



HANDBOOK ON REFUGEES INTEGRATION THROUGH SPORT

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1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Handbook

The scope of the Handbook is to cast new light on how to increase community participation of youth refugees through the attractiveness of sport activities and a strengthened cooperation between sport organizations and organizations specialised in refugees' matters.

The Handbook navigates all steps that have occurred in the development of the *CrosSport* project by sharing this practical and valuable experience for the benefit of all stakeholders committed to making a difference in the field of sport and integration of refugees at the local level.

The Handbook is built upon all data and knowledge on the use of sports as a tool of integration for youth refugees gathered from the Focus groups of experts' meetings and the compilation of good practices that have emerged from therein.

It also offers thorough methodological insights to create and apply this knowledge to train the project target groups, e.g. community leaders and refugee activists.

Finally, it provides further illustration on the development of the international network on refugees inclusion through sport and on the dissemination actions occurred along the process.



1.2 Who are refugees and how to reach them?

Refugees are defined and protected under international law, specifically by the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol. According to the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, a refugee is someone who:

"Owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable, or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it."

This definition emphasizes that the fear of persecution must be well-founded and the individuals must be outside their home country. It does not cover individuals displaced by economic conditions or those who migrate voluntarily.

To effectively implement a project aimed at the social inclusion of refugees through sport within host communities, strategic planning in outreach and competency development is crucial. Here follows a list of key factors needed to reach the target groups and execute such a project successfully:

In order to reach the target groups, a set of guiding principles have been taken into account:

- Collaboration with local organizations and partnership with refugee assistance organizations, local NGOs that already have direct contact with refugees. These organizations help identify interested participants and facilitate introductions.
- Engagement with Community Leaders: this relates to working with leaders of the refugee communities, including representatives of refugees-led organizations and refugee testimonies from the sport arena. These figures help communicate the benefits of the project and encourage participation.
- Use of social media and community outreach: raising the awareness through social media platforms used by the refugee community.
- Incentives: the provision of transportation, meals, or the award of certificates useful for enriching his/her own professional curriculum are crucial in facilitating participation, especially for those who may face economic barriers.

By strategically adopting the above principles, the project reached out the target groups and laid the ground for success and sustainability.

1.3 Definitions, typologies and theories of inclusion and integration of refugees



The concepts of inclusion and integration of refugees are multifaceted, encompassing various definitions, typologies, and theories. Here follows a brief outline of these elements in order to provide an understanding of how these processes work and are conceptualized in academic and policy contexts.

Definitions

Inclusion: Inclusion refers to the efforts and policies designed to ensure that refugees are fully involved in the social, economic, and political life of the host community. It emphasizes the idea of enabling refugees to participate fully and equally, recognizing and valuing their contributions while ensuring access to rights and services.

Integration: Integration is often used interchangeably with inclusion but generally refers to a more comprehensive process whereby refugees are expected to become a part of the host society. This involves the mutual adaptation of both refugees and the host society. Integration is multidimensional, including legal, economic, social, and cultural dimensions, and involves building a sense of belonging and participation in the host community.

Typologies of integration

Legal Integration: involves the granting of rights and legal statuses that are key to refugees' ability to live, work, and access services and protections equivalent to those of citizens.

Economic Integration: the ability of refugees to sustain themselves economically without assistance. This includes access to employment, fair working conditions, and the opportunity to pursue entrepreneurship.

Social Integration: the creation of social bonds and networks between refugees and the host community. This involves social acceptance, interaction, and participation in community activities.

Cultural Integration: the mutual cultural adaptation between refugees and the host society. Refugees might maintain their cultural practices while also embracing aspects of the host culture, fostering mutual respect and understanding.

Political Integration: encompasses refugees' participation in the political processes of the host country, including the ability to voice opinions, participate in elections (if applicable), and engage in civic activities.

Theories of Integration

1. **Berry's Model of Acculturation:** this theory posits four strategies used by immigrants to engage with the host culture: assimilation, separation, integration, and marginalization. Integration, in this context, is viewed as the most beneficial, involving maintaining one's original culture while interacting with and adopting parts of the new culture.

2. **Ager and Strang's Framework:** this model outlines indicators of integration across ten dimensions, including employment, housing, education, health, social bonds, social bridges,

social links, language and cultural knowledge, safety and stability, and rights and citizenship. It emphasizes the importance of a holistic approach to integration.

3. **Social Capital Theory:** this theory, advocated by scholars like Putnam, emphasizes the role of social networks and the trust within and between these networks. It underscores the importance of social connections in the integration process, facilitating access to resources and support.

4. **Ecological Systems Theory:** adapted by Bronfenbrenner, this approach looks at the multiple layers of environment that affect an individual’s development, from immediate surroundings to broader societal influences. It’s useful in understanding how various societal levels impact refugee integration.

These definitions, typologies, and theories help in shaping policies and practices aimed at refugee inclusion and integration. They provide a framework for understanding the challenges and strategies necessary for successful integration, emphasizing the need for policies that address multiple dimensions of refugee life and facilitate their active participation in society.

Policymakers, NGOs, and other stakeholders can use these insights to develop targeted interventions that support both refugees and host communities, fostering environments where mutual adaptation and respect pave the way for cohesive societies.

1.4 What is CrossSport ?

The “*Crossing the Boundaries through sports*” - *CrosSport* - is a 2-year trans-European partnership project designed by the International Centre for Sport Security Europe (ICSS Europe), through its Save the Dream initiative, and involving other three international partners, the *International Olympic Truce Centre* (IOTC) (Greece), *Fundación Sevilla FC* (Spain), and *Fondazione Lazio 1900* (Italy).

