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The final Sport!OP! Conference



Ajuntament de Granollers

The European project Sport!OP! has reached its final stage. After almost three years of activity, the project will hold its final conference in Granollers on December 14, 2022.

The meeting will allow the European partners to share their experiences with organizations and professionals in Granollers who are interested in the challenge of developing different strategies using sport as a vehicle for social inclusion for vulnerable children and young people, especially girls. Thus, the meeting will serve to present the Action Plans which the partners of the project have put into practice with their local communities.

Plans which have served to define a socio-educational proposal that can be reapplied by other entities or in other territories. Furthermore, the Methodological Handbook will be exhibited, a document which aims to bring together the main learning points and recommendations of the coaches and trainers.

These projects are based on the promotion of sport and physical activity, working on the resilience of the participants with the aim of preventing and neutralizing possible situations of social exclusion. Finally, policy recommendations to facilitate decision-making in the projects will





be presented. These recommendations have made the project possible and in the future will do so for all those organizations which would like to launch similar projects.

Additionally, there will be an integral conference: “Inclusion, sport and networking; utopia or reality?” by Milena de Murga, head of the Social Action and the International Department of the ‘Unió de Federacions Esportives de Catalunya (UFEC)’. The conference will look at where synergies can be achieved with other Erasmus+ sport experiences such as the SPRING Project and Sport for the social inclusion of refugees with a gender perspective from the ‘Barça Foundation’ and the ‘Ramassà Sports Association’.

Follow this link to consult the final conference program.

What conclusions have we drawn from our pilot project?



In this third newsletter we will present the conclusions we have drawn from our pilot project and how we will continue our work in the future, based on our experiences.

Our pilot project consisted of break activities at Vikingaskolan in Linero in Lund. The area and target group was chosen because it is a school in an area that RF SISU (The Swedish Sports Confederation and Sport Educators) has defined as a “idrottssvagt area”, meaning an area with low youth attendance in sports. The focus of our activities was to create a positive attitude to physical movement and increase the interest of joining a sport. The Swedish handball federation’s concept “Hand the ball” fitted our purpose perfectly since it focuses on inclusion, creativity and communication rather than on traditional handball practice with focus on competition and results.

We have participated in meetings arranged by RF-SISU where we have met other local sport organisations, e.g., the local soccer club, martial arts club, basketball club and representants from Lund municipality and discussed how we together can give the children in Linero a meaningful leisure time. We have also participated in Linero Street Festival where we had Hand the ball activities.



We will continue with our break activities, but we noticed that the break activities mostly interested the youngest children (7-9 years old) and that it was harder to reach the oldest (10-12 years old). For that reason, we have started an after-school activity once a week in collaboration with the leisure center at the school. This idea came from the teachers at Vikingaskolan who saw this as a way to have a transition activity into starting to play in one of our ordinary teams. However, the purpose with the after-school activity isn't mainly to recruit new players to our existing teams, but to create a positive attitude towards

physical movement in general and a meaningful context in their free time.

We can not stress enough how important it is to have a well-functioning cooperation with the school when doing projects like these. They know the children and has given us many new perspectives on how to reach them. The area has many socio-economical challenges which makes it hard for many of the children to participate in activities that comes with a fee or if the activity is far away from where they live. The school is also the best, and maybe the only, way of getting in contact with the parents who play a vital part in encouraging the children to participate in sports. If the parents understand the importance of physical movement and the benefits from taking part in a sports association, it will lower the threshold for these children to participate.

We have also detected another group of children that are at risk of social exclusion which can be avoided by participating in a sports activity, and that is children with different disabilities. For that reason, we have started a parahandball branch. To introduce handball for this group of children you need to work in a very active and outreaching way. That means visiting schools and working with the municipality in different ways. Our experiences from the Sport!OP!-project have given us so many lessons learned of how we can work efficiently with this.



