



**REPORT**

**EUROPEAN CONFERENCE • LISBON**

**SPORT INCLUSION OF MIGRANTS AND**

**REFUGEES IN A TRANSFORMING EUROPE**



Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union

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# **SPORT INCLUSION OF MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES IN A TRANSFORMING EUROPE**

### **Written and published by**

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## INTRODUCTION

How to best move to inclusion of refugees in and through sport across Europe? This was the central issue addressed by the European conference “Sport Inclusion of Migrants and Refugees in a transforming Europe”, in the City of Football in Oeiras (Lisbon), the headquarters of Portuguese Football Federation.

The event brought together more than 100 participants, from different sport stakeholders, ranging from grass-roots to the professional level, to share experience and good practices. The conference took place on 23-24 November 2018 and was organized by the Sport Inclusion Network (SPIN) partner SJPF – Portuguese Professional Football Player’s Union, as part of the “Sport Welcomes Refugees” project, co-funded by Erasmus + sport programme of the European Union.

# OPENING SPEECHES

## **Joaquim Evangelista**

President of the board of Portuguese Football Player's Union

- The Portuguese Football Players' Union, as a member of the SPIN – “Sport Welcomes Refugees Project”, welcomed all the participants to the European conference, dedicated to a reflection on Europe current situation and on the role of the sports community for the integration of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers. The Portuguese football family recognized the responsibility of this sport to promote a cultural and political change, proportional to the social impact of the game.
- The President of the Players' Union has identified the integration of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers as one of the greatest challenges in contemporary Europe, remembering the number of people, especially children, running from the countries in war, as the largest migratory movement since the World War II.
- Greetings to the Portuguese Football Federation (FPF), represented by the President, Mr. Fernando Gomes, for allowing the event to take place in the “Cidade do Futebol”, headquarters of FPF. In addition, greetings to the Portuguese Olympic Committee, for investing and dignifying the role of sport in the social area.



the renovation of SPIN project for a first time, and once again deserves the approval of the European Commission, for two more years, this time focusing on the minority women community (SPIN Women).

– The SPIN project has two key levels of intervention: the political and the networking, related to the work developed with international organizations, governmental and non-governmental bodies, for the migrants, refugees and asylum seekers hosting, and the sports stakeholders, materialized in the identification and sharing of good practices and methods to apply by the clubs and grassroots associations to integrate those communities into their structures, in a successful and inclusive way.

– SPIN project has allowed to create a set of tools, by experts in this matter, specially the “good practices guide” for sport clubs and grassroots associations, with great dedication of the partner Camino, that Portuguese Players’ Union congratulated. This is a guiding manual for the sport sector action in the social inclusion programs. Being part of the Erasmus + programme for sports, and having a transnational dimension, SPIN challenges different realities (social and sportive) and helps to create a positive dialogue and mutual learning. This happening when Europe is witnessing the emergence of populisms and radicalization against migrants and refugees it’s fantastic.

– In the person of Mr. Pedro Calado, High Commissioner for Migrations in Portugal, the Portuguese Players’ Union welcomed all the other public and non-governmental organizations that make Portugal an inclusive and welcoming country, which in these days is worth a lot.

– In relation to the Portuguese Government, represented in this event by the Secretary of State for Youth and Sports, Mr. João Paulo Rebelo, Portuguese Player’s Union praised the position of principle. Towards the adversities of the migration crisis, in a European context, Portugal expressed its willingness to welcome migrants and refugees to the highest European institutions. Our government’s inclusive policy it’s an example, transposed to innumerable projects linked to the education, which provide us with the right tools to promote effective equality of opportunities. Even in a time of economic crisis, Portugal didn’t let the crisis of values speak louder.

– Final note on the position of the Portuguese Player’s Union in this matter, defending an integrated and 360° vision of the football player career, recognizing him as a role model to the community. In addition to the SPIN network, the fight against racism, violence, xenophobia and gender discrimination it’s a priority, obliging the Union to implement several actions to promote good practices and the true values of sports, not just looking for the image of the player, but really engage him.

**Kurt Wachter**  
VIDC - fairplay Initiative –  
SPIN Coordinator



The project coordinator welcomed the participants of the European conference and explained the background. In 2010 a group of NGOs, anti-racism initiatives and sport organisations from seven EU countries came together to develop an intervention. The underlying issue in European mainstream sport was that migrants and minorities were systematically under-represented and excluded from positions of status, furthermore they faced a lack of advancement of in non-playing positions. In the context of the pre-ERASMUS+ Programme called Preparatory Actions in the field of sport the EU funded the project “Sport Inclusion Network (SPIN)–Involving migrants in mainstream sport institutions” (2011-12).

When the ERASMUS + Sport Programme was launched, we were among the first to receive funding for the follow up project European Sport Inclusion Network - (ESPIN), which focused on volunteering. Organised sport across Europe is based to a very large extent on voluntary work. Crucial step towards the participation of all social groups in sport is to improve the access of migrants and minorities to volunteering.

Then the year 2015 came and we witnessed the arrival of many refugees on our cities and countries. The so-called European refugee crisis broke out. However, the initial response from civil society, including sport was overwhelming

For example in football, organised fan groups carried out Refugee Welcome manifestations at their stadiums and beyond. For example fan groups in Germany including Borussia Dortmund, Werder Bremen or St. Pauli became active. .

Also FAs and clubs were welcoming refugees, for example the Austrian national team

presented a “Respect Refugee” banner to demonstrate their solidarity and some football teams (such as Vienna Sportclub) played in special refugee welcome tops

Also players spoke out in public – for instance German world champion Benedikt Höwedes defended the human right to asylum or David Alaba from Bayern Munich, who supported actively families in refugee homes in his home town Vienna.

Also we as SPIN launched during the FARE Action Week a Football Welcomes Refugees campaign in all our countries. For example, in Hungary stadium events were staged in the Hungarian premier league featuring teams with Football Welcomes Refugee T-shirts and banners, something which would be today, three years later, totally impossible due to heavily politicised anti-immigrant sentiments in this EU country.

Following the refugees crossing into the EU in 2015 also many sport clubs, associations and informal groups started to provide sport and leisure activities to the newly arrived migrants. Sport organisations were confronted with a new situation where experience and best practices are lacking and grass-root sport initiatives experienced dwindling support.

Against this backdrop we designed the current project “Sport Welcomes Refugees – Social inclusion of newly arrived migrants in and through sport” (2017-18), which aims to provide evidence-based knowledge, training and qualification to deal with the new target groups.