CrossSport is a EU Preparatory Action funded by the Directorate-General for Education and Culture – Unit C4 (Sport), and coordinated by the ICSS Europe, which aims at fostering inclusion and integration of refugees through sport by establishing collaborative mechanisms and peer to peer platforms aimed at empowering sport organisations at all levels, while connecting them with integration-focused social development organizations.



What are Pilot Projects and Preparatory Actions?

Pilot Projects and Preparatory Actions are initiatives aimed to test the feasibility of an action and to prepare future EU activities. Lasting not more than two years, a Pilot Project is an initiative of an experimental nature designed to test the usefulness of an action. They are decided annually by the European Parliament and managed by the European Commission.

Preparatory Actions, with funding for not more than three years, are designed to prepare new actions like EU policies, legislation, programmes etc. They normally follow on from a successful pilot project on the same subject.

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The project objectives are the following:

1. Identify and associate organizations and projects focussing on the integration of youth refugees through sport implemented at local, national and European level.
2. Contribute to the networking and cooperation among local authorities, sport organizations (from grassroots clubs to federations) and social development organizations (NGOs, foundations, etc.) by setting up focus groups to share knowledge and identify good practices on the use sport as a tool of inclusion.
3. Develop a Methodology Handbook on how to increase community participation of youth refugees through the attractiveness of sport activities and a strengthened cooperation between sport and social development organizations.
4. Create the figure of the “*Community Leader for Inclusion through Sport (CLIS)*”, a reference person who is equipped for using all the potential that sport has to impulse the social inclusion of youth refugees who are relocated from one country to another.
5. Promote the figure of the “*Sport for Inclusion Activist (SIA)*” among refugees from different communities through an intensive training aimed to develop their skills to act as “Agents of Change” and to strengthen their abilities in the fields of capacity building, community engagement and social inclusion, as well as gender equality and empowerment through sport.

1.5 *CrosSport* management and decision-making

The management of the *CrosSport* project has revolved around 3 (three) main axis:

- a) building up of a network of collaborative organizations
- b) creating working tools such as the educational package’s training programs
- c) raising the awareness of the sport and social integration ecosystem by lifting up the voice of refugees.

CrosSport management has followed a clear approach in which the coordinator has been responsible for the coordination of the consortium’s work while embracing a participatory decision-making in every step of the process.

To achieve this concerted effort, the project conducted regular online Steering Committee Meetings (SCM) and in-presence Trans-Partnership Meeting (TPM) at crucial moments of the



project implementation. These meetings have been central to guaranteeing the alignment of this transnational work.

The ultimate goal of such organizational set-up has been the achievement of the objectives set out at project outset, through the operationalization of the working packages.

The next chapter will zoom into each step that made this possible.



2. Reference Framework and Networking

This section provides guidance to any organization that intends to:

- **Create participatory working practices to work locally on refugees through sport.**

Specifically, it helps respond to the following question?

What are the steps that I need to follow to identify and become partner to a “like-minded” organization?

2.1 Identification and association of organizations

The identification and association of organizations was the first step for the establishment of National Focus Groups. A clear **Methodology** was discussed and agreed upon during the first TPM in Lisbon. This followed a two-tier approach:

1. **Give refugees a voice:** participation and involvement of refugees and their representative organizations in project activities

Key premise:

Since its outset, the project intended to (co)-produce knowledge with Refugees and take an active stance *vis a vis* their status, problems and aspirations in sport as an instrument for social inclusion. Through this engagement, refugees assume ownership of the project: this is a fundamental step to change the paradigm revolving around refugees and it also helps promote a positive image of inclusion and counter negative narratives concerning their status.

How was it achieved?

→Participation in the launch event

The *CrosSport* project’s launch event, organized during the *European Week of Sport* in September 2022, presented an opportunity to move a first step in this direction, as it elected refugees as the theme of the week.

The event revolved around a **refugees-led sharing talk** that gathered testimonies representing the refugee’s communities, who were identified and invited.



by national partners. The Refugees, who participated in the conceptualization of the event session, took the lead during the talk while leaving the coordinating partners a facilitation and moderation role.

→Participation in the Focus Groups

National Focus Groups of Experts were conducted and counted on the participation of refugees and their representative organizations. This participatory format was essential to guaranteeing that the views of the refugees was incorporated in the project activities.



→Participation in the training programme: conceptualization of the SIA module

By sharing their experiences, needs and challenges, a group of young refugees conveyed their reflections and provided relevant input for defining the objectives, content and teaching method of the training to create the figure of Sport Activists for Inclusion agents. This represented a fundamental contribution to allow the *CrossSport Autumn School* Scientific Committee "to customize" this training activity.



