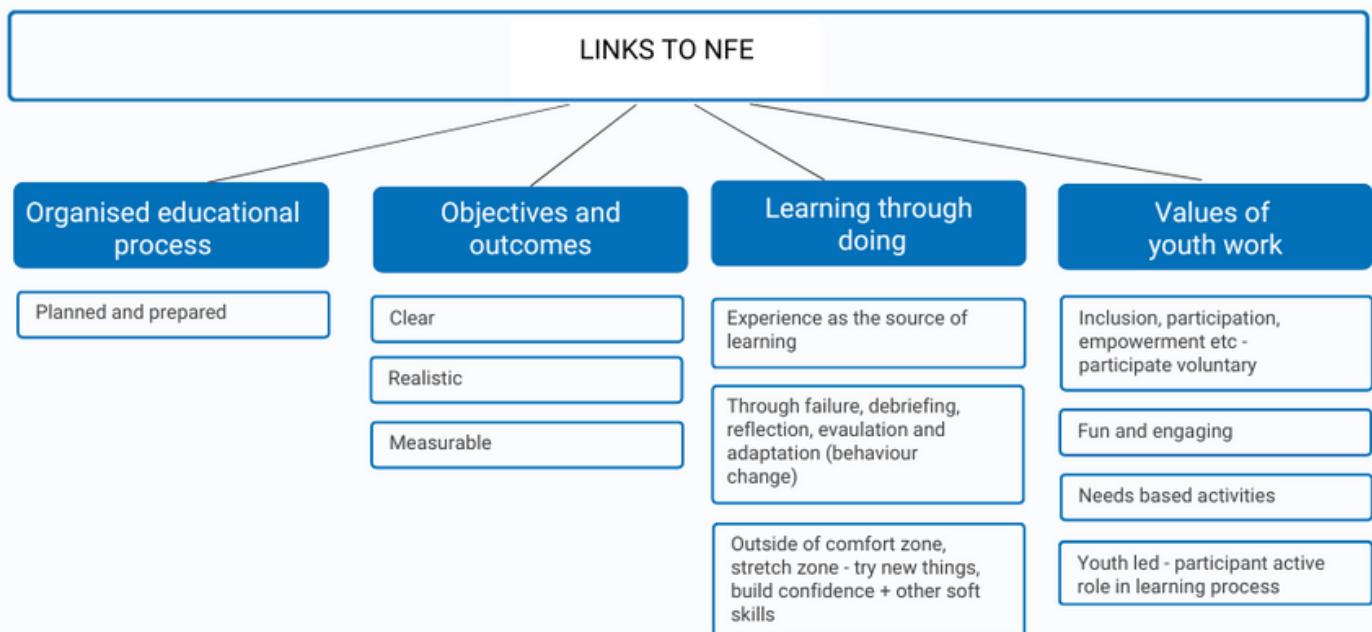
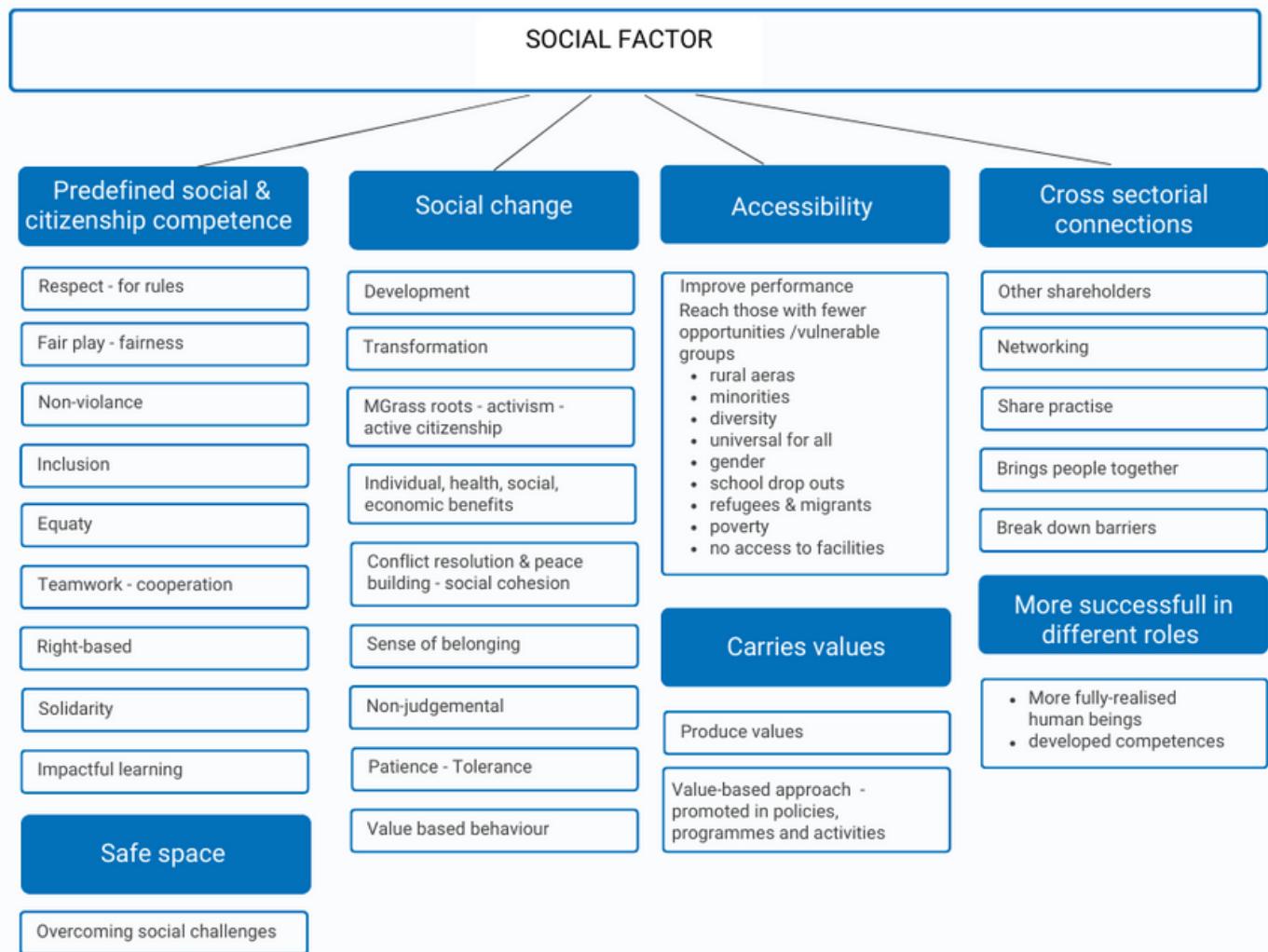
It can promote motivation /self-efficacy, drive and energy