The objective is to enhance the social inclusion and participation of newly arrived migrants on different levels of sport through training, awareness-raising and capacity-building of sport stakeholders.

Over the last two years, implemented actions included extended empirical research in order to assess the needs of sport educators in view of the actual challenges. Focus group interviews in 8 countries with 70 representatives of sports associations, clubs and initiatives, refugee homes and initiatives, migrant organisations and NGOs were conducted.

Some of the most common challenges when working with refugees are language barriers, lack of contact and access to refugee homes, the legal situation of refugees and the refugees’ circumstances, anti-immigrant sentiments, traumatic experiences of refugees and reaching out to women and girls.

In order to raising public awareness for contribution of (former) refugees and asylum seekers all partners organised Refugees Welcome Events in the European Week of Sport. 2017 and during the FARE Action Weeks (Oct. 2018)

With the aim to build capacity of sport initiatives who work with newly arrived migrants we organised on all seven partner countries network meetings, where informal initiatives met

the organised sport sector. A tool to lend practical support for new sport initiatives working with refugees was handing out Basic Packages; these packages included sport equipment and sport gear.

A key element of the project was the training and qualification of sport educators and clubs. For that matter, UISP hosted multiplier training in Rome in 2017 and established an online-platform.

We have also produced a great animated video which will help sport instructors and volunteers who work with newly-arrived migrants and we have published this week our new Good Practice Guide which will serve as a valuable inspiration for sport stakeholders from the grass-roots to the professional level.

This very conference is part of our efforts to establish a European networking platform and suggest policies on the theme of sport inclusion.

- Which way forward? To move from charity and help to more sustainable forms of integration and inclusion; there is a need to harness the potential of refugees and asylum seekers not only as active players but also as future coaches, administrators, managers and referees.
- For amateur sport clubs to open up to migrants and minorities and become cross-culturally accessible; this change of culture is slow, and entails advice and support by sport governing bodies, public authorities and experts.
- Empower and capacity-build migrant football teams and initiatives including refugees and asylum seekers in order to participate in regular leagues and competitions.
- Sport programmes for refugees are overwhelmingly designed to fit boys and young men; girls / women are often not even addressed; therefore, specific gender sensitive football / sports programmes are needed which consider religious or culturally related regulations.
- Cooperation of all stakeholders is indispensable: local authorities, public bodies, football governing bodies, sport clubs, institutions who care for asylum seekers, self-organisations of migrants and NGOs need to work together.



**Fernando Gomes**

President of the Portuguese Football Federation, UEFA Vice-President and member of the FIFA council

• The Portuguese Football Federation has joined to this conference with great interest and on behalf of the FA team, Mr. Fernando Gomes started to congratulate the Portuguese Football Player's Union, for the initiative. Portugal is a country that has been able to host, in an exemplary way, different generations of migrants and historically it is a country with a strong connection to foreign communities, influenced by the post-revolution period and the migratory movement from the former colonies and Portuguese-speaking countries. Some of the most successful national football players (from Eusébio to the most recent examples of Nani, Gelson Martins, Renato Sanches or Bruma), came from this migratory background and found in football the perfect environment, since does not distinguish social and economic status, origins or family contexts, all the players are equal and deserve an opportunity.

• Aware of the increased need of a social responsibility policy, the Portuguese Football Federation has been able to embrace the values of equality, respect and integration and in this, as in other initiatives, to be an example in terms of social integration of those who choose our country to find a new life.

• In a final note, Mr. Fernando Gomes welcomed all the participants, from different countries, and wished all the success for the two-days event.

**João Paulo Rebelo**  
Secretary of State for  
Sport and Youth



• In the opinion of the Portuguese government, sports must be at the top of the agenda of those who are seeking for the development of an inclusive policy. Portugal has been able to promote these values in the community, above all, use the European funds to promote a true social inclusion strategy. This SPIN project it's a great example from the use of sport to promote inclusion and support the refugees and migrants arriving to Europe, which makes the Portuguese government, as the country of one of the partners of this project, very proud. Therefore, the Government will continue to support and develop public policies so that sports and education can be hand in hand. School sports, for example, are a tool that we want to continue developing, and projects such as the "Unities for support of high performance in school" – UAARE, are a perfect example of this communion between the values of sport, education and social inclusion opportunities. Sport inclusion, definitively, must be in the top of sport sector agenda.



## ROUND TABLE I

**“CAN SPORT BUILD A DIVERSIFIED AND INCLUSIVE EUROPE? A POLITICAL VISION.”**

**Chair:** Cláudia Lopes – Journalist (TVI)

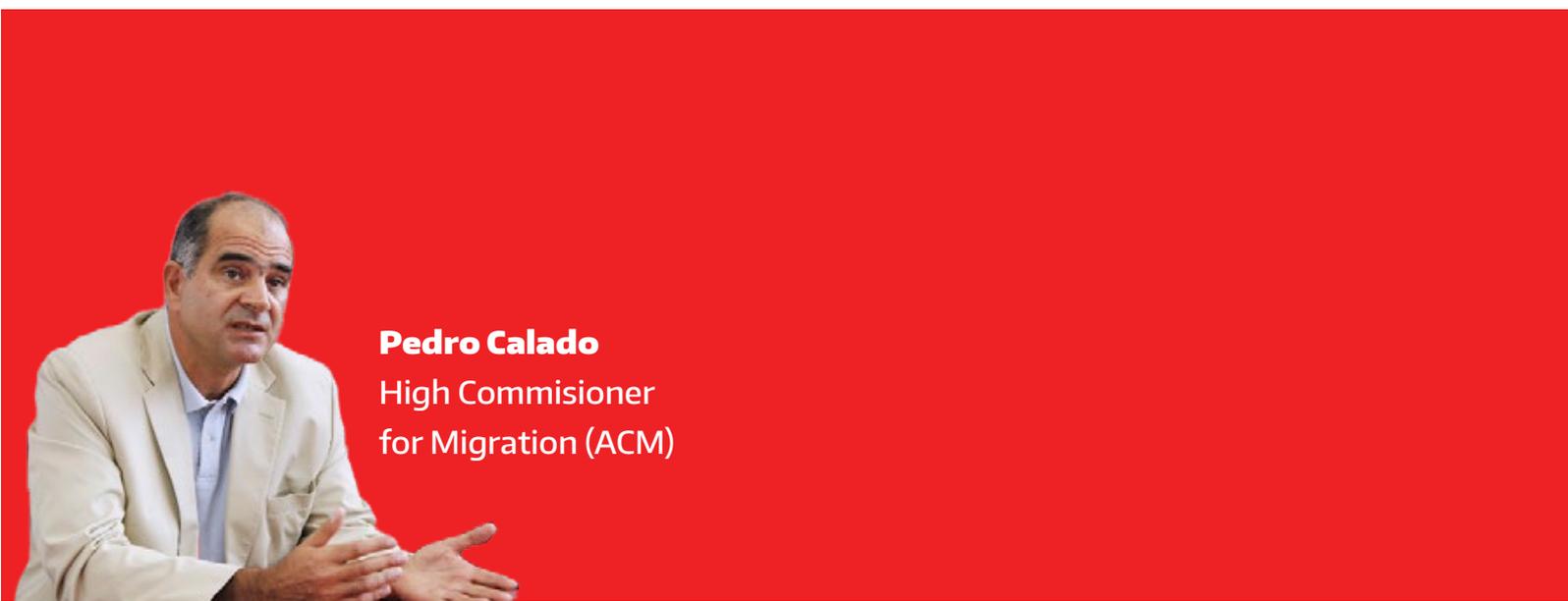
**Pedro Calado**  
High Commissioner  
for Migration (ACM)