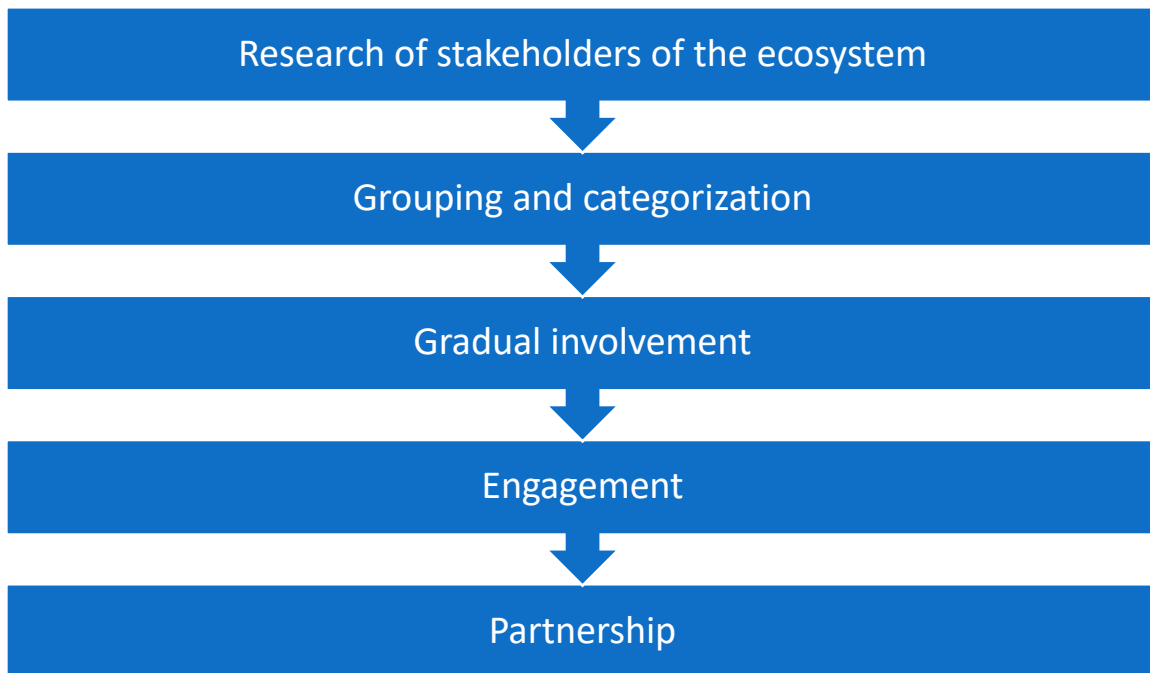
→Participation in awareness raising events

A milestone in the project’s awareness raising effort is represented by the event “Football Match between Refugees and Project Partners”, which gathered 63 participants from different organizations, and was broadcasted by the Portuguese Television Channel of the Portuguese Football Federation (PFF) Canal 11 during the Program “Amor a Camisola”.



The project’s awareness raising actions are described in Chapter 4 “Dissemination”.

2. **Engage “like-minded” organizations** through a gradual process leading to partnerships



The process illustrated above is the result of a constant effort and **work ethics** based on two **principles**:

- work collaboratively and “well” together
- dedication to the refugees cause
- shared belief in the transformative power of sport



The next paragraphs are illustrative of this effort and enrich with examples of how this work out in practice.

2.2 Networking and cooperation among organizations

This first work package was structured according to pre-defined criteria and subsequent Terms of Reference (ToR) (which is available as an Annexes).

A) Setting up Focus Groups

The underlying **criteria** for the setting up of and participation of entities in National Focus Groups was the the following:

- 25% Sport organizations
- 25% social development organizations
- 25% organizations representative of refugees
- 25% academia

This percentage was defined in order to guarantee a balanced participation that would take into consideration the views of key stakeholders groups.

B) Knowledge sharing and collection of good practices

The Focus Groups were set up with the **objective to collect a set of good practices** and experiences about successful initiatives, projects or strategies at local and national level (but also European and international level, when relevant) in the integration and inclusion of refugees through sport in reception communities, with a focus on youth.

The implementation of the Focus Groups was conducted according to the ToR previously shared with all participants. The ToR served the purpose to set a clear working framework based on an agreed common criteria and methodology for the uniformization in the presentation of results. The ToR provides a description of:

- Responsibilities of the participants
- Modalities for the operationalization of the meeting
- Guiding questions for the collection of data and information
- Worksheet / Form of the Focus Group Report (Output: Downloadable Good Practice sheet)

Over two months *CrosSport* partners in Portugal, Spain, Italy and Greece met with key leading actors committed to the integration of refugees through sport in their respective countries.



The table below summarizes the participants of the Focus Group in each country.

Portugal: Focus group	Spain' Focus Group	Italy's Focus Group	Greece's Focus Group
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ International Organization for Migration (IOM) ○ Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS) ○ Portuguese Institute of Sports and Youth (IPDJ – National Plan on Sport Ethics) ○ High Commission for Migration (ACM) ○ Sport Confederation of Portugal (CDP) ○ Social Innovation in Sport ○ National Olympic Committee of Portugal (COP) ○ University of Porto's Observatory Sport, Education and Communities ○ Forum Refugio ○ Athletes representative of the refugee community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ CEPAIM ○ CEAR ○ Fundación Sevilla Fc ○ Club de Remo Sevilla ○ Cd Dragones De Lavapiés ○ Fundación LaLiga ○ Federación Navarra de Beisbol ○ Special Olympics ○ ACNUR España ○ CD Montevil ○ Asociación Alacrán 1997 ○ Comité Olímpico Español (COE) ○ Comité Olímpico Internacional (COI) ○ Cruz Roja ○ Futbol Mas España ○ Proemaid ○ Mundialito Inmigración (Sfc) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Every child is my child ○ Roma calcio amputati ○ Donne for peace ○ Lazio Basket ○ Lazio Calcio a 8 ○ Lazio American Football ○ Riding for Rainbow (Afrilanthropy association) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ARSIS NGO ○ Girl Power Academy Greece ○ Athens Comic Library ○ AEK FC ○ Organisation Earth ○ ActionAid Hellas (IOTC) HESTIA FC as it has been identified as best practice from UEFA and UNHCR

The Focus Groups were led by each *CrosSport* partner in its respective country. The Focus Groups were organized autonomously by each partner attempting to reflect in their composition the general criteria set out for their constitution.

The Focus Group Meetings were held both online and in presence and counted with a total presence of 50 organizations. Such participation was instrumental to gathering and analysing the good practices on the integration of refugees through sport. The list of good practices is downloadable in the website www.crossport4refugees.eu.

The work of the Focus Group was also pivotal to strengthening the collaboration among national and European partners and defining, as we will see, new collaborative partnerships.