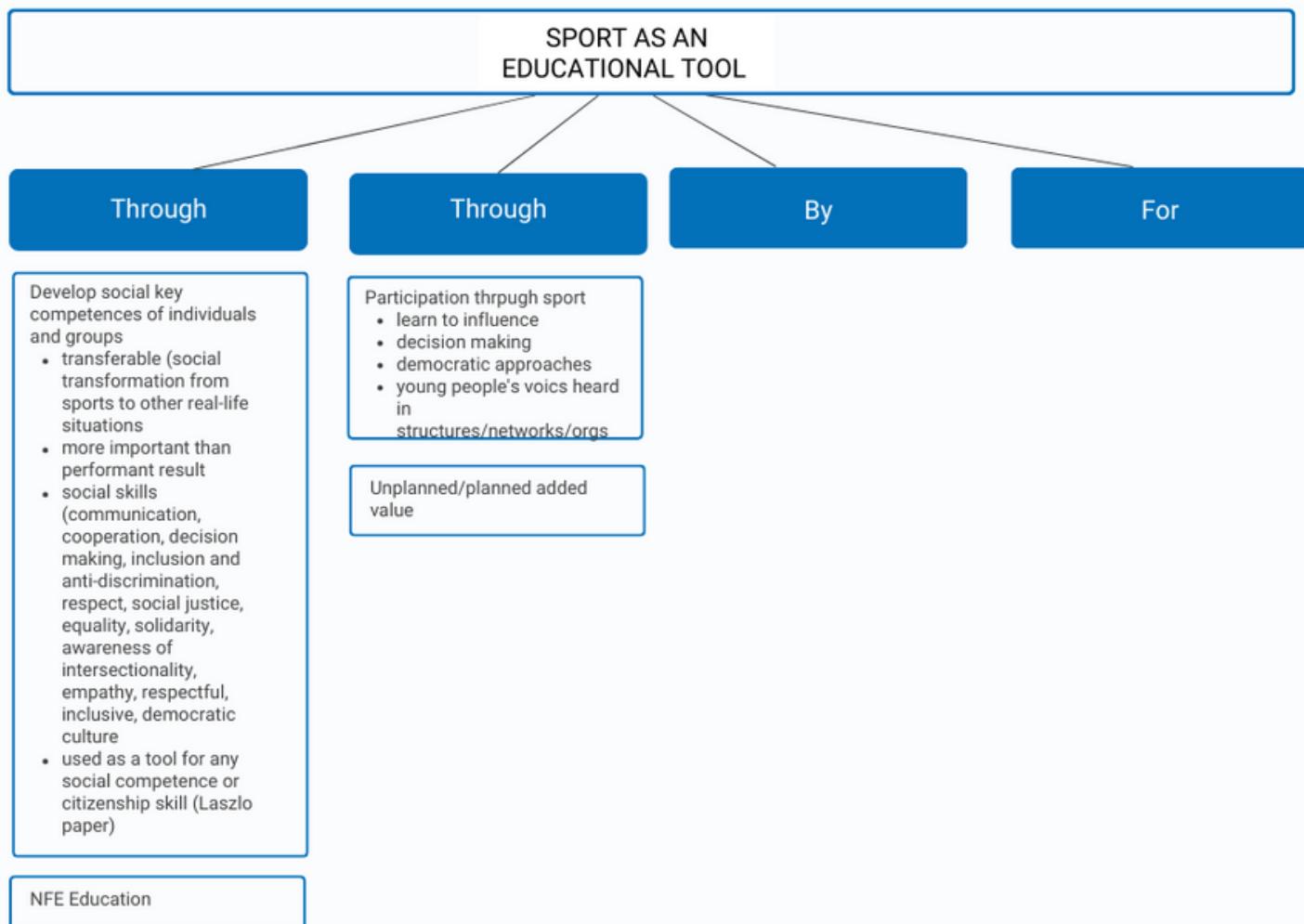


# The current use of Social Sports (in the work of European NGO's/ clubs/associations)

NGO's and sport clubs from Europe defined what social sports means for them or for their club/organisation and how they are using social sports in their work. Social sports is used to support personal development from different dimensions, as a tool in education to transfer different kinds of values and as a tool for social impact.







## Inspiring practise examples of connecting sports with different topics to use sport as a tool to transfer different kinds of values from workshop sessions of the YouSport Kick-Off event.

### Street workout

*Main topic: Bodyweight Training - Social inclusion  
Facilitator: B-sthenos ASBL (Belgium)*

This method (Street Workout) can create a good atmosphere in the popular neighborhoods, and can be a good tool to prevent the violence, drugs and school dropouts. With this method the young people or neighbours will be together then take care of the public places.



“ The workshop was really fantastic. The activity itself has a social origin as it started in the disadvantaged areas of the USA and became popular worldwide. This workshop was even more social by focusing on the "social" exercises done in groups and with pairs. The trainer was professional and empathic. I learned new games and exercises which I can implement in the future. ” - Filep Marica, Hungary

### Dice Game

*Main topic: Privilege -but it should not be clear to participants  
Facilitator: Oscar Coppieters - Belgium*

This non-formal method is about communication, rules, how to set parameters for who can participate, role/position of sports coaches in reaching/including people from disadvantaged backgrounds (which is the focus of E+). This activity is a learning by doing activity and it's important

because the experience becomes something that you can take with you. This happens with activities that integrate sports and through them you can do all kinds of learning. This kind of learning appeals to youth that do not conform to schools or work, but love playing.

“ It was frustrating at some point when the rules changed. You realise that you need to communicate and you need to help people. It was eye-opening how helpful people may become in a game that can be competitive too. For example at some point I was a winner and at the other time I had no chips and other players gave me chips ” Elvira Uustalu, Estonia

## Inclusive Circus Arts: An approach to create accessibility to modern circus techniques and its benefits

*Main topic: A facilitation of the learning process in circus and other motor skills.*

*Facilitator: Peter Huhndorf, Germany*

Circus skills are a form of art that have been bringing people together and spreading joy for thousands of years. By facilitating these practices through concepts and methods of



Inclusive Circus Arts the accessibility is increased. This gives people across all capabilities an easy opportunity to express themselves in a movement-based art. Additionally they can profit from the health benefits (improvements in memory, attention, coordination, balance, range of motion,...)

To me this approach is a great ever evolving help to learning and spreading a beautiful, healthy art I love. It is easy to learn and to spread. It connects people and has a great potential to be applied into other activities, sports, movements, teaching or forms of therapy. The workshop was hands-on practicing juggling techniques from the most simple one to more complicated. In the end the participants reflected on the task and conclude that through juggling: People can profit ,People with (physical and mental) disabilities or in rehabilitation after injuries can profit a lot, Help in Concentration, Help with stress relief and Cognitive functioning

“

“I learned how to enjoy juggling while learning , how to enjoy trying and it was like meditation.

From frustration now I am calm. It is amazing that I remembered that you can enjoy and learn at the same time.” Laura... France



## Let's sport play music and music play sport!

*Main topic: How to combine music and sport in inclusive projects*

*Facilitator: Kama Kępczyńska/POLAND*

The activity can open our eyes on what sport really is. If we hear sport we see the specific discipline (skiing, football, basketball etc.). What happens is that we start thinking about skills, equipment, partners needed. Also important is the perception of sport as a wider concept.

It is simply taking up any physical activity that can be performed anywhere by anyone irrespective of the skills and equipment needed. Combining sport and music is an innovative concept which can lead to social integration on numerous levels.

“

“I would recommend this workshop for anyone, but maybe especially for people who are reserved about how to start, because it's very easy to sit back and not do anything, but with workshops like this, you cannot sit back, you have to get involved, there's no avoiding places. Some people say they want to stand up and sing and you know that's not an easy thing to do. But once you get people out of their comfort zone I think that the definition of learning really develops.” Brian O Neill - Ireland

## Play to succeed

*Main topic: cooperative and work-team games,  
Facilitator: Arora Sancho Guirao - Barcelona, Spain*

Main goal of the activity:

To understand the importance to work in group in order to gain confidence in one-self and the others, and feel part of a group, trusting, relying and taking care of each other.



Learning objectives:

To differentiate between cooperative, collaborative and team games.

To visualise the approach of each game played.

To feel by practicing the emotions and difficulties risen through the games.

To begin to acknowledge the own strengths and weaknesses.

To be able to reduce the pick of energy and excitement through relaxation at the end.

To identify emotions and how oneself feel at the end of the activity.

The elements that make this sport activity social sports is because everybody is included to participate and it is adapted to involve everyone. It is also social because communication between participants is needed in order to complete and reach the goal. The group is seen like a micro society; the group is diverse but seen in equal terms. While playing, sometimes conflicts appear, but we see conflicts as an educational tool to learn about diversity, respect, adaptation, empathy, between others. During the games, if needed, we give time to talk, to understand each other points of view, to find ways to keep trying, and, of course, to enjoy and heal.

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# Sport and formal education

## **FORMAL EDUCATION DEFINITION**

UNESCO defines an education programme as a coherent set or sequence of educational activities or communication designed and organised to achieve pre-determined learning objectives or accomplish a specific set of educational tasks over a sustained period. Objectives encompass improving knowledge, skills and competencies within any personal, civic, social and/or employment-related context. Learning objectives are typically linked to the purpose of preparing for more advanced studies and/or for an occupation, trade, or class of occupations or trades but may be related to personal development or leisure. A common characteristic of an education programme is that, upon fulfilment of learning objectives or educational tasks, successful completion is certified. The key concepts in the above formulation are from: UNESCO Institute for Statistics (2012): International Standard Classification of Education 2011, Montreal.