- This subject has enormous political, social and economic relevance.
- The High Commissioner used to be a kind of provider of migrants, nowadays it's estimated that the number of migrants in Europe increased from 200.000 to 400.000, which reinforces the need to implement new public policies, regarding social inclusion strategies, knowing that each country has its own communities, and its cultural specificities.
- You must realize where you've come from and where you are going, and do not apply the old maxim of "I do not need to know you to don't like you".
- In the countries with more foreigners, it's in the rural communities where is more resistance by the unknown.
- It's necessary return to the principles of empathy and instead of listening to phrases such as "make America great again", hear phrases like "make empathy great again", basic principles of respect and human interaction.
- We, as a country, are still a good example on the modern societies, and the fact that any party in Portugal with parliamentary seat has a discourse of violence and intolerance against foreigners, is a very positive sign in the current context of Europe. However, we can't stop and we must use the instruments at our disposal to ensure the best possible cultural assimilation and interaction between cultures, in a context of tolerance, mutual respect and recognition. Integration is a two-way process, a permanent intercultural dialogue.
- It's important the intercultural exchange and tolerance of the customs of those who arrive without calling into question the principles of the Portuguese Republic Constitution.
- One good example is the "side family" project, an initiative through which a family ac-

cepts to host a another, in their home, that they do not know, forming pairs of families - one immigrant or refugee and another local, for a lunch-time, typical of their culture, as a way of welcoming. This initiative contributes to promote an effective integration of migrants in Portugal, reinforcing social relations and promoting the cultural diversity that exists in our country. The transnational project was created in the Czech Republic in 2004 and is based on the concept of "Inclusive Districts". In Portugal, the initiative is promoted by the High Commission for Migrations, in partnership with public and private entities.

- Statistics indicate that asylum applications are permanent. The first support we must give is to countries of origin, so that migrants are not forced to leave for adversities.
- We need to create legal mechanisms for the coming of these people. Human trafficking numbers in Europe are almost the same of drug trafficking.
- We must really invest on integration and to give the same conditions, rights and duties to our citizens.



**Pedro Calado**  
High Commissioner  
for Migration (ACM)

- The experience in Greece refugees' camps, receiving people, especially, from Syria was very powerful. These people spend two or three weeks on journeys, in inhumane conditions, affecting the dignity of a person, looking to escape the terror of war.
- It's important to analyze how can they become part of our societies. We must respect these people. Our responsibility is based on values and principles of human dignity, which states subscribed in the Geneva Convention. These values are our cultural references, values such as humanity, citizenship, cohesion and social justice, multiculturalism, cooperation, solidarity and friendship. This is and will continue to be the basis for European positioning on the refugee's support.

- If we do not put these values on the table and act, we will hardly give priority to the human dimension. Fortunately, most people want to be part of a society that does not leave anyone behind.
- If we stop investing in these people, we will create have a new and dangerous kind of society.
- Even if sports are not the priority for those people (migrants, refugees or asylum seekers) it is a fantastic tool, that can really help with integration.
- It's also important to seek to help outside the "peaks" of the media attention. The crisis starts when the communities are not awakened to the issue. People must better understand and escape the stereotype, but there is still a lot of work to do.
- At the local level, if organisations do not communicate between each other, this process will be much more complicated.
- It's important that families have a school that integrates youth, but also recreational, cultural and sportive organisations. If they get involved, we will have an easier process. We must empower, through governmental and multinational programs, the local organisations to support on this community support, but there is still a long way to go.

**Tita Matos**  
Director of the Portuguese  
Refugees Center (CPR)

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**Varpuu Taarna**  
Ministry of Economic Affairs  
and Employment of Finland



- Subscribing much of the comments and good methods described by the panel, integration has really to start with the younger layers. We have to make sure they have the resources and know the organisations that can provide help, in different levels.
- It is important to have different organisations working together to provide the most diversified response possible.

- It's also very important to create new formulas for dialogue and communication with these communities. These people must feel they belong to something, avoid the common feeling that if you are not part of society you can't receive or contribute.
- Looking at the Finnish and Portuguese reality, I would say there are many areas in which we can learn from each other. The Portuguese ACM's program "choices" is, for example, an initiative that I have been following for some time and which I think is excellent for replication at a European level. When we speak of this European network, the great challenge lies in articulating a strategy and ensuring that a group of countries with diversified political, economic and social realities can, through sports or other instruments, guarantee that these people are integrated and treated with dignity.

**Paulo César**  
Sports Councilor of Odivelas  
Municipality (European City  
of Sport 2020)



- Odivelas is an example of integration. For example, it has the largest Islamic community in Portugal, established since the 1960s.
- Full integration is impossible without a community involved in the process. Many migrants, for example, are living in Lisbon in very complex conditions. Education is the first instrument so the schools must adapt their learning model.
- A large proportion of migrants do not speak Portuguese and do not have the same diet for example. They also have difficulties to trust in others, and many speak only in their mother language, not even being able to communicate in English.
- We seek to involve the school community in the challenge of integration, sports are one of our main tools. We have projects where local families can host and share their own tra-

dition with foreigners. At the same time give them space to publicly share and develop their traditions.