In Spain, Fundación Sevilla FC worked with multi-stakeholder group of Spanish actors, which are involved in the *Mundialito de la Inmigración*, a football tournament that was launched in 2005 with the desire to “support the comprehensive development of immigrants” who reside in Sevilla and who share the same universal language of Sport.

Above: Presentation of the 24 teams that participated in the XVI edition of the Mundialito.
Below: Partners from different organizations engaged in the Mundialito and CrossSport.



3. Educational programmes

This section provides guidance to any organization that intends to:

- **Develop a training programme to build the capacity of staff working with refugees and sport.**

Specifically, it helps respond to the following question?

How do I work with strategic partners to develop a training programme on the integration of refugees through sport?

A) Creating the figures of *Community Leader for Sport Inclusion (CLIS)* and *Sport for Inclusion Activist (SIA)*

3.1 Methodology of the educational package

The *CrossSport* project aimed to create a collaborative network of local authorities, sport and social development organizations to instigate community participation of young refugees through their involvement in sport activities. This collaborative approach, exemplified by the work of the Focus Groups, was instrumental to fostering dialogue between these organizations and to the identification of the *Community Leader for Inclusion through Sport (CLIS)* and the *Sport for Inclusion Activist (SIA)*.

According to the terms of reference of the educational package, the “*Community Leader for Inclusion through Sport (CLIS)*” is a reference person identified in the host community who is equipped to use all the potential that sport has to impulse the social inclusion of youth refugees who are relocated from one country to another through a dedicated training program”.

At the same time, since its conceptualization, the project acknowledged that refugees’ activism could be a great boost to social inclusion. Specifically, it could create a “ripple effect” in terms of increasing public awareness within the community. For this, training for refugee community’s agents of change was a critical activity to ensure that their soft skills, knowledge and enthusiasm were best harnessed.

To provide a response to this crucial inclusive mechanism, the educational package envisaged the identification of *Sport for Inclusion Activist (SIA)* within the refugee community who are equipped to act as “Agent of Change” in order to promote community engagement and social inclusion, as well as gender equality and empowerment of girls through sport.

Based on these conceptual premises and project objectives, the project elaborated an educational package which was the result of the process of gradual engagement of like-minded partners. This process, which resulted in the creation of the **CrossSport Autumn School**, was achieved by following a four-step methodology:



3.2 Development of the educational package



Preparation phase

This phase consisted in the definition of the objectives of the educational package. To define such objectives, it was necessary an agreement by all partners of the consortium regarding the format and content of this activity. To achieve this result, a series of steps were taken:

- The process was initiated with the **drafting of the Terms of Reference** of the two figures, which was shared and agreed upon by all partners.
- This preparatory document constituted the basis for **discussion within the focus groups and the refugees**. This consultation was necessary to understand the appropriateness of this formative tool in consideration of the target group.
- Another essential step was the **identification of a scientific partner** to structure and design the educational package. With this regard, the focus group was instrumental to identifying a suitable partner with expertise in the area of refugees and sport.
- The last stage of this preparatory process concluded with the **signing of a Memorandum of Understanding** with the University of Porto's [Observatory of Sport, Education and Communities](#) (ODEC).
- This was the first step in the **establishment of the Scientific Committee**, which is a concrete example of how the previously described methodology of "engagement of like-minded organizations" worked in practice: further to the ODEC, as one of the participants of the Focus Group, the Portuguese sport's umbrella organization representing 63 sport federations [Sports Confederation of Portugal](#) (CDP) was challenged to participate in the *Autumn School* as the **sport advisory partner** of the Scientific Committee. Once established a joint purpose, ICSS Europe, ODEC and CDP established this partnership to develop the educational package.

Design phase

The **design phase** was carried out jointly with both the Scientific Committee and the *CrosSport* partners. Specifically, this phase consisted of different concomitant activities:

- a. the development of the programme's content and calendar.

- b. the development of the technological solution to implement the training online.
- c. the execution of administrative tasks (publicity, enrolment, etc).

In summary, the design of either trainings was carried out through a participatory process by following a series of steps:

- ⇒ Draft of the Terms of Reference (ToR) of CLIS and SIA trainings
- ⇒ Share the ToR with the Steering Committee and reception of feedbacks
- ⇒ Convene a brainstorming session with refugees and supporting organizations
- ⇒ Discuss the inputs gathered with the *Autumn School's* Scientific Committee
- ⇒ Propose the content and format to the Steering Committee and final approval