## **INFORMAL EDUCATION DEFINITION**

Informal learning, from the learner's standpoint at least, is non-purposive learning, which takes place in everyday life contexts in the family, at work, during leisure and in the community. It does have outcomes, but these are seldom recorded, virtually never certified and are typically neither immediately visible for the learner nor do they count in themselves for education, training or employment purposes. APEL systems are one way in which the outcomes of such learning can be made more visible and hence open to greater recognition. (Ref: Chisholm, L. (2005): Bridges for Recognition Cheat Sheet: Proceedings of the SALTO Bridges for Recognition: Promoting Recognition of Youth Work across Europe, Leuven-Louvain.)

## **NON-FORMAL EDUCATION DEFINITION**

Non-formal education is any educational action that takes place outside of the formal education system. Non-formal education is an integral part of a lifelong learning concept that ensures that young people and adults acquire and maintain the skills, abilities and dispositions needed to adapt to a continuously changing environment. It can be acquired on the personal initiative of each individual through different learning activities taking place outside the formal educational system. An important part of non-formal education is carried out by non-governmental organisations involved in community and youth work. The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe has passed a resolution and a recommendation on "Young Europeans: an urgent educational challenge" promoting enhancement of traditional forms of education settings, recognition and support of non-formal and informal learning settings. REF: Parliamentary Assembly (1999): Report of the Committee on Culture and Education, Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, document 8595: Non-formal education; Parliamentary Assembly, Resolution 1930 and Recommendation 2014 (2013): Young Europeans: an urgent educational challenge.

Every generation has different types of needs and formal education might not be suitable for everyone. P.E. is too strict in some countries/schools, while sport should be a safe and creative way for children to create. Other subjects could be easily connected with sport, so we could use sport as a vehicle for children to learn about different subjects in a fun way. For example in Norway, according to a local NGO, "funding sport initiatives are very important as social non-formal formats of sports help kids to make friends and enjoy learning which contribute to their stay in formal education." As another example, for some young people in Jordan, the formal education system isn't attractive, so NGOs have worked together with schools to improve their educational approach, and used sport as a tool to develop soft skills alongside the academic learning. When they give children and youth such learning opportunities, they create safe zones for them and for their learning, while they can also help them to reflect by using sport.

Educators working in the world of sport are often trained as sport coaches. As such, they are experienced in playing and organising sport activities. However, traditional sport organisations and clubs are "made up largely of youngsters with a talent for sport, whose families actively support their participation and who have the financial means to pay for it."<sup>3</sup> One consequence is that the sport coaches and the sport organisations usually have little or no experience in dealing with young people with fewer opportunities (with mobility issues, any form of disability, poor family, no motivation for sport, etc.)" because the focus is on achievement and winning and those with disability, or lack of ability to participate fully (money, motivation, no means of travel etc) can't commit to training in the same way. "As much as they are experts in physical development, it happens that they might lack the theoretical knowledge or general competences for working with this target group of youngsters.

On the other hand, most youth workers work with young people with fewer opportunities on a regular basis. They are mostly trained to recognise the social needs of individuals and to propose methods which directly respond to those needs."<sup>4</sup> However, youth workers are usually not experts nor practitioners in sport methodology. They might have some experience in "traditional activities like football, basketball or excursions to the swimming pool to supplement their programme, they are generally not trained to steer the learning processes which come out of sport activities."<sup>5</sup> It happens that youth workers are not sport enthusiasts and they are not familiar with different sport options for young people, regardless of their background or abilities. They might not have the equipment, facilities or the support from the local community to initiate sport activities."

The International School Sport Federation, <https://www.isfsports.org/isf-education-values> has an intermediate approach to formal and non-formal education through sport, as they are organising their activities within the school system but use a lot of non-formal methods. The publication 'Volunteering through school sport' <https://www.isfsports.org/isf-education-values> highlight the values they bring into the lives of youth through connecting formal and non-formal education through sport.

***Both the sport and youth sectors are looking to expand their area of work, to innovate it and include more, so this long term initiative of bridging could be the beautiful beginning of connecting these fields together to create more for more young people.***

# Why social sports are important

## THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL SPORTS ON INDIVIDUALS AND ON THE COMMUNITY

In the social sphere, organisations and sport clubs are using sport and sport activities in two main directions: to support the personal development of participants and to address issues of interest for the wider community. In this sense, sport is used as a tool for a defined objective, meaning that the potential and characteristics of sport are used to achieve something different from the goals of sport itself.

When it comes to supporting the personal development of young people and other participants, the use of sport is seen as effective for strengthening various personal competences, referred to as values, attitudes, soft skills, social skills, life skills etc. Examples include empathy, fairness, self-efficacy, teamwork and establishing relationships. Often, the use of social sport is seen in a wide sense, as supporting overall personal development and empowerment of competences. There are also references in academic research to learning about health and improving physical and mental health of individuals.

The use of sport for addressing social issues is also multifaceted. Most often, sport is used as a tool for inclusion of different social groups, particularly ones that are disadvantaged or with fewer opportunities. Examples include individuals, including young people, with physical disabilities, refugees, school dropouts, women, migrants, and minorities. Sports can support a sense of purpose, direction, and belonging for disadvantaged young people and their families. The sense of community created with teammates, coaches, and other participants can lead to higher levels of social support and a stronger sense of community.

Based on the answers of European NGOs, impact can be divided between individual and community purposes of social sports. When used to support the personal development of individual participants, sport can be applied for empowering young people, helping them with goal-setting, helping them find a purpose and meaning, supporting them to find jobs etc. Sport also has a role in helping young people grow as members of the society, learn how to take social responsibilities, and be active in democratic life.

On a community level, sport can serve a wide variety of purposes: to raise awareness about social topics, support peace, provide new approaches to conducting participative consultative processes, inclusion, social transformation, raising awareness about environment and climate change, support dialogue, fight against prejudices and as a prevention.

But, "sports can also have a negative impact. It can lead to social excursion, it can lead to social hierarchy, if it's not supported by coaches and leaders in the right way, that's why it's very important that we aren't just enthusiastic about sports, but we are also very critical - are we implementing it in the right way." (Peter Ottens)

"A tip that I have for someone that wants to create change through sports in their communities is - invest in yourself. Because sometimes we are so passionate about a target group, that we want to invest in those kids. But unfortunately, there are so many people who are at risk, but there is a lack of role models, there is a lack of coaches, there is a lack of people who want to take initiative. So invest in yourself and in your knowledge. We need to connect our heart and our head together to have a huge impact." (Peter Ottens)

In conclusion, participating in social sports can provide numerous social benefits.

By offering opportunities for social interaction and networking, building stronger relationships and friendships, developing competences and soft skills and fostering a sense of community and belonging, ***social sport can lead to a sustainable social change if we are using it in the right way.***



## HOW TO MEASURE THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL SPORT

1: First of all consider, what is the best tool to measure the change. Some examples can be:

- subjected test (survey on feelings, experiences)**
- questionnaire**
- impact assessment on knowledge, attitude, skills with pre and post assessment**
- interview**
- focus group**
- etc**

### **Some tips about community impact:**

2: Use the same tool before the project, during the project and after the project.

3: To see how the change is happening, include observation of the community in your project's monitoring strategy.

4: The change that you will see in the answers before the project and after the project (or notes of observation) will show the impact that your project had.

In conclusion there are many elements that work together for the development of an individual, it might not be the social sports activity in itself that changes the person. But contributing to change is still valuable/valid. Participating in social sports always adds something to the person, and growing is continual in the process, but impact and change on an individual can take years to manifest and turn into behavioral/attitude/value change. So if you put the seeds in the heads of youngsters, the impact might not be visible in the evaluation form but years later the fruit can be harvested.