- Today, there's a 1st, 2nd and 3rd generations: parents, children and grandchildren. The 1st generation was fully integrated, comes from Africa and integrates in a country that speaks the same language. The 2nd generation had more difficulties because they lost roots with their cultural environment. Many have never been to Africa. They feel different and isolation it's a severe risk.
- Sport can play a very important role in the community. There's a garden in Odivelas, for example, where a group of Indian kids used to play cricket. They are giving us a signal, this game is important and even if we don't have a tradition on that, we can use it, for example in the school, as a communication and learning tool.
- Cities and municipalities can make a difference through responsible policies, adapt the strategy to their local community specificities. A good educational program is the key, ignorance is a weapon against diversity and multiculturalism.





## ROUND TABLE II

### SOCIAL INCLUSION THROUGH SPORT: CHALLENGES AND NEEDS OF SPORT ORGANISATIONS, MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES”

**Chair:** Miguel Morgado – Journalist (Sapo 24)

### **Francisca Araújo**

Public Relations and CSR projects,  
Portuguese Football Federation,

- In the Portuguese Football Federation we believe in the triumph of values.
- We work in partnership with the Olympic Committee, to capitalize the football attention to raise awareness for the refugees needs, with different actions. We used to invite young students to attend the national team games. Football it's an incredible tool, a cultural identification factor and the FA wants to continue to promote this.
- The issues related to refugees in Portugal have particularities because they are, generally, in transition to other European countries. With specific groups it is not so easy to work together on long term basis.
- The corporate social responsibility is a developing theme and sport can set an example. Even if the FA, nowadays, do not have people working with this background, to fill positions within the federative structure, the projects that we support, can facilitate this possibility in the future.

### **Ana Ribeiro**

Corporate Social Responsibility  
manager, Portuguese Professional  
Football League,

- The integration of migrants through football is really facilitated.
- The League is currently involved in specific actions, mainly in partnerships for awareness-raising actions. The Football Foundation, created by the League intent to develop projects related to social inclusion, putting professional football at the service of the community. The football player it's a powerful aggregator.
- As a professional league and responsible for the organisation of three different competitions, it's our intention promotes an association with major humanitarian causes, protecting these values and even use science, and technology, applied to football to disseminate useful information. The potential is enormous.
- Social inclusion is one of the foundation's intervention areas, and sport is a facilitator of this process, so the football family must work in a network.
- The mentioned foundation is creating some projects, like the "live football", which gives vulnerable groups and communities the opportunity to watch live football matches in the professional football league. At the same time, we can use the entrance of the teams on the field to promote messages of awareness, in the games organised by the League. Other idea is to integrate refugees and migrants so they can collaborate as technicians or volunteers in our work teams.
- Creating a balance between host culture and refugee culture is a great challenge. In sports organisations there are several ideas that can be worked in a better way.

**Obert Makaza**  
Galway Bridge Project

- The BRIDGE project seeks to promote the effective delivery of reception and integration supports (including advocacy and capacity building interventions), to asylum seekers and third country nationals living in Galway City and the rest of the county. The project is coordinated by Galway City Partnership and funded under the Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF) and supported by the Department of Justice and Equality and funding partners; Galway City Council, Galway Rural Development, HSE, Youth Work Ireland, Galway and the Sports Partnership. It is envisaged that this work will be carried out in partnership with existing stakeholders.
- The project goals are to: develop and maximize the capacity and potential of those in the asylum process, refugees and third country nationals to engage with mainstream organisations and communities through the provision of information resources, skills and confidence, and deliver a capacity building programme to improve referral systems, information provision and supports within/between mainstream organisations to assist them to meet the needs of the target groups.
- Project outcomes include enhanced capacity and empowerment to access information and advocacy, cultural orientation, language, IT skills, education, training and employment for refugees and third country nationals.
- It's not a project just football, but other sports such as volleyball and athletics. Many refugees seek specific support, such as how to obtain the proper assistance from the club, considering the specific needs.
- Bridge's works to facilitate the link between migrant groups and sports groups. Transportation, for example, is a huge challenge. The other challenge is to develop new sports consider the preference of the arriving communities (e.g. cricket).
- Some programs are very brief, a more global program is needed, a program that supports the relationship over time, this is one of the great challenges.

**Aisha Al-Said**

Head of Partnerships, Innovation and  
Knowledge, Fundació FC Barcelona

- Barcelona football club works on social inclusion and violence prevention all over the world. The most important program is the refugee program.
- In Spain, compared with other European countries, there aren't many refugees, but many of the refugees living in the country don't have a proper assistance, considering the social inclusion support.
- The Barça Foundation is working with Catalonia, Greece or Italy, as well as outside Europe, in Libya for example. We don't want to help only the community where we belong, but we have a worldwide approach.
- Sport is a very important tool to facilitate inclusion, anywhere.
- In response to the question of whether many refugees want to become Barcelona players, one of the first things we say working with communities is exactly that we are not looking for players, we exercise the social responsibility of sport. This separation is very important.
- Our approach follows a specific methodology so that young people can be encouraged and have more confidence. Migrants have problems with their immediate past, they don't want to train technical skills, the foundation wants to use football so they can feel better, integrated and treated with respect and equality by the community that surrounds them.
- The Barça Foundation does not take club coaches to their missions, because one of the goals is to work with local coaches.
- One of the main challenges we faced is how to get women to play. They have to get the authorization from the parents and so, we must sensitize the families to the importance of the girls participating in sport, always trying to adapt to the reality they face. At this time, the FC Barcelona Foundation is studying the barriers that girls feel in order to play sports, and the best way to work in their social environment.
- One of the greatest challenges in Europe is to work with the Muslim community and in this type of situation the approach has been to talk to the mothers, with the idea that they will observe closely the work that is done.
- In Saudi Arabia, for example, we can't mix girls with boys because it is prohibited, so in each country there are some ground rules we need to understand and work with.

- The work that Barça Foundations does in partnership with several organisations, usually involves identification of the problems and the strategy to find the best solutions in the specific context. One of the important measures to adopt is to improve the quality of the school programs, football can be a very important tool to do this job.
- Finally, my father is from Syria and a large part of my family had a refugee status. After arriving in a new country it is crucial to find a way of forgetting the problems and difficulties one faced. Sport and football in particular has this capacity.