A) *Design of the CLIS training*

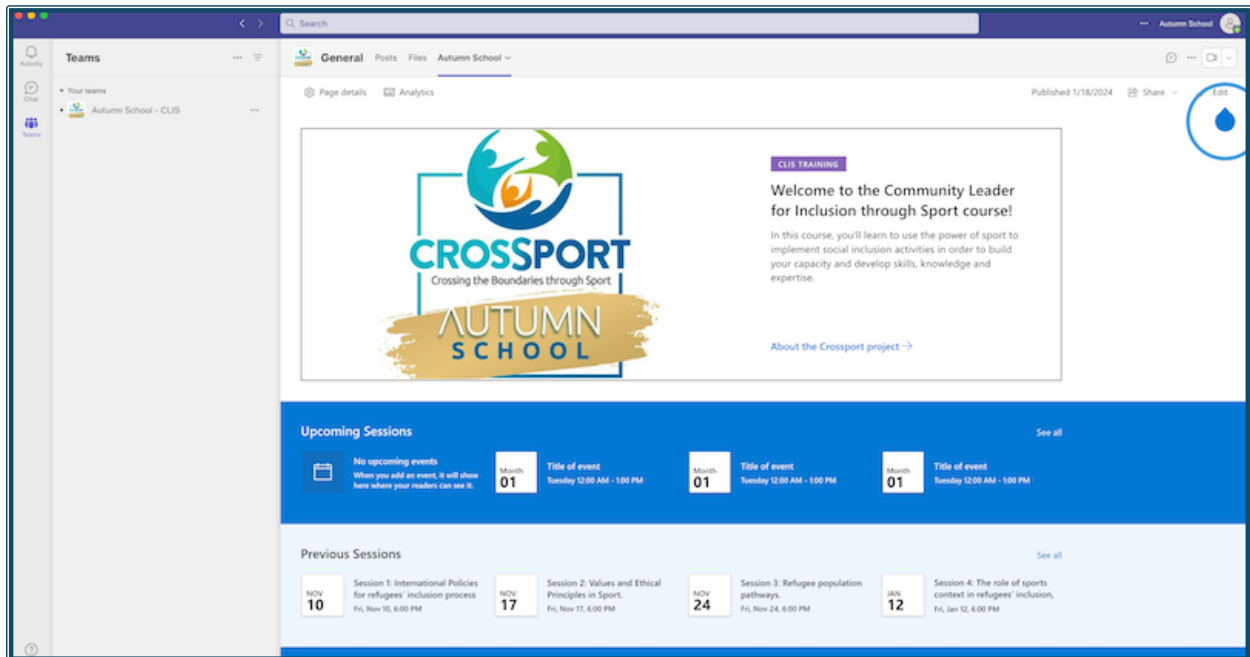
The development of the programme followed a two-tier approach that revolves around the following steps.

- In the first place, the project coordinator worked the **outline of the programme** called “Potential Alignment of Sessions”, which was shared with all partners for their comments and input.
- After this, the **programme outline was shared with the Scientific Committee** for further analysis. The Scientific partner took up a leading role in the development of the main content of the programme (sessions).
- To openly discuss and validate each programme module, it was decided to organize **weekly Scientific Committee meetings** to discuss the content (slides, presentations, interventions), the structure (participatory approach with the trainees activity participating and sharing their experience in the development of the module), the involvement of external speakers, and relevant administrative issues.

The **CLIS training's final alignment** included the following sessions:

1. International Policies for refugees' inclusion process
2. Values and Ethical Principles in Sport
3. Refugee population's pathways
4. The role of sports' context in refugees' inclusion, sense of community and belonging
5. Social Innovation through Sport
6. Partnership, collaboration, and networking: sustainable funding for refugees' sports activities

The full content of the modules is available in the *CrosSport* Learning Platform online.



The **CLIS training's summary table** is presented below:

- ⇒ 40 participants from different organizations
- ⇒ 15 hours in-class (online) theoretical modules: 6 modules of 2,5 hours each
- ⇒ Additional home-based work based on previously defined tasks (“challenges”)
- ⇒ Provision of 2 CTS certificate upon successful completion
- ⇒ Participation in a wider network on sport for the inclusion of refugees

B) Design of the SIA training

The process highlighted above was instrumental to the design of the SIA training in a **training of facilitators format**. After consultations with the Steering Committee and the Scientific Committee, it was agreed that the optimal structure would be a self-paced training model providing greater flexibility for every party involved and better adapting to the needs of participant refugees.

According to this format the staff belonging both to partners organizations and implementing organizations in all countries are trained by the Scientific Committee who maintains responsibility for both the production of content and the delivery of the training; the implementation of the modules is then delegated to all partners who are responsible for implementing, monitoring and evaluating the SIA course with refugees in their respective countries.

Specifically, *CrosSport* partners are trained together with the staff of any local partner organization that is engaged in sport activities with refugees. After this initial training each

partner is responsible, in each country, for the training (theoretical part) and implementation of the dynamics (practical part) of at least 10 refugees (40 in total).

The **SIA Training of Facilitators** focuses on 3 sessions:

- Module 1: Sport for Inclusion Activist as Agent of Change
- Module 2: Personal and social development through sport
- Module 3: Dynamics for Inclusion (cooperative games, team building, etc.)

With this activity *CrosSport* an important opportunity to train both dedicated staff and refugees, allow both flexibility of a country-specific implementation, consideration for the target group availability, multiplier effect.

The **SIA training's summary table** is presented below:

- ⇒ Training of trainers of *CrosSport* partners and network participants
- ⇒ 40 young refugees trained
- ⇒ 5 modules: 3 theoretical and two practical sessions
- ⇒ 10 hours of training in total (between theory and practice)
- ⇒ Participation in a wider network on sport for the inclusion of refugees

Note: *CrosSport* is a pilot preparatory action. With this background, partners have agreed to revise the original scope of the SIA training programme “transforming” it into a ToT action as it was deemed optimal to adjust this activity on the basis of the needs and specificities of the context. Thus, this new training concept was considered the right format when compared to the initially planned direct training of young refugees.

Implementation phase

The implementation of the educational programme was carried out taking into consideration two main pillars:

Partnership with key stakeholders. A list of key partners that have contributed to the successful realization of this activity include:

University of Porto's Observatory for Sport, Education and Communities (ODEC)	https://odec.fpce.up.pt
Sports Confederation of Portugal (CDP)	www.cdp.pt
Government of Portugal's National Plan for Ethics in Sport (NPES)	https://pned.ipdj.gov.pt
Special Olympics	https://www.specialolympics.org/
Save the Children – War Child - TeamUp Project - The Netherlands	https://www.sollicitatieteamup.nl/
ColorAdd	www.coloradd.net

Social Innovation in Sport	https://www.socialinnovationsports.org

Participation of trainees: equally important is the consideration that all sessions were devised to stimulate the participation of trainees during the session.