One good resource to use is the Dutch National Agency's impact tool. It explains about impact and gives tricks on how to create long lasting impact through your project and the factors that determine its success. [https://www.erasmusplus.nl/en/impacttool-mobility\\_](https://www.erasmusplus.nl/en/impacttool-mobility_)

### **How to recognise the value of using social sport as a tool? Some suggestions from European organisations:**

- create an assessment (like youthpass )
- story telling - communicate - be visible
- earn credibility
- do research
- share good practices

There is not much research yet about the social value of sport (although this Australian [KPMG report from 2020](#) is one good example). Having a tool for the youth field to use to recognise the value of using social sport as a tool would be very useful, so this could be a field to be further explored and to create a common recognition method.

- Which areas to measure?
- Which competences are specific to this field?
- How does it link to existing impact measurements in Europe?

# Examples of Impact

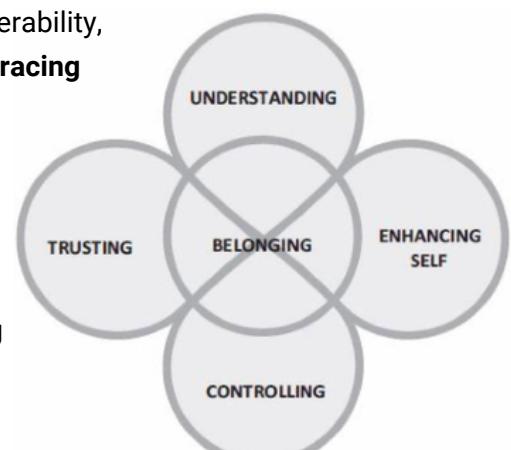
## THE IMPORTANCE OF LEADERSHIP IN SOCIAL SPORTS

A boy who had a difficult childhood, including his mother's death and his father's alcoholism, thanked a 19-year-old intern coach for changing his life. The coach was touched by the boy's emotional response and realized that all he needed was a role model who shows emotions and he can look up to. They missed the closing ceremony of the event they attended, but it was the most beautiful moment they had. 20 kids were crying, the boy held the coach for 50 minutes, and for the first time in a year, his tears came from his mom passing away. "Showing our vulnerability takes a lot of courage for us. So vulnerability is what we need in leadership because for us at least these kids we work with and many more people in order to create safety they need leaders who showed their vulnerability and sport is a great environment to create that space because at the end of the day what this leads to is creating the next leaders of the future. And in order to create leaders of the future we need to show our leadership." The intern coach now studying to become an elementary teacher and started a basketball team for the elementary school. This example of leadership demonstrates the importance of showing emotional support and empathy for the next generation.

Such impacts create **belongings**, and 'The five core social motives' by Fiske demonstrate this very well. These motives are not unique to humans, as they all seek belonging in a safe place.

Addressing these issues requires investing in leadership and allowing vulnerability, as it encourages others to share their experiences and challenges. **By embracing these core social motives, organizations can create a more inclusive and supportive environment for their target groups.**

Peter Ottens' target group struggled to find belonging due to lack of role models and trust in school. In order to create belonging, they aim to be an alternative to street culture by investing in leadership and allowing vulnerability. **Showing courage and openness to insecurity and hardships encourages others to do the same too.**



Peter Ottens, title .... [Link for his organisation](#)



# Examples of Impact

## A GIRL'S STORY OF HER PARENTS' ARREST FOR DRUG SMUGGLING AND HER EXPERIENCE OF SEXUAL ABUSE.

She felt for a long time that sharing her whole story would only worsen her situation so she kept being quiet, but she started to open up and share her story to Peter Ottens. "At some point I asked her what made her want to give her story to me? And she said: coach, you are the first person, (and I've seen over 50 of youth care professionals,) who is not interested in me but who is curious about me." Because she said that all those other people just opened their laptop, they wrote while she was speaking, they were not actually listening, they never showed who they are themselves but she had to give everything to them. **"You showed me your personal and emotional side and that creates trust. And that makes me want to be here. I found my belonging here."**

He knew it was important to further help her so he took her to a hospital where they had a department where they examine and consult girls who went through sexual abuse. They went into a room with four female doctors and the head doctor asked if the basketball coach was there for the right reasons. They asked the coach to step out, but after one minute the doctor called Peter back and revealed that the girl didn't want to talk without his presence.

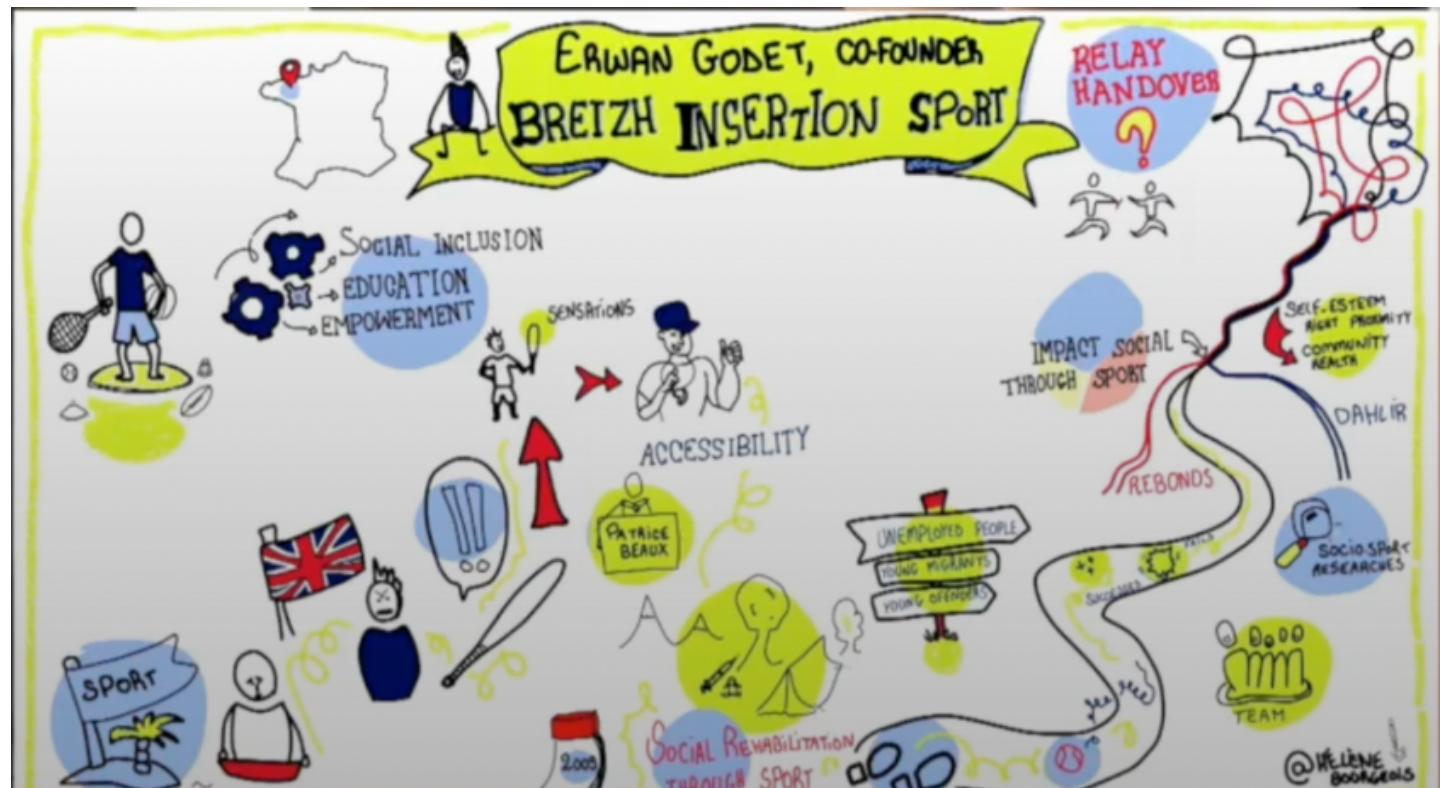
**This story highlights the true power of sports in empowering individuals at high risk of exclusion, without the professional mask of youth care or psychology.** " And that's why sports is such an important, essential and beautiful tool we can use to help a lot of people, (a lot of people at risk). But we need to treat it very carefully. **Just because we are passionate doesn't make it work. We need to connect our emotions and our feelings and our passion, our heart, connect it with our brain and use sports in the right way.** And if we can do that, if we can start today by being curious about one another, and touch the true purpose of the 'Yousports Kick-Off event'- because there's so much potential here at the event, that we have to unlock it with each other by being curious and by leading with vulnerability." (Peter Ottens)