**Jonathan Fadugba**  
Head of Communications,  
FARE Network

- The FARE network is an umbrella organisation that brings together individuals, informal groups and organisations, drive to combat inequality in football and use the sport as a means for social change.
- Fare's commitment to tackle discrimination through football's inclusive power is based on the principle that the game, as the most popular sport in the world, belongs to us all and can propel social cohesion. We fight against all forms of discrimination, including racism, far-right nationalism, sexism, trans- and homophobia and discrimination against disabled people.
- The strength of the network lies in the diversity of its members, including fan groups, NGO's and amateur clubs and grassroots groups, among others, who contribute with their expertise and act in a concerted effort to make discrimination in football a thing of the past.
- Through the annual Football People action weeks, which with more than 1500 activities is the largest initiative against discrimination in football worldwide, FARE has been able

to expand its sphere of influence to countries outside Europe. The organisation works not only in more than 45 European countries, but also with activists in the United States, South Africa, St. Lucia and Brazil.

- We have to realize that racism is not the number one concern of refugees, as they have more complicated things showing up in the first contact with a new country. Escape from the comfort zone, run out of family, to be alone many times, this is what create most impact.
- Sport is not the most important but it can be an essential tool, the important thing for this people is to create bonds with the host country.
- With football, everyone knows Messi or Cristiano Ronaldo, and this allows to develop a common language. For our experience, other sports have equality success, integrating migrants, refugees and asylum seekers, such as volleyball or swimming.
- It is necessary to take into account cultural diversity. To set an example, in the case of swimming we must take into account the equipment due to religious clothing impositions. But at the end of the day, sportive activities are a really fine tool to provide to these persons an opportunity to get acceptance and to create a bond with the communities to which they arrived.





## WORKSHOP A

### **GRASS-ROOTS SPORT CLUBS AS AGENTS OF INCLUSION AND ACTIVE CITIZENSHIP: CHALLENGES AND GOOD PRACTICE.**

*This workshop, having due regard to varying national contexts, sought interactively to explore and discuss the ingredients, challenges and benefits of inclusion and active citizenship as a cornerstone philosophy in grassroots sports- with respect to refugees and asylum seekers. Regarding the format, case study practical examples were presented as part of the workshop to set the scene for interactive discussions and activities. The anticipated outcomes of the workshops were: Participants will have the opportunity to hear practical examples and discuss and share thoughts and or experiences on the topic.*

**Facilitator:**

Des Tomlinson, Football Association of Ireland (FAI)

**Input:**

Obert Makaza, Galway Bridge Project

Vanda Ramalho, Associação Nacional de Futebol de Rua

Vasco Malta, High Commission for Migration (ACM)

James Toner Football Association of Ireland (FAI)

**Aim of the Workshop-Session**

To openly discuss three key topic areas, with experiences from the speakers and audience shared in relation to the three main ideas of inclusion, active citizenship and finally grassroots sports.

**Content**

The workshop was based on the three main ideas of inclusion, active citizenship and finally grassroots sports. The discussion revolved around the question how different countries have placed different structures around certain projects across their countries, to try encouraging inclusion, active citizenship and increased participation in integrated grassroots sports.

The workshop not only delved into what is being done across different countries around the three titles mentioned but it also involved all speakers speaking of both the challenges and good practices that were involved in developing their programmes too.

**Structure**

All in all the workshops lasted 60 minutes.

**Opening (40 mins)**

One of the activities that was initially discussed was an integration-through-football programme ran in Portugal, where the aims involve empowering all children that play, particularly girls. Street football pitches are set up across the country in areas where it is believed integration is a priority and the games that are played have particular boundaries around them.

The games only rules are that girls and boys can all play together and that the players themselves make the rules. The purpose around this is to empower the girls to play with confidence and play at the same level as boys.

Another project that the country implemented was around league tables being based on more than just the games results. The points gained by teams are also based around education results too and fair play.

Overall the key points to take from this programme were that it created participation in football, it allowed for gender equality to take place and it allowed integration between cultures happen too. The importance of education was also highlighted by the project.

### **Inputs and Questions (20 mins)**

A more general conversation, the general topic of discussion was around inclusion and retention of groups in projects. Some of the general challenges discussed included lack of interest in sports for asylum seekers / refugees, transport and availability / access to programmes, access to education and long term plans beyond football for people too.

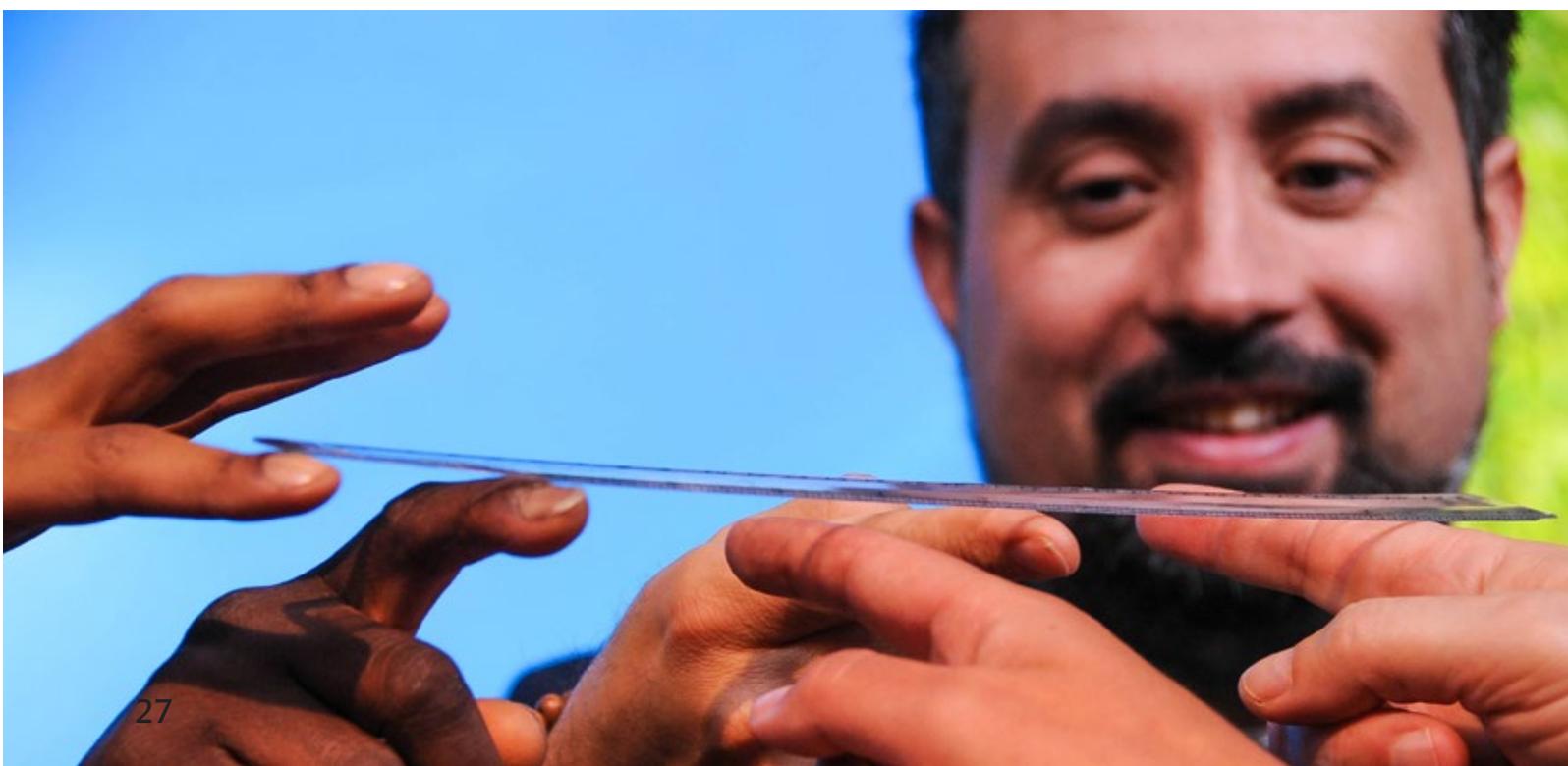
These topics were discussed more openly with the audience, with everyone agreeing that they are general challenges that can occur when dealing with refugees / asylum seekers groups.