Testing phase

As a practical application of the knowledge produced, the project envisaged to “deploy” Community Leader for Sport Inclusion (CLIS) trainees within their own community in order to incorporate this knowledge in the daily work of those organizations working with refugees within the host communities.

The objective of the deployment is for the CLIS to critically look at his/her daily experience of work with refugees through the lenses of the project’s intellectual outputs (CLIS training programme and collected Good practices) while offering guidance in two situations:

- Ongoing project or stand-alone initiative: the staff is faced with organizing activities with refugees in his/her daily work.
- Future project or stand-alone initiative: the staff is tasked with conceptualizing a project proposal or planning an event.

4. Dissemination

This section provides guidance to any organization that intends to:

- **Implement an awareness raising strategy on the integration of refugees through sport in the local community.**

Specifically, it helps respond to the following question?

What set of actions do I need to implement to reach out the broader public and sensitize it regarding the importance of sport for the integration of refugees in our society?

The project's dissemination revolved around a clear **awareness raising strategy**. Along the project's lifetime, a set of awareness raising actions were operationalized with the intent to promote the core message – central role of sport in amplifying opportunities for integration of refugees in our communities – both online and with concrete actions on the ground.

a) Social media and press release

“Spread the message”

CrosSport has implemented a constant communication through social media by extensively using a the social networks and press:

- Social media: *CrosSport* project has been disseminated through the ICSS, Save the Dream and project's partners accounts on Instagram and Twitter, with link to the project's website
- Partners' websites: partners have constantly communicated about the project's initiatives, whether on their own websites or through their social media accounts.
- Press releases: Partners have issued press releases to give the project's insights, which are disseminated through the partners' own communication channels and in the project's website www.crossport4refugees.eu.
- Roll ups: partners have designed and produced roll-ups that have been used in all project-related events.

b) Mural of videos of refugees' testimonies

“Make your voice heard”

A Mural of Videos of testimonies represented a great opportunity to collaborate with refugees and partners to gather their experiences and raise the voice on the theme of the central role of sport for the integration of refugees and migrants in our communities. This effort is a long-lasting, durable and “ongoing” instrument to sensitize the public.

Posted on the **CrossSport**'s website (<https://crossport4refugees.eu>), the Mural witnesses the personal experience of refugees and partners as they share their life path, and the positive impact sport has had in the daily challenges of inclusion and integration.

c) World Youth Day

“Put your foot on the ground”

CrossSport project team organized a multi-faceted large public awareness raising and dissemination action with a considerable impact for the public at large on the occasion of the *World Youth Day* (WYD) on the 1st of August 2023 in Lisbon. This consisted of the following:

<p>a) design and dissemination of a “customized-for-the-event” project flyer, which included the mural of videos accessible through a QR code;</p> <p>b) a Project roll-up exhibited, which also included the QR code with the link to Mural of videos at the Lisbon Youth Centre;</p> <p>c) the ICSS Europe team took action and distributed project flyers in key city spots while inviting young people to visit the online Mural and embrace the refugees’ journey of inclusion and integration in the host communities.</p>	
	<p>ICSS Europe and CrossSport welcomed the universal message spread to the hundreds of thousands of youths gathered from all over the world according to which <i>“Sport is a universal language that goes beyond borders, languages, races, religions and ideologies. It has the ability to bring people together, encourage dialogue and acceptance. It is a precious resource!”</i>. Pope Francis</p>
<p>ICSS Europe staff disseminating flyers in the WYD crowds</p>	

d) Seixal Football Match

“Put your shoes on the pitch”

ICSS EUROPE, the *Portuguese Red Cross* and *Seixal Clube 1925*, a sport club that distinguishes itself for playing an active role in the integration of youth refugees in the Portuguese society, were the organizers of the **Football Game between Refugees and Partners** on 29th of September 2023 at Estádio Municipal do Bravo, home of *Seixal Clube 1925*.

This initiative, which was attended by more than 60 people among partners and refugees and was part of ICSS EUROPE activities in the *European Week of Sport (23-30.09.2023)* contributed to highlighting and celebrating the unique capacity of sport to strengthen the integration of refugees, promote social cohesion, empathy and inspire action in inclusion through sport. The football match was followed by a social dinner which also revealed the importance of food and gastronomy as a symbol of integration as it brings people and cultures together.



A reportage of CrossSport’s **Football match between partners and refugees** was also broadcasted by the Portuguese Television Channel of the Portuguese Football Federation (PFF) Canal 11 project during the Program *“Amor a Camisola”*. In 2022, Canal 11 won a honorable mention of the “Children's Rights in the News” award awarded by the National Commission for the Protection of Children and Youth.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=svzYmQQU-L4>



5. Annexes

- Launch event abstract
- Focus Group Terms of Reference
- Good practices (downloadable summary)
- CLIS training methodology
- SIA training methodology



CrosSport
“Crossing the Boundaries through Sport”

LAUNCH EVENT – Friday 30th, September 2022

ICSS EUROPE, within the framework of ICSS’s *Save the Dream initiative*, is launching in Portugal the project “*Crossing the Boundaries through Sport (CrosSport)*” in partnership with the International Olympic Truce Centre (Greece), Fondazione SS Lazio 1900 (Italy), and Fundación Sevilla FC (Spain).

CrosSport was designed to support young refugees in Europe by using sport as a tool for their integration and social inclusion. This comprehensive initiative was one of the ten projects selected for funding as a *Preparatory Action* in this area, a tool introduced by the European Union that aims at testing new policy initiatives and/or prepare the ground for the adoption of future policies, programs or actions at EU level.