## Examples of Impact

## **ERWAN GODET THE ESTABLISHMENT OF BREIZH INSERTION SPORT**

At 14 years old, Erwan was in England during a school trip and started to be interested in sports (he didn't practice any sport before). He was walking with a friend on the first evening in England and they were attacked by a couple of teenagers who demanded, "Hey, give us your money. " They ran as fast as they could. The day after he decided to buy a baseball bat for defense, although nothing happened with this baseball bat for a while. But when he went back to France, he decided to create a baseball club, the Black Panthers. This experience and learning baseball on his own allowed him to learn different techniques and gestures, which he later used in his career. After studying philosophy for five years, Erwan decided to pursue a career in baseball and sports. He practiced as a coach for adults, teenagers, and kids, but felt that sport in itself was not enough for him. He later partnered with Patrice Beau, a sport ministry professional, who believes in using sports for various opportunities and high performance levels. From not-practicing sports at all until the age of 14, now as a baseball coach he coached the French national team under-15s and they participated four times in the European championships. After this, with Pat Riesbaud, they decided to create an association: the 'Breizh Insertion Sport'. This is an association which uses sports and various activities to empower people through sport. They have anecdotes of trips with homeless people, where one girl, addicted to heroin, found solace in sports and a new life. The association now has 23 workers, including sports educators, working with various individuals, aiming to create a more inclusive and accessible sport experience for all.



# Needs of organisations

## 1. WHAT ARE THE OBSTACLES AND CHALLENGES OF USING SPORTS FOR SOCIAL CHANGE?

(THIS INFORMATION WAS COLLECTED BASED ON A MAPPING EXERCISE WITHIN YOUSPORTS SNAC FROM THE NATIONAL AGENCIES OF AUSTRIA, BELGIUM (FLANDERS), FINLAND, FRANCE, GERMANY, ITALY AND TÜRKIYE)

Organisations are most often prevented from using sport for social change due to a lack of resources. Resources here are used in a wide sense, encompassing everything from lack of finances, through lack of time, to lack of staff and needed competences.

**Financial challenges** seem to be the greatest obstacle to social sport. Almost all mapped countries listed funding as the main challenge, and most of them underlined the **lack of long-term grants**. A result of that is that there is often funding just for project activities and not for staff, and even then the funds are mostly for short-term projects that are not sustainable and don't have a long-lasting impact.

Connected to and often resulting from the lack of finances is the **lack of staff, facilities and equipment**. Many organisations don't have enough staff that can implement social sport activities, or the staff does not have enough time to focus on that. In few of the countries it was pointed out that sport organisations are mainly based on volunteer work, which also poses a challenge to working on social sports. And some communities in low-income areas may not have access to adequate sport facilities altogether, which makes it even more difficult for organisations and clubs to implement programs effectively.

**Lack of competences and expertise** can be mapped as a separate challenge. In three of the mapped countries there is a lack of awareness and competencies in organisations and their staff to use social sport. As social sport activities require specialized knowledge and experience, particularly if done with marginalized groups, organisations that lack them struggle. Other areas in which training and competence development are needed are intercultural learning and working with individuals with disabilities.

Some of the mapped challenges are connected to **the wider society**. Hence, lack of widespread sport culture, lack of understanding about the value of social sport, cultural barriers for some social groups, and the lack of interest from the target audience have all been mentioned as obstacles. Some of the challenges have to do with the nature of social sport itself, as it is seen as not suitable or attractive enough for all target groups. As pointed out by the Belgium (Flanders) NA, different cultures may have different attitudes towards sports,



and some cultures may have specific beliefs or practices that conflict with the use of sports as a tool for social change. Few of the mapped countries reported challenges with finding target groups.

Similarly, young people are prevented from participating in social sport activities due to challenges connected to lack of resources. Resources are again used in a wider sense, and include lack of financial means, but also lack of time, lack of access to adequate facilities, and limited accessibility. In few of the national papers it was pointed out that young people are overloaded with school requirements and other responsibilities and often don't have enough free time to attend sport activities. Meanwhile, it was also mentioned that nowadays there are many options to fill in one's free time, particularly given the digital offer, and young people often don't find the motivation to join social sport activities. Some groups of young people, particularly those with fewer opportunities, face additional challenges due to other issues in their life.

### Other challenges included:

- Lack of cooperation within the field
- Lack of awareness and understanding of the possibility for social change through sport
- Lack of support from institutions
- Much higher emphasis on competitive sport and having to fight with organised sport that has much more money
- Lack of recognition of 'social sport', on one hand explicitly by the sport policy domain, as well as by 'youth policy domain', and of course by the public discourse.



NATIONAL NEEDS FROM  
KICK OFF PARTICIPANTS

Build networks

Create clusters of countries that work together - clusters at loca/regional level

Organised sport - connect to adults /coaches (not just youth work)

Share practise - peer sharing /learning on national level

Work on projects/campaigns together

Create clusters of clubs that can work together - national level

- share practise
- receive info from instructions
- opportunities - training, etc
- funding
- new methods

Bring community to collaborate with sports clubs

For activities

- study visit opportunities
- get participants for international activities
- find partners for projects

Covid reduced numbers - how to increase?

Partners searching - tool

Partner finding online - Markus from Estonia

Interdisciplinary connections

- eg. rugby + yoga
- find out about other types of sport

Database for volunteers

NATIONAL NEEDS FROM  
KICK OFF PARTICIPANTS

Support grass roots

Preventing big/ professional orgs taking money and opportunities - if we reach out too much, could take funding away from youth field

More please - Infrastructure

Create tools to organise projects in more effective way

Develop capacity of existing org working on social sport

- build partnership to increase the impact
- training and ups killing of coaches/trainers (to be better at social sports, social sports methods)
- training of young leaders
- value-based (inclusion etc) - competence development of sports/youth leaders