One of the main common ground solutions that were discussed in relation to the above challenges related to the outreaching to groups.

It was agreed by both the panel and the audience too that 'to include all migrants in discussions and to give them the floor' is truly empowering for them, which in turn helps solutions be made to challenges much quicker.

### **Discussion & Results**

The general feedback from the audience came from activity 2 in particular, as the idea of empowering migrants through giving them a say was openly discussed. The general consensus would have been that the discussion was open and interesting and there were ideas discussed that everyone could have taken points away from.





## WORKSHOP B

### **INNOVATIVE TOOLS AND METHODS FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION: HOW TO PRACTICALLY SUPPORT SPORT EDUCATORS?**

*Sport educators and coaches often feel the need for support when they offer sporting activities for refugee children, adolescents and adults in sports clubs, youth facilities, schools and neighborhood centres. The workshop presented tools and methods for social inclusion developed by the SPIN project and by associated partners, such as training methods and quality criteria for self-evaluation. The workshop was held in an interactive format: participants have practiced and discussed some methods and had the possibility to give feedback.*

**Facilitator:**

Willie Westerhof, Gender & Sport expert

**Input:**

Victoria Schwenzer, Camino

Jerry Essandoh, VIDC – fairplay

Luca Lollobrigida, UISP

**Aim of the Workshop–Session**

To openly discuss three key topic areas, with experiences from the speakers and audience shared in relation to the three main ideas of inclusion, active citizenship and finally grassroots sports.

**Activities and Discussion**

*- Animated Video on practical tool for sports instructors*

Following an introduction warm-up, Luca Lollobrigida presented the animated video produced during the “Sport Welcomes Refugees” project. The video can be used to train sports instructors and provides practical tips on how to integrate persons with a refugee background into the mainstream sports clubs and associations. After the screening of the video Ms. Westerhof facilitated an evaluation of its content together with the participants of the workshop.

In general the video was very well received. The content was rated as very recognizable and practical and some participants have already used it in trainings. It was also mentioned that for the participants the content of the video did not present anything really new but for sports instructors who have not worked with refugees it would be useful. It was also noted that some of the tips or suggestions provided appeared very easy while in practice and the reality of the sports clubs it can be more challenging, e.g. to find a suitable interpreter to assist with interpretation or psychologists specialized in Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). It was also suggested to ensure active involvement of the refugees in the design of the activities and to employ diversity managers if possible.

*- Name Exercise*

Mr. Essandoh introduced a name game in which persons give themselves a nick name starting with the same letter as their first name, e.g. Magic Maria or Diabolic David. All the participants participated in the exercise which is a good example of an exercise that is including and in which everybody can participate.

### *- Quality Criteria*

Finally, Ms. Schwenzer, presented the Quality Criteria (QC). The QC is a result of the project “Sport Welcomes Refugees”, and is a self-assessment tool that sports associations can use to see what they need to introduce to achieve better integration of refugees and migrants in their activities. Under a range of headlines (Project Conception, Cooperation and Networking, Qualification and Targeting, Gender Sensitivity, Inclusion and Active Participation, Intercultural Awareness, Anti-Racism and Non-Discrimination, Communication and Transparency, Focus on Participation instead of Performance) it provides a checklist of good practices. The instrument will also be made available online on the [www.sportinclusion.net](http://www.sportinclusion.net) webpage, where the club can see how well they fare in achieving maximum inclusion and integration of the refugees.

Participants found the evaluation tool interesting and needed. One remark related to the target group of the evaluation tool referred to the difference between sport clubs and other sport projects or organisations.

### *- Feedback*

Participants had the possibility to give feedback at the end of the workshop. The workshop was very good evaluated. Participants appreciated the shared knowledge in its three different parts and the used methodology very much. They got new ideas and input to continue their work in their countries. The created good ambiance was highlighted as well. More time would have been good in order to have the possibility to express own experiences more deeply.





## WORKSHOP C

### **DEVELOPING AN INTERNATIONAL SPORT INCLUSION NETWORK: BUILDING ALLIANCES, NEW FORMS OF COOPERATION AND IDENTIFYING RESOURCES**

*The so-called refugee crisis constitutes not only challenges but is an opportunity for the sport movement to demonstrate and deliver its massive potential for social inclusion of refugees and migrants. To address current challenges SPIN project partners suggested to develop a wider international network which brings together NGOs, sport clubs and associations, migrant & refugee organisations and experts. The workshop explored necessities and current needs of a grass-roots oriented network. How can we avoid duplicating existing networks, but to be complementary and innovative? What should be the core functions of a future network and how to best mobilize resources?*

**Facilitator:**

David Hudelist, VIDC - fairplay

**Input:**

Bella Bello Bitugu, Director of Sports, University of Ghana,

Orsolya Tolnay, ENGSO, ASPIRE project

Itzik Shanan, New Israel Fund, Kick Racism out campaign

Salomé Marivoet, ISCTE-CIES

**Aim of the Workshop-Session**

To get to know the opinion and insights of speakers, their work and organisation and to discuss how to build a network, international alliances, new forms of cooperation and identifying resources in the field of Sport and Inclusion.