CrosSport was originally conceived to tackle the challenges posed by the migration flow affecting the Mediterranean Basin. Today’s current and dramatic events stress, more than ever, the need to adopt such innovative measures and enlarge the scope of action.

With this backdrop, *CrosSport* aims at creating a collaborative network of local authorities, sport and social development organisations to increase community participation of youth refugees through the attractiveness of sport activities. From its outset, the project aims to:

- Give refugees a voice: refugees co-produce knowledge and take an active stance *vis a vis* their status, problems and aspirations in sport as an instrument for social inclusion. Through this engagement, refugees assume ownership of the project.
- Promote a positive image of inclusion and counter negative narratives concerning refugees.

The project’s launch event, organized during the European Week of Sport, presents an opportunity to make a first step in this direction, as it elevates the theme of refugees and promotes a change in the paradigm revolving around refugees and their avenues for inclusion.

The **refugees-led sharing talk** gathers testimonies representing the refugee’s communities, which are identified by project partners. The testimonies are directly involved in the conceptualization of this session and are expected to take the lead in the debate with partners and stakeholders.

The launch event also attempts to take stock of current initiatives that are actively pursuing similar goals and seek virtuous complementarities. The event is hosted by the National Olympic Committee of Portugal (NOC), a reference institution in promoting the inclusion and integration of refugees into the Portuguese society based on Olympic values of respect, friendship and excellence.

This approach paves the way for jointly exploring the boundaries between refugees’ status and practice of sport, while conveying a shared working method to pursue inclusion objectives among refugees, partners and stakeholders.



Crossing the Boundaries through Sport (CrosSport)

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Focus Groups - REFERENCE FRAMEWORK AND NETWORKING (WP2)

Objective

To collect a set of good practices and experiences about successful initiatives, projects or strategies at local and national level (but also European and international level, when relevant) in the integration and inclusion of refugees through sport in reception communities, with a focus on youth.

The Focus Group will contribute with the identification of 10-12 good practices and with the general mapping of existing practices, following the agreed common criteria and methodology.

Responsibilities of the FG participants:

- Participate and share responsibilities for FG activities.
- Share good practices, insights and findings from guidelines, projects, evaluation reports, etc.

Modalities

a) Discussion group

- The Group meets twice either online or face-to-face.
- The meeting agenda will be shared in advance.
- Members are encouraged to propose agenda items.
- Minutes of each meeting, including the agreements reached and follow up issues will be taken by the Spokeperson and circulated with all members within one week after the meeting.

b) Desk research studies

Guiding questions

In preparation of the focus group discussions, the list of **criteria** that help evaluate refugees inclusion through sport (to produce the outputs/final Report) is the following:

Quantitative data:

- how many initiatives took place in the participating countries?
- what is the representation of people with a refugee background in sport?



Qualitative data:

- What is the profile of refugees involved in the integration?
- Which are the main leading organizations / entities involved in the country in specific sport for refugees programmes?
- What are the integration models permitting access to sport programmes for refugees which are being implemented?
- Are there specific local cooperation instances among organizations that ensure that barriers such as transport are overcome and access to sport programmes guaranteed?
- What is the level of engagement of public bodies?
- What is the level of engagement and perception by the local communities (Local Councils, local NGO's, Civil Society)?
- Are there existing platforms for the exchange of good practices on the integration of refugees through sport (examples of reception and integration in clubs and sport practices through, for instance, special permits granted or agreements made through inter entities collaboration that arise from these platforms)?

Worksheet / Form of the Focus Group Report

Output: Downloadable Good Practice sheet (2 pager)



Title of the initiative:

Region / Country / Town:

Key-stakeholders involved: (public + private & sport + extra-sport)

1st part: Brief description (background/rational, purpose)

(Max.: 1000 characters)

2nd part: Implementation of the practice (number of persons involved, refugees' profile and concrete conditions of living, duration of the initiative, explanation of activities, etc.)

(Max.: 2000 characters)

3rd part: Impact (results, etc.)

(Max.: 1000 characters)

4th part: Lessons learnt/recommendation

(Max.: 1500 characters)

5th part: Contact details (partner, name, email, phone)

(Max.: 500 characters)



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“**Crossing the Boundaries through Sport (CrossSport)**” is a project funded by the European Union (EU), coordinated by ICSS EUROPE and implemented in partnership with the International Olympic Truce Center (Greece), Fondazione SS Lazio 1900 (Italy), and Fundación Sevilla FC (Spain).

The CrossSport project aims to create a **collaborative network** of local authorities, sport and social development organizations to instigate community participation of young refugees through their involvement in sport activities. This collaborative approach is instrumental to fostering dialogue between these organizations and to the identification of the *Community Leader for Inclusion through Sport (CLIS)*.

The **Community Leader for Inclusion through Sport (CLIS)** is a reference person identified in the host community who will be equipped for using all the potential that sport has to impulse the social inclusion of youth refugees who are relocated from one country to another through a dedicated training programme. The goal is to implement a customized training programme to train community leaders (with or without a sport background) and sport staff (athletes, coaches, educators, etc.) on the use of sport practices to implement social inclusion activities in order to build their capacity and embed this skills, knowledge and expertise within sport organizations and other committed stakeholders to achieve their organizational objectives.

At the same time, it is acknowledged that refugees’ activism can be a great boost to social inclusion. Specifically, it can create a “ripple effect” in terms of increasing public awareness within the community. For this, training for refugee community’s agents of change is a critical activity to ensure that their soft skills, knowledge and enthusiasm are best harnessed. The CrossSport training programme envisages building the capacity of **Sport for Inclusion Activist (SIA)** identified within the refugee community who will be equipped to act as “Agent of Change” in order to promote community engagement and social inclusion, as well as gender equality and empowerment of girls through sport.