A Methodological Handbook for social inclusion through sport is released



When is sport really educational and inclusive?
 What values can be promoted through sport?
 What are the educational sports programmes?
 How can they adopt a resiliency-based perspective?

These and other questions have been the core of the **Methodological Handbook** resulting of the joint work in bringing together all the key lessons learned throughout the Sport!Op! project.

With the objective of facilitating decision-making for any organisation aiming at implementing sport-based projects to prevent social exclusion, the above-mentioned Methodological Handbook presents a few guidelines with respect to the crucial aspects for making sport educational and, as a result, an instrument for social inclusion.

To educate in values, we have to act with values

There is broad consensus that physical activity and sport are a valuable support for personal and social development. Moreover, the transmission and development of attitudes and values constitutes one of the ways in which sport can certainly make an impact.



Therefore, the different educational agents involved in sport activities (particularly the technical staff), have a big role to play in ensuring that these attitudes and values are the most desirable ones: respect, self-control, self-esteem, empathy, effort, autonomy, cooperation, etc. Keeping this in mind, it is essential that all of them

Figure 1 How can we adopt a resiliency-based perspective



maintain behaviour consistent and aligned with the educational objectives. In other words, all educational agents have to be consistent with behaviours that can set an example, with a clear understanding that these actions are not occasional gestures, but rather **resilient educational actions** that may activate an environment for social inclusion: Providing opportunities for participation, teaching “Life Skills”, providing caring and support, etc. (Figure 1).

Let’s get practical: The Methodological Handbook

Drawing on the process explained above, the Sport!Op! Project has released a Methodological Handbook for sports bodies to build inclusive, resilient and educational projects through sports activities.

The handbook is presented as a set of explanatory tables that outline the proposals made by the Sport!Op! partners regarding the aspects that they consider important in order to develop resiliency through sports and physical activities.

As a result of different working sessions and pilot projects, many inputs and specific applied examples have been obtained to gain a better understanding on how sport-based activities contribute to young and vulnerable people’s live.

C-Proposals for the design phase and application of the sessions

AREA OF ACTIVITY	SPORT!OP! CONTRIBUTIONS	HOW...	RESILIENT ENVIRONMENTS					
			GOALS	KNOWLEDGE	LIFE SKILLS	CARING	EXPECTATIONS	PARTICIPATION
ACTIVITY'S TYPE, METHODOLOGY AND ORGANIZATION	Providing strategies and resources so that the participants are able to achieve improvements in each person's performance				✓	✓	✓	
	Establishing an atmosphere of trust and harmony in the initiatives to encourage the members of the team to help each other		✓		✓	✓		
TO DESIGN AND APPLY	Knowing themselves and reflecting, with a summary of the most important aspects of the session and their application to situations of everyday life				✓			✓
	Reflecting on what has gone well and badly at the end of training sessions or competitions				✓			✓

Presence of the proposal in the design and organization of the project Linking the proposal with the dimensions of resilience

Figure 2 Methodological handbook recommendations presented as explanatory tables



All these inputs and recommendations are presented in the Methodological Handbook as a set of explanatory tables (Figure 2) that outline the proposals made by the participating institutions regarding the aspects that they consider important in order to develop resiliency through sports and physical activities.

It is important to say that there is no single way to use this handbook, and its contributions are not intended to be a definitive outline of practice or experience. There is still a great deal to learn and explore in the course of the creative task of planning and implementing sport-based interventions.

We wish you a pleasant reading and we strongly encourage you to use the handbook to keep questioning hegemonic approaches to physical education and sport.

The University of Barcelona (UB) team would like to thank all the suggestions and good practices shared by NGO Marathon Sarajevo, LUGI Handball, Hašk-Mladost, Granollers City Council, GO! Atheneum Ieper among other partners of the Sport!Op! project.

The Sport!Op! Methodological handbook is available [here](#)

HAŠK Mladost has finished up their Strategic action plan



For the purpose of the project HAŠK Mladost has formed a Local Sport!OP! working group, which met up a few times during the project span to develop firstly the pilot implementation and after the Strategic action plan.