**Content**

The so-called refugee crisis constitutes not only challenges but is an opportunity for the sport movement to demonstrate and deliver its massive potential for social inclusion of refugees and migrants. To address current challenges SPIN project partners suggested to develop a wider international network which brings together NGOs, sport clubs and associations, migrant & refugee organisations and experts. The workshop will explore necessities and current needs of a grass-roots oriented network with inputs and discussion of experienced international experts of building up projects and alliances in Sport and Inclusion.

**Structure**

All in all the workshops lasted 80 minutes.

**Opening (10-15 minutes)**

The Workshop was opened with a short interactive method, to get to know the participants and to get a feeling of their approach to the topics of sport and integration and the meaning of working in an international network.

**Inputs and Questions (30 minutes)**

All speakers gave a 10 minutes input which included a short overview of their work and projects and also a first idea of their experience in building, forming or working in international networks.

After the input we discussed some specific questions, which were:

- What are the main needs a potential network in the field of Sport and Inclusion should fulfill (e.g. education/training, research ...)?

- What should be the core functions of a such a network?
- What are does and don'ts in building up new networks?
- What kind of structure is making sense and how to involve many grassroots and also stakeholders?
- How can it be avoided to duplicate existing networks, but to be complementary and innovative?
- What possibilities do you see to mobilize resources?

### **Discussion & Results**

There were a lot of questions from the audience. Unfortunately, we had too less time to discuss them all. The questions were diverse, some wanted to know more about the issue of racism and discrimination in sport, which was strongly connected with the project in Israel that Itzik Shanan presented. Other questions lead more in the discussion of the meaning and sense of building up a network in the field of Sport and Inclusion. Some in the audience meant it is not necessary, as there are already existing networks, some said it is necessary as there are too many singular, small organisations dealing with similar issues but without any strong roof.





## WORKSHOP D

### THE CONTRIBUTION OF MIGRANT AND REFUGEE-LED ORGANISATIONS

*This workshop brought together field actors involve in organising events, meetings and peer-to-peer support to migrant and refugees in need of advice. The participants will take this opportunity to share their knowledge and expertise to the other European partner. The discussions will focus on “outcome for cities regarding their integration programs” when they cooperate with organisations supporting migrants and refugees. Also we can exchange on “How national NGO’s use small organisations to help them run their migrant programme”.*

**Facilitator:**

Christian Thibault, Liikkukaa-Sports for All

**Input:**

Mamadou Ba, SOS Racismo

Alexander Kapitue, Portuguese Refugees Association

Ali Rezae, Afghan Youth Association of–New Start New in Austria

Jean-Marc Alingué, Liikkukaa-Sports for All

**Aim of the workshop**

This workshop has brings together actors and project planners to show their commitment to the refugees needs for sport activities. Its aim is to share good practices, methods and tricks to deal with situations when conducting a migrant refugee group.

**Content**

Refugees fleeing their conditions from where they lived arrive to a country where they are disoriented because of great number of barriers. Whether it's the language, cultural differences, environment changes, they are looking for someone to guide and support them. Organisations intervene to give this support but due to the different situation each refugee is caught in, different attitudes and methods to provide help is needed. So associations develop skills, activities and tools to deal with those issues.

**Structure**

The workshop has lasted 75 minutes

**Opening**

A video presentation from the Facilitator was shown and a small game play helped the participants to get to know each other's. The game play was aimed to show how much common interest some people have regardless their origin or cultural differences.

**Inputs and Questions**

Four groups had to discuss about issues regarding refugees' situations plus associations' views and how they are seen by institutions and the larger public.

1. Strength of migrant associations
2. Weaknesses of migrant associations
3. Needs and what need to be done to support
4. How to promote migrant associations work

## **Discussion & results**

Our group came to the conclusion after debating on the methods to speak out loud about the migrant associations roles to write down 4 resolutions for the contribution of Migrant and Refugee-led Organisations:

- 1.** Embrace the strengths
- 2.** Empower the migrant organisations
- 3.** Provide public space for migrant organisation and to be open for news ideas
- 4.** Anti-racism, agency, education and lobbying.



## ROUND TABLE III

### “MIGRANT AND MINORITY WOMEN IN SPORT – PROMOTING SPORTS PARTICIPATION AND LEADERSHIP CAPACITIES”

**Chair:** Sara Capelo, Journalist (Revista Sábado)

**Maria Machado**  
Olympic Committee  
of Portugal

- Sport has the magical effect of engaging with the community and facilitating the integration of minorities and marginalized populations, in particular the refugees. The goal of the Portuguese Olympic Committee, as a governmental body responsible for the implementation of our public policy, is to help in the inclusion through different sports and activities. We have collaborative partnerships with several entities that are linked to work in the field: the High Commission for Migration, the Refugee Reception Center, the Refugee Support Platform and the Lisbon City Council. Boys and girls should have the same opportunities but for these happen we need to understand and work on their differences. Sharing experiences in an international framework is also crucial.

**Assunção Fernandes**  
Assomada Solidarity  
Association



- The Assomada social responsibility association is an extraordinary example of a local club that has been fighting against marginalization, giving to many young women's new goals through sport. Assomada has a female handball team. Since it is a non-professional

organisation, it resorts solely and exclusively to the voluntary work of those who believe that social integration is an investment in the future.

- Alexandrina Barbosa, a young woman who was part of the handball project of the association, play in the national team and in the French championship. Started with nothing more than a dream, a lot of talent and the desire to get off the streets. The solidarity and the bonds created between the girls through sport, was what impressed me the most.

## **David D'Agnelli**

### Liberi Nantes

- The meaning of Liberi Nantes is "free to play". It was established in Rome in 2007 as the first Sport Association in Italy recognized by UNHCR for promoting and guaranteeing free access to sport for all refugees and asylum seekers. The association intends to offer to women and men an escape from war or dramatic humanitarian situations, a possibility of freedom, for recovering their dignity, rebuilding themselves and create new relationships. Liberi Nantes promotes different sportive environments, such as football or rugby.

- The club had the first transalpine football team consisting only of refugee athletes. We work with men and women, refugees and exiles from the age of 15. It's a project with four activities: football, touch rugby, gymnastics and other sports. Football is the one that has most participants.

**Layla Mousa**

UISP

- Over the next two years, the SPIN project will be developed just thinking in the women reality (SPIN Women). In the course of the SPIN project [which began in 2011], we realize that one of the most important challenges is the involvement of migrant and refugee women in sports activities. There are many barriers that women have to overcome, and we are willing to work on tools that can ensure a successful integration through sports.