Scientific Committee: ICSS EUROPE, the Observatory for Sports, Education and Communities (ODEC) of the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences of the University of Porto (FPCEUP), and the Sports Confederation of Portugal (CDP).

Target audience: members of the local community aged between 18 and 35; youth leaders and civil society activists, including migrants, with or without a sporting background, workers from municipalities and local public bodies, associations, foundations, NGOs, coaches, and other staff from sports clubs and other sports organizations.

Objective: to build the capacities of 40 CLIS in all participating countries (Portugal, Greece, Italy and Spain) through a certified training course, which will count on the participation of the key actors in sport and social inclusion such as the CDP, Portugal’s High Commission for Migration (ACM) and the National Plan for Ethics in Sport (NPES).



Dates:	Module 1: 10 November 2023 Module 2: 17 November 2023 Module 3: 24 November 2023 Module 4: 12 Janeiro 2024 Module 5: 19 Janeiro 2024 Module 6: 26 Janeiro 2024
Time:	18:00 – 20: 30 GMT (Lisbon) / 19:00 – 21:30 CET (Sevilla, Rome) / 20:00 – 22:30 CET+1 (Athens)
Nº of Sessions:	6 (2,5 hours of online session + 2 hours of self-study exercises = 4,5 per session)
Duration:	27 hours in total
ECTS:	Minimum attendance of 75% of the training hours

Sessions

1. *International Policies for refugees' inclusion process:* ODEC + ICSS EUROPE + CrossSport partners + CDP
2. *Values and Ethical Principles in Sport:* ODEC + National Plan for Ethics in Sport (NPES)
3. *Refugee population pathways:* ODEC + Portugal's High Commission for Migration (ACM) + CrossSport partners
4. *Multidimensional role of sport context in refugees' inclusion, sense of community and belonging:* ODEC + CDP + CrossSport partners
5. *Social Innovation through Sport:* ODEC + CDP
6. *Partnership, collaboration, and networking: sustainable funding for refugees' sports activities:* ODEC + ICSS EUROPE + CrossSport partners



Background

“**Crossing the Boundaries through Sport (CrossSport)**”, is a project funded by the European Union (EU), coordinated by ICSS EUROPE (Portugal) and implemented in partnership with the International Olympic Truce Center (Greece), Fondazione SS Lazio 1900 (Italy), and Fundación Sevilla FC (Spain).

The CrossSport project was originally designed to address the challenges posed by the migratory flow affecting the Mediterranean basin. Today's current and dramatic events emphasize, more than ever, the need to adopt innovative measures and expand the scope of action.

The CrossSport project also aims to create a **collaborative network** of local authorities, sport and social development organizations to instigate community participation of young refugees through their involvement in sport activities in the partner countries: Greece, Italy, Spain and Portugal. In order to provide young refugees and host communities concrete opportunities for interaction and exchange through sport, **Focus Groups** have been established and a collection of good practices has been compiled. This collaborative approach fosters a dialogue between organizations and is instrumental for the identification of the “**Sport for Inclusion Activist**” (**SIA**) within the refugee communities.

It is, in fact, acknowledged that refugees’ activism can be a great boost to social inclusion. Specifically, it can create a “ripple effect” in terms of increasing public awareness within the community. For this, training for refugee community’s agents of change is a critical activity to ensure that their soft skills, knowledge and enthusiasm are best harnessed.

The “*Sport for Inclusion Activist (SIA)*” will be equipped to act as “*Agent of Change*” and be capable to strengthen the capacities of his/her community fellow members, promote community engagement and social inclusion, as well as gender equality and empowerment of girls through sport.



The SIA training programme

The CrosSport training programme aimed at creating the two figures of Community Leaders for Sport Inclusion (CLIS) and Sport for Inclusion Activists (SIA) was officially launched on the 27th of September 2023 in a public event at the Faculty of Porto with the signature of the a Memorandum of Understanding between the ICSS EUROPE and the key scientific partner of the educational programme, the Observatory for Sports, Education and Communities (ODEC) of the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences of the University of Porto (FPCEUP). The event also formalized the setting up the **Scientific Committee of the training programme** constituted by the ICSS EUROPE, the ODEC and the Sports Confederation of Portugal (CDP).

The aim is to build the capacities of 40 SIA in all participating countries (Portugal, Greece, Italy and Spain) through **Capacity building workshops to promote inclusion of refugees through sport**, which will count on the participation of the key actors in sport and social development.

Duration

A 2-day practice-oriented workshops over a week-end (total of 10 hours)

Dates

February/March 2024 (to be confirmed)

Profile

- Members of the refugees community aged 18 to 35
- Refugees, with or without a sport background, with a proven engagement in the promotion of refugees inclusion within the host community
- a trust and respect builder
- a proactive networker within the community
- a leader that builds bridges and shares responsibilities with all the actors
- a socially responsible advocate that brings issues like the gender equality in a harmonious way
- Commitment to actively participating in social inclusion activities of refugees and migrants within the host community through sport



Content

The workshop modules will focus on the following main thematic blocks:

1. A refugee story: introductory workshop for personal introduction, expectations, goals, code of conduct, presentation of the programme, etc.
2. Uniting communities through sport: examples on the use of sport for social inclusion – Joint workshop with CLIS to share experiences, multiculturalism, etc.
3. Personal and Social Development through Sport: an insight about the use of sport to develop personal and social skills and competences by making use of subjects of concern to their peers and their own experience as a starting point.
4. Health Enhancing Physical Activity: a specific module to cover activities aimed at promoting physical and mental wellbeing through sport.
5. Gender and Sport: an insight about how to use sport to promote gender equality but also about sport gender/cultural specificities.