Cross sectorial links

Policy makers

- to show what is done here /elsewhere
- link event to policy level

Formal education - PE /sport teachers

Social work

Youth work

Municipalities

Private sector

SNAC to connect to national/local gov. structures

- sport
- youth

PNational /gov systems

- use programmes to support municipalities + other

Recognition of social sports

Many see 'sport' and not the education/impact behind

Many don't understand what is being done

Political recognition - different levels

Provide workshops on social sports methods + activities in other activities

- sport
- youth

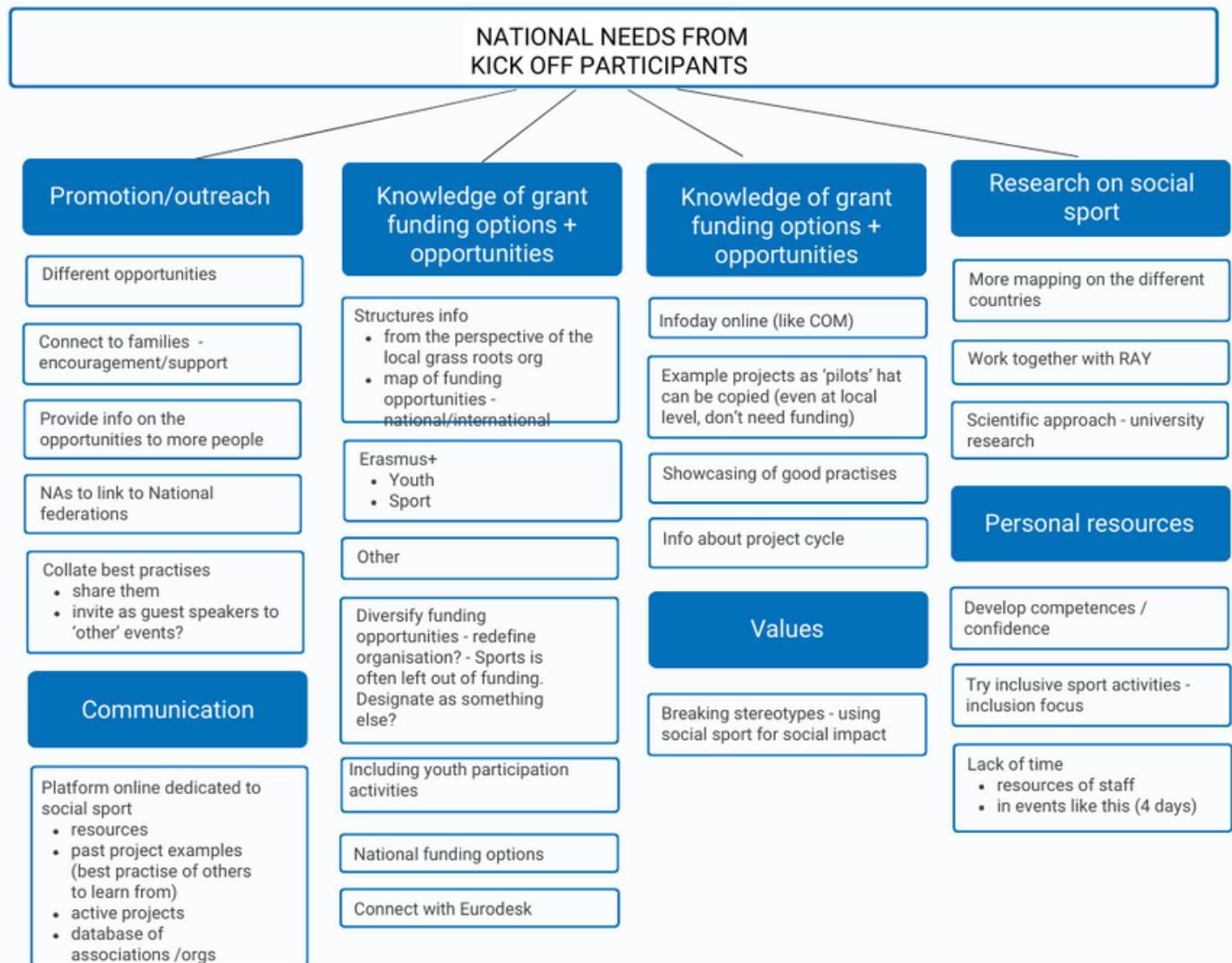
Promote and disseminate impact of social sports to many different people

Connect to the formal sector to have qualified workers

Proving impact (not just numbers)

Recognition of social sports

- explain it to others
- be able to get local funding
- European/national level (similarities/differences)
- European context - national context
- helporgs find themselves in the bigger picture
- connection to other opportunities (Sport4All, Weel of Sport etc.) - don't add extra initiatives!
- meaningful framework
- advocacy at local level
- use definition of social sports for connection to other peers
- integrate in already doing



# What can you do in your own context?

During the Kick-Off event, participants discussed the possibilities of what they could do in their own context to support: sport and inclusion, sport and diversity, sport and competence development and sport and the wider community.

## Sport and inclusion

- Offer materials + transportation so that kids can do sports (rural areas)
- Include those participants with other social groups participants trying to have a common language / interests / sport (capacity building through sport)
- Give free classes / offer fee reduction (money issue)
- Being flexible / adaptable to try to include all people
- Sharing emotions to check how people feel when included in a group / into society
- It's important to listen to the real issues of people with social / economical disadvantages

## Sport and diversity

- Give possibilities to all ages, all levels, schools
- Marketing

## Sport and competence development

- Playful learning, organising events, sharing information, tradition sharing, practical learning, coaches training, learning myself and sharing on media and writing articles
- 3 competences- emotional, social and cognitive- working on them
- Contribute through facilitating projects , international projects
- Skill training hidden with fun and reflecting
- Emotion control and attitude
- Observation and adapting
- Impact measurement and sport is one of the keys and one of the levels
- Repetition and involving parents
- Collaboration with schools
- Mental health skills- how to help youngsters and yourself. Self- awareness through emotions. Choices and decisions of youngsters, we need to understand them.
- Be your own coach - Be brave

# What can you do in your own context?

## Sport and wider community

- ✓ **Ireland: Discounted rates for the local community. No taxation of sports clubs. Can make your own money. Have charitable organisations who support youth projects/youth clubs/schools**
- ✓ **Estonia: The clubs have the power to build the community. You also have the responsibility to do something to the community. Do charity, organise cheap classes**
- ✓ **Turkiye - The government support individuals, groups and sports clubs - the government wants all activities to be free, so they support**
- ✓ **Italy - nothing is for free. It's difficult to create a community. Everyone wants to have a champion "at home", it's not about the community, but about the individual's possibility of becoming a champion. You change the club for your kid to enhance its chance**
- ✓ **We come from different countries and have very different work conditions.**



# YouSports Strategic Project first research

For the YouSports SNAC, there was a need to understand the target audience and their needs.

A mapping exercise was carried out to get a picture of the current reality.

This next chapter summarizes the main findings coming from the mapping process conducted on a national level as part of the YouSports SNAC project.

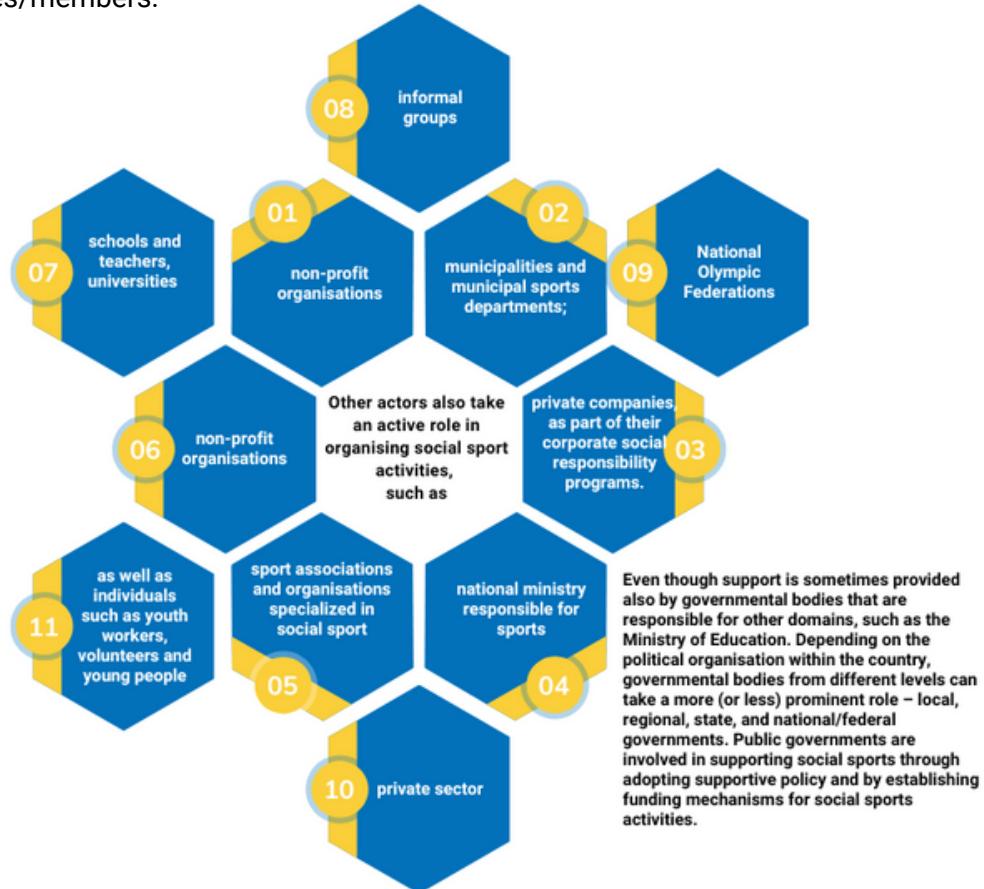
The mapping results are based on national level mapping conducted in Austria, Belgium (Flanders), Finland, France, Germany, Italy and Türkiye, as their National Agencies are members of the YouSports Strategic project

## How is social sport organised and supported?

The first research showed that various actors are involved in implementation of activities that can be considered as social sport.

There seem to be **two major stakeholders** that have an active role in implementing social sport activities:

- **sport clubs**, both professional and non-professional (amateur), for whom social sport is not the primary purpose;
- **sport federations**, such as national Olympic Committees, state and national multi-sport and their local and regional branches/members.