As was already reported the pilot implementation was done in collaboration with the field hockey club that has offered free hockey classes in primary school Prečko two times a week for the duration of the school year. We are happy to say that the collaboration between the club and the school was successful and that they decided to continue the activities in the new school year as well.

As a result of this pilot action and with the assistance of the Local Sport!OP! working group HAŠK Mladost has created their Strategic action plan which is an





example of the implemented program in Zagreb and can be used as an example for creating similar action plans in other locations and organisations.

It details the type of actions and actors / stakeholders, as well as the resources needed to sustain a local community-based strategy using sport as a vehicle for social inclusion of the most vulnerable and at-risk children and adolescents.

Also it breaks down the strategic goals and objectives of Sport!OP! into specific tasks. It includes the sequence of steps to be taken, or activities that must be performed, for a strategy to succeed at local level.





Granollers City Council and various sports clubs in the city are joining forces to bring sport closer to children in situations of vulnerability



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Granollers City Council has started a pilot test within the Sport!Op! project which involves the sports and social services departments working together with sports organizations and clubs in the city. The aim is to build the resilience and improve social skills of children in vulnerable situations by taking part in sports in an inclusive manner.

To further this objective, an inclusive approach for children between 8 and 12 years old has been adopted by various sports organizations (three football clubs and a skating club). Special emphasis has been put on the participation of girls. About thirty children have taken part and have been able to choose in which club they prefer to play sports. From November 2021 until June 2022, they will have access to sports activities outside school hours twice a week.

This pilot project in Granollers focuses on two aspects: the **support and advice to trainers** and the **support to families and children** participating in the project.

With regard to the **support and advice to the trainers**, it is necessary to facilitate the socio-educational intervention which training staff provide. Consequently, they will be provided with tools to unleash the educational potential of the sports activity. In addition, there will be a need to develop training programs related to social inclusion and education in sport, as was proposed by the city's sports organizations during the 1st Multiplier Sport Event with local stakeholders. Throughout the pilot test process, the trainers will be accompanied by a social educator and a leading sports technician from the project.

As well as the support to carry out an activity that combines sport and education, it is important to know what the training staff need to effectively support their task when working with children. This will enable a teaching/learning educational process promoting values and the acquisition of skills for life.



Finally, The effectiveness of the program will be evaluated by assessing: - if it has widened trainers' knowledge of how to resolve situations of conflict; whether instructors have improved their ability to carry out more inclusive and fair sports activities for all, with a philosophy of zero tolerance to discrimination; whether they have more practical resources to release the educational potential of sport. Last but not least, the usefulness of the project will be analyzed.

Regarding the second aspect of the project, the process of **support for children and families**. We would like to accompany and monitor the participants of the project, encouraging sports participation to develop introspection, self-confidence, motivation and the children's ability to socialize. The aim is to discover what difficulties have been faced throughout the process, what solutions have been adopted and future plans to avoid these difficulties. Likewise, the effectiveness of the program must be evaluated by the recipients of the test.

With the participation of the different groups involved, it should allow us to make recommendations on what the best tools for integration are. Consequently, it will allow us to propose a local strategic action plan to work for this integration in the future.





Go! Atheneum Ieper next steps



Although the Sport!Op!- project is coming to an end, as school we still keep on working on the integration of vulnerable youngsters. In consultation with our stakeholders, we made

a roadmap. The gained knowledge is implemented in this plan. Our school had the advantage of having a lot of accommodations and knowhow. This helped us keeping the costs as low as possible.

Initially, we started to offer some extra sports hours for the de OKAN- class. This class exists of youngster from another origin, that don't master the language and the cultural facets of our society. To let these sports activities run smoothly we used our last year senior sports students to help coordinate and organize. These students did not only organize, they also participated actively after a period of acclimatization, so the main goals (motivation and inclusion) would be pursued. The participation of our pupils was enticing, and it was a positive factor in learning the language and the habits.