## ROUND TABLE IV

**“ARE THE ATHLETES REALLY ENGAGED WITH SOCIAL INCLUSION? A FOOTBALL PERSPECTIVE”**

**Chair:** Gonalo Ferreira, Journalist (SIC)



**Osama Rashid**

Clube Desportivo Santa Clara

- Unable to be present at the European conference because of match taking place over the weekend of the event, in Azores, the professional football player Osama Rashid, member of SJPF, sent a video message where explained the personal and family journey, from his escape to the war in Iraq until the first touches in the ball, in a local club of Netherlands. He is one of the revelation players of the 2018/19 Portuguese first division (Liga NOS) edition, and left message for all the migrants and refugees:

- "You must work hard to learn the language, try to be part and accept the culture that embraces you, do not be afraid to take the risk and do what you enjoy. In my case, football was a door for all the opportunities. When my parents sent me to school in the Netherlands, I remember being embarrassed by the way I was dressed, they did their best to give me the minimum conditions. But on the football field it was another story, I was like all the others and free to do what I enjoy most, I can say that football gave me everything."



**Joaquim Rebelo**

Former professional football player,  
staff at Portuguese Players' Union

- As a former player I can say that living the environment of a football team, where there are every season entries and exits, of nationals and foreigners, is a huge challenge and an experience of how to integrate. In this case, we know that help to integrate faster is arriving quickly to a competitive success.

- In my perspective, one of our best initiatives as a player's Union is the training camp for the members without contract. This is an annual event, where we can develop a process true social inclusion. In the Union's training camp, we managed to integrate migrants or refugees in a double perspective. We recognize that for many of them the professionalization is not possible, but we integrate and let them enjoy the practice with professionals. We also provide tailor-made courses, so they can learn and evolve in other areas. In our team they feel an enormous happiness for having this opportunity. We are helping to fulfill a dream, and this is the true potential of football.

### **Cynthia Uwak**

Former Nigerian international, two-times African footballer of the Year and FIFA Women's World Player of the Year nominee

- The welcoming countries have the obligation to provide the schools, clubs and grass-root associations with the tools to avoid discrimination. If this happens, football and other sports could be a real important tool. I felt a little marginalized for choosing to play for football. It's challenging for a woman to be a player, make the sports her professional activity. For the majority of society, women should take care of the house and it was not easy to have opted for football against a certain installed culture. I started playing in the streets, then participated in some tournaments and after did my course until arrived at the Nigerian national team.

- Even at the high level of competition there are discriminative behaviours, from professional colleagues, referees or team leaders. I suffered that. That's why tools like the ones SPIN project wants to develop are so important, there are still many clubs and sportive structures with lack of preparation to know how to include foreigners. Imagine what can happen to someone with serious traumas, having this type of treatment. Even with this remarks, football is my passion.

**Bella Bello Bitugu**

University of Ghana,  
Director of Sport

- Looking at Cynthia's example, it is reducing to look at a woman only from a biological perspective. Women are human beings and they do not deserve to suffer the discriminations that they are target. They must have the same opportunities and access as men, this is absolutely clear.

About integration, we have spoken of very different realities, we cannot confuse the adaptation that the migrant and refugee must have to their cultural identity and their dignity as a human being that is often not preserved or guaranteed.

# CLOSING SESSION

## “ESTABLISHING SUSTAINABLE SPORT INCLUSION ACROSS EUROPE: WHICH WAY FORWARD?”

The international conference ended with a debate between Layla Mousa, Des Tomlinson and Kurt Wachter, SPIN partner members representatives. The three speakers looked at the way forward about sustainable sport inclusion across Europe in the coming years.

The exploration of the income provided by the European funds didn't exclude in the perspective of the speakers the necessity of build a strong network to address several important topics for the future of Europe as a community, fighting against various forms of discriminations and the emergence of extremist far-right movements.

Turkey, Pakistan, Uganda and Lebanon are, in this order, the countries of the world that receive most refugees. Against this background, is Europe ready to welcome migrants? And it's really doing what it should in order to protect the people who are arriving? Kurt Wachter, coordinator of the SPIN project, confesses that it's difficult to anticipate what will be the reality in the next ten years, but appealed to organisations to work in support of migrants and refugees: “Being in Portugal, I must admit that I am relieved to see the work that has been developed in this area by so many organisations and the commitment of your government. As anti-immigrant sentiment is on the rise across Europe, we can take Portugal as a good example”.

As in Portugal, a work of integration of migrants and refugees has also been developed in Ireland, as Des Tomlinson explained: “There is a state-level partnership that leads to the sustainability of sports inclusion. To develop a future path, in what concerns this subject, it is necessary to establish partnerships that can help us in this task, at national and international level. “

Joaquim Evangelista and Kurt Wachter finally closed the international conference “Sport inclusion of migrants and refugees in a transforming Europe”.

# APPENDICES

## **Sport Welcomes Refugees Project**

The overall objective of the ERASMUS+ project “Sport Welcomes Refugees – Social inclusion of newly arrived migrants in and through sport” is to enhance the social inclusion and participation of newly arrived migrants on different levels of sport through training, awareness-raising and capacity-building of sport stakeholders.

The project was designed by partners of the Sport Inclusion Network (SPIN) to achieve the following specific objectives:

- Facilitate grass-roots sports participation of refugees, asylum seekers and other migrants
- To generate evidence-based knowledge about the needs of sport organisations and sport multipliers
- To develop a European framework for quality criteria regarding inclusion of refugees and migrants in sport clubs
- To capacity-build and empower migrants and refugee initiatives to challenge exclusion and discrimination and harness the role of migrants as volunteers in sport clubs
- Develop educational tools and raise awareness among sport stakeholders

Measures included the Development of Quality Criteria and Good Practice (1), Training and Qualification of Sport Educators and Clubs (2), Campaigning and Raising Public Awareness (3), Capacity building of Sport Initiatives with newly arrived Migrants (4) and European Networking and Policy Development (5).

## Background

In 2015, more than 1.2 Million first time asylum seekers applied for international protection in the EU. Civil society was welcoming those who fled the civil wars. However, the refugees crossing into Europe also sparked a European crisis: Mass media and politicians call for an end of the “Culture of Welcoming Refugees” and attacks on refugee centres are on a rise. Against this backdrop, the sport movement, who provide sport and leisure activities to the newly arrived migrants engage need support, capacity-building and training to cope with the new realities. Sport initiatives sometimes feel left alone, since the public sector and the mainstream sport structure only lend limited support. The Sport Welcomes Refugees project attempted to address this gap.

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