## How is social sport funded?

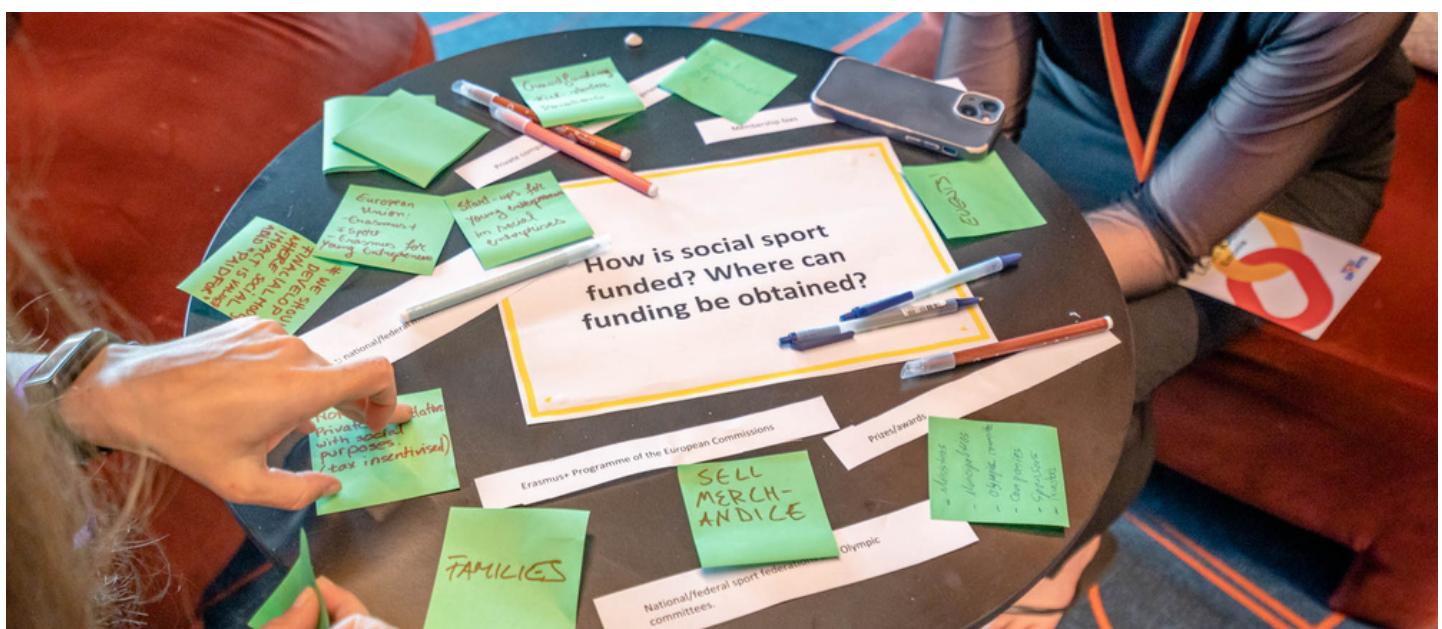
Main financial support for social sports comes from the public government based on the outcomes of the mapping.

National/federal ministries, regional and local governments have open calls for funding projects, but they also provide other kinds of support, such as providing facilities that can be used free of charge. In Belgium, the government provides grants to various sports organisations and clubs that promote social inclusion and offer opportunities for disadvantaged individuals or groups to participate in sports. In Austria, social sports are funded through programs such as:

<https://www.bmkoes.gv.at/sport/sportfoerderungen/calls.html>



These alternative sources are particularly important where public funding is not available. And even if public funding exists, other sources are important as they provide a combination of funds.



**Case study:** "Sport e Salute" S.p.A., is the Italian State Company and the Government's operational structure for the promotion of sport and healthy lifestyles also in charge of distributing public grants to sports organisations. Its main purpose is of coordinating a series of activities aimed at promoting grassroots sport, correct lifestyles, increasing sports practice and enhancing the role of the territory, schools, volunteers, federations, associations and amateur sports clubs. The new Social Sport Plan 2023, in cooperation with the Department of Sport, provides 15.7 million in funding for SSDs, ASDs and Third Sector entities. The submission of applications started in February. In detail, there are four projects: Inclusion (2.4 million), Neighbourhoods (3.7 million), Sport in Parks (3.3 million) and, for the first time, Prisons (3 million). It is estimated that a total of 12,000 sports associations and potentially more than one million citizens will be involved.

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## Social sport and European Union Programmes

From the mapping exercise it seems that there is a **strong connection between (social) sport and the Erasmus+ Programme**. Erasmus+ and European Solidarity Corps have been named as some of the most important funding sources of social sport activities. Cumulatively, there have been about 200 projects granted to sport organisations from the eight mapped countries in the period between 2018 and 2022. In addition, about 330 youth projects within the two programmes had “sports” in the title or the short description.

Some of the National Agencies also reported other forms of cooperation with the (social) sport sector. This generally took the form of keeping a regular communication and exchange with the sport federations and the ministries of sport, organising information and other events, and taking part in social sport events, such as the Special Olympic World Games in Berlin. The European Week of Sport has also been mentioned a few times as a point for collaboration.

### Project Formats

(different types of social sports projects that can be grant funded through Erasmus+ and the European Solidarity Corps)

### Erasmus+ Youth and Sports grants

- Professional development of youth leaders. Improve skills and competences through training, seminars, study visits, networking, community building. Project duration 3-24 months. Called KA1 Youth Workers mobility
- Group exchanges for young people to be together, discussions, activities, workshops around a chosen topic. 5-21 days. Age 13-30, plus youth leaders age 18+. Called KA1 Youth Exchanges.
- Group dialogue and discussion to make change on the local level – civic action and youth activism in parallel with other youth groups making a change in their community in other countries. Age 13-30. Duration 3-24 months. Called KA1 Youth Participation projects.
- Virtual exchanges – no physical mobility, online intercultural discussions and interaction with other young people. Duration 36 months. Called KA1 Virtual Exchanges in Higher Education and youth.
- Capacity building, policy dialogue, international collaboration projects. Duration: 12, 24, 36 months. Called KA2 Capacity building in Youth.

- Job shadowing/observation for leaders (called Key Action 1, Sports)
- Coaching / training assignments for leaders (Key Action 1 Sports)
- Small scale partnerships strategic / capacity building (Key Action 2 Sports). Some examples of these that were funded in 2022 include: Examples of funded 2022 small scale partnerships: Differentiated Engaging Volleyball , Teenage girls & sport activities, Inclusion of disabled people through basketball, Inclusion and Empowerment of Women in Canoe Sport Disciplines

## **European Solidarity Corps**

*The European Solidarity Corps helps young people take part in projects that benefit communities, either abroad or in their own country. These projects offer an inspiring and empowering experience, as well as the chance to bring change while developing skills and competences.*

- Volunteering: Short term / long term (from 3 days to 1 year). As an individual, or as a team/group. Internationally or in-country. Here are some examples of individual volunteering with a sports theme.
- Local (ESC solidarity projects / E+ participation activities\*). Click here for some examples of sport related solidarity projects.

## **Other international opportunities**

Try searching 'sports' on these other databases : <https://eurodesk.eu/useful-links/opportunity-databases/>



“The YouSport Kick-Off event was a success because by organising this event we had a common goal, a goal to explore the potential of sport as a catalyst for change and I can truly say that we have exceeded our expectations. The outcomes of this event really show that sports have a real impact on people and communities.”

**MATHIEU ROUMÉGOU, DIRECTOR OF  
THE FRENCH NATIONAL AGENCY FOR YOUTH  
AND SPORT - AGENCE DU SERVICE CIVIQUE**



# Background paper for the YouSports Kick-Off Event

As part of the preparation for the Kick Off event, we invited an expert in the field to put together some background on the concept of using sport as a tool.