The next step was the extension of the intern sports activities to sportif operations outside the school. This was a big step for both the students and the targets. It turned out to be very educational. In this phase we noticed more difficulties in organization. It became harder for the targets to adapt to the cultural values and norms. We could perceive that this was a big step ahead trough social inclusion. The apotheosis of these activities was a teambuilding in cooperation with one of our external partners, Outside Adventure.





The development of inclusion through sport, towards, sport is more than sport by municipality of Grigny



Inclusion means removing physical, cultural, economic and attitudinal barriers that can hinder participation. It is therefore a question of designing activities that exclude no one.

A. Sport as a driver of integration and support towards employment

The implementation of the sports academy and the Pass'sport for the financing of sports licenses contribute to the increase in the number of sports users in the territory. At the same time the number and the professionalization of the supervisors do not follow, there is therefore a gap between the needs and the supply of supervision in the associative sports structures of the territory.

A large number of young people in the area consider sport as a prospect of professional integration, without measuring the reality of this sector of activity and the real job opportunities it offers. Project construction work around sports professions should make it possible to develop concrete integration paths for these young people who practice a sporting activity in which they would like to flourish.

B. Sport as a lever for emancipation and gender equality

The evolution of the place of women in sport, and in French society in general, is a major issue of our time, as shown by the subject of equality between women and men, designated as a major national cause for the current five-year term. The sporting world, a certain vector of humanist values, but also a true mirror of society, does not derogate from the inequalities noted between women and men.

The development of women's practice is an objective that is all the more important since it must enable the emancipation of the greatest number of women.



The increase in female practice depends in part on the appropriation that women can make of the infrastructures at their disposal, as well as their incentive character, and this according to their personal situation and pace of life. Thus, sports equipment with slots adapted to the rhythm of mothers, equipment allowing family practice, family sessions, a parent space when practicing children or atypical childcare would contribute to better access for women in physical and sports practice.

The sports academy and the pass'sport2024 have promoted access to sports activities for girls.

C. Health sports, disabled sports and adapted sports

The practice of physical activity is recognized for its many health benefits, in particular by fighting against pathologies linked to a sedentary lifestyle.

The right to sport and physical activity is a measure of social justice. Its implementation must allow people with disabilities to have identical access to that of able-bodied people, through accessibility to all devices and equipment, including in the practice of physical and sporting activities, in clubs and associations.

The city intends to develop an offer in connection with the sports associations of the territory, taking into account the need for specific support, but also for inclusion within the sports sections.

D. Sports action and prevention

Sport remains a vehicle for personal development and integration, it develops values around solidarity and mutual aid and self-transcendence, it is even more necessary for Grigny to promote the practice of sport to enable young people in a first time to meet and emancipate.

The more regular opening of gymnasiums with a local sports offer can be part of the response to the mobilization and support of the most vulnerable young people beyond the sports offer.





Young people need to exert themselves but also to have a space to meet on schedules where the services of the city and reception structures are sometimes closed, especially for 16 years and over who find only few spaces to meeting after 7 p.m.

This is why developing a local sports offer can be a real plus for working on the question of the integration of young people through sport, this offer should not be centered on football but on a multitude of sports in order to respond to a wide audience.

Municipality of Granollers (ES) is acting as lead partner of the project, and the University of Barcelona (ES), the Municipality of Grigny (FR), the Atheneum Ieper (BE), the LUGI Handbollsörening (SE), the HASK Mladost (HR) and the Marathon Sarajevo Club (BA) are brought together to create and consolidate a local community-based strategy embracing sporting activity as a primary vehicle for social inclusion.

Should you have any questions, comments or suggestions on SportOp! Project, feel free to contact us at: **Anna Entraigas** (aentraigas@granollers.cat) or **Meritxell Castellsagué** (mcmillan@granollers.cat)

Thank you for your time and we hope you enjoy reading our newsletter!