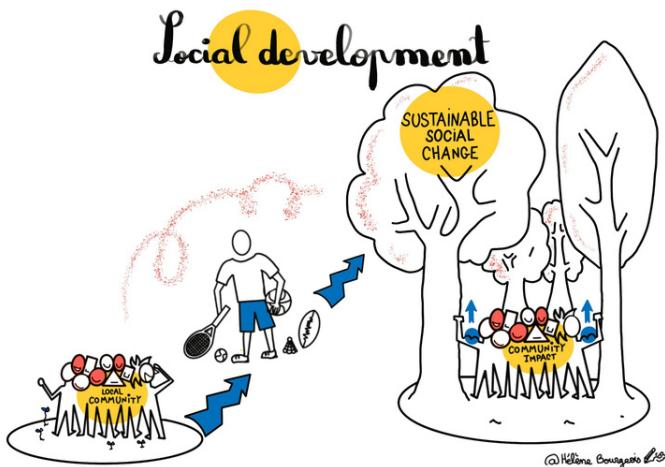
## An introduction to Social Education through Sports

by László Földi, human rights / democratic citizenship / education through sport expert

### The naming of the phenomenon

We all agree that sport can potentially be much more than physical exercise, playing, competing and performing. Sport can have unplanned or planned added value, and impact on the personal development of the individuals as well as on the community. We know that this impact can be very negative on people and the society (discrimination, doping, match-fixing, extreme radicalisation, violence etc.), or it can contribute to the positive development of people and communities (equality, peace, fair-play, inclusion, democratic citizenship and human rights).

**Social sports** is about building the relationships from player to player rather than the achievement of winning a game. In social sports there are social benefits for the participants such as: socialisation, building friendships, overcoming social challenges, building personal networks etc. Social Sport is used for social development. The expression is mainly used in Australia.



**Sport for social development** is a method of bringing about social change through the use of sports. In the United States this is commonly referred to as sports-based youth development. Sport refers to the physical activity and development in any individual, health, social and economic benefits. Sport is used as a tool for peace and development. The expression is mostly used in the US.

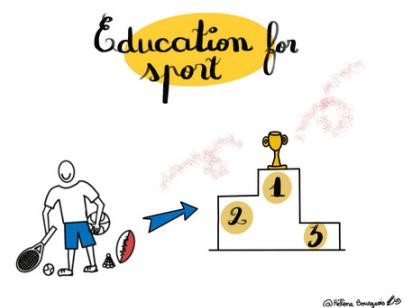
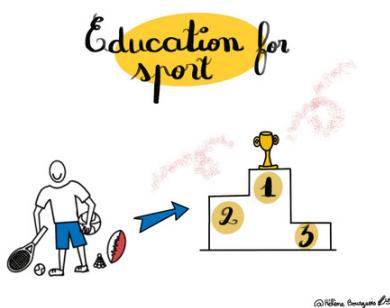
**Education through sport** is a **non-formal educational approach** that works with sport and physical activities and which refers to the development of key competences of individuals and groups in order to contribute to personal development and sustainable social transformation. The expression is used by **UNESCO** and in the European Union, especially since the European Year of Education through Sport in 2004. It was launched to promote a better use of sport as an educational and **social inclusive tool**. It was further developed by the European Sport and Culture Association ([Move and Learn Manual, 2023](#)). (It was first mentioned in [1940](#) in [University of Chicago Journal](#) in the context of the history of the development of physical education.)

### **Education for/by/through sport**

**Education For Sport** addresses the improvement of skills related to successful sport (winning competitions and/or accolades and beating records). The purpose of sport in this context is, therefore, to serve the development of individual and collective competencies, to improve physical performance related to sporting activities.

**Education By Sport** focuses on the implicit benefits and social values of sport. In this approach, the aim is to reconcile sporting goals and societal well-being. Sport, as a collective exercise and physical activity, within this approach works towards improving well-being, identity, solidarity and social inclusion. Most grassroots sport communities have significant educational impacts at both individual and community levels.

The **Education Through Sport (ETS)** is a non-formal educational approach that works with sport and physical activity towards the development of the social key competencies of individuals and groups, in order to contribute to transferable personal development and sustainable social transformation (from sport to other real-life situations).



The 7th Article of the **Revised Sports Charter of the Council of Europe** ([Recommendation adopted by the Committee of Ministers in 2021](#)) also refers to **Education in values through sports ethics**. "Sports ethics" is a positive concept that guides human behaviour. It is defined as a way of thinking and not just a way of acting. It underpins sports integrity, equality, honesty, excellence, commitment, courage, team spirit, respect for rules and laws, respect for the environment, respect for self and others and a spirit of community, tolerance and solidarity. It also includes respect for human rights and sustainability. Sports ethics shall be promoted in all activities in sport, via relevant policies and programmes. Appropriate steps shall be taken to raise awareness of sports ethics and to provide continued learning opportunities in this sphere. Being trained about how to choose the ethical course of action inside and outside sport is an integral part of the competences that should be acquired through sport. Practising values-based sport can empower people and teach fairness, teamwork, equality, discipline, inclusion, respect and integrity.

The [EU White Paper on Sport \(2007\)](#) also refers to the social and educational role of sport. Through its role in formal and non-formal education, sport reinforces Europe's human capital. The values conveyed through sport help develop knowledge, motivation, skills and readiness for personal effort. Time spent in sport activities at educational establishments produces health and education benefits which need to be enhanced. Based on experience gained during the 2004 European Year of Education through Sport, the Commission encourages support for sport and physical activity through various policy initiatives in the field of education and training, including the development of social and civic competences in accordance with the [2006 Recommendation on key competences](#) for lifelong learning.

One of the guiding objectives of the [EU Work Plan for Sport 2021-24](#) is to Increase participation in sport and health-enhancing physical activity in order to promote an active and environment-friendly lifestyle, social cohesion and active citizenship.

Non-formal education as the link between youth work and sport

Social education through sport (in short: social sport SETS) is a [non-formal educational](#) concept. It consists of the integration and implementation of sport elements to be used for an educational purpose to address a social issue, develop social competences and provoke a lasting social transformation. The whole educational process is planned and prepared, clear, realistic and measurable outcomes are expected after it happens. From a methodological perspective, the approach consists of adapting sport and physical activity exercises to the objectives of the planned learning project.

Aiming for a better understanding of this process, we propose to make the link between SETS and Kolb's experiential learning cycle that we can see in this model (Kolb, David (1984). Experiential learning: Experience as the source of learning and development. Englewood Cliffs). In SETS the concrete experience is the sport (or physical) activity that is adapted to the learning objectives and expected impact of the programme. The participants of the experience reflect together in a guided debriefing process, through which they initiate further competence development and behavioural change. To make it simple: sport and its activities become a creative education tool in the hands of facilitators of the learning.

It is important to differentiate two types of learning through sport. On one hand, participating in sport and its communities includes the inherent development of some competences that come from the specific elements and characteristics of sport: such as cooperation, social responsibility, fair-play, respect, sharing identity, belonging etc. On the other hand, sport and physical activities provide a wide range of potential learning objectives that can be fostered to achieve desired social and citizenship competences. By creating the relevant scenario, context and rules (or by changing the rules of the game) and by preparing the adequate debriefing process, SETS can contribute to the development of any social competence or citizenship skill.

### **The three SETS principles**

1. Education through social sport has education as the core, so personal and community development is more important than the competition.
2. Individual and collective reflection is an essential part of SETS, so discussing what happened during the sport activity is an integral part of the learning
3. SETS respects the values of sports as well as the values of non-formal education and youth work.

### **Current challenges of SETS in Europe:**

1. *There are few universities where it is a subject*
2. *There has not been a mapping of good / inspirational practices*
3. *There are no regular interdisciplinary events of sharing and exchanging practices (between youth work, formal education and grassroot sports)*
4. *There are few publications available on the different pedagogical / youth work methods (compendium, collection of exercises etc.)*

Some further reading: <https://www.throughsport.eu/resources/>

# Social education through sport (SETS)

1 ACTIVITY WITH PLANNED LEARNING OUTCOMES



WHAT IS IT?

3 PERSONAL LEARNING



COMMUNITY IMPACT



BASED ON VALUES  
SPORT  
NON-FORMAL EDUCATION / YOUTH WORK



@Hélène Bourgeois

# YouSports Kick Off Report

12-16 JUNE 2023, ANGLET, FRANCE



