



Keep Youngsters Involved

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Final Conference Report Keep Youngsters Involved Amsterdam, 14th/15th March 2019



Participant final conference Keep Youngsters Involved



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Summary

The project Keep Youngsters Involved aims to find ways to prevent youngsters (age 12-19) from dropping out of sport. In many European countries, a lot of youngsters annually give up their sport due to a lack of motivation, problems with school or job schedule or different interests. The KYI project, co-funded by the Erasmus+ Sport programme in 2016, targets youngsters in general and specifically youngsters from lower socio-economic backgrounds. Six international project partners worked together to increase and share knowledge by creating a common understanding of effective and practice-based elements. They aimed to select the best products and implement them in grassroots sports within the European countries involved. The conference (14th and 15th of March 2019) was organized as a milestone just before closing the KYI-project. Main goal was to present some of the main insights and to collect perspective on the dissemination strategies, anticipating on the projects closure in September 2019.

After a brief word of welcome by the CEO of the Knowledge Centre for Sports Netherlands, Bert van Oostveen, the project team presented a framework that showed the structure of the project, culminating into the revelation of 14 main factors that can help prevent youth from dropping out of sports. These factors can be roughly divided into three categories:

- Predisposing factors, that have to do with setting the conditions
- Reinforcing factors, that have to do with social assistance
- Enabling factors, that take away limitations and borders

More information about these 14 factors, can be found at the [Project website](#). Every factor was then connected with 10 actions or policy plans, with which grassroots sports clubs can start working on the actual prevention of dropout amongst youngsters in sports. All these actions were transformed into different card games that can be used in discovering and exploring new policies.

Personal stories: messages from youngsters and professionals

Before the audience was facilitated to discover the practical and concrete varieties of measures and actions the project suggested themselves, they were offered several examples and practices of how youth can be involved into sports. We emphasis on some of the many examples:

- For instance, consider the personal story of the host of the conference, Dennis Gebbink, founder of Only Friends in Amsterdam, a sports club for mentally and physically disabled people. His experiences with his 26 years old son Myron, who from his early youth suffers from double-sided brain damage, inspired him to start his Only Friends Sports Club in 2000 with 70 disabled boys. The main vision of the club is expressed in its payoff: "You are as good as you are". Rather than competitive elements or the desire to be better than the other team, the main goal of any member is just playing together and have fun. Thus, introducing already 3 of the 14 factors: *Relatedness*, *Expectancy* and *Peer involvement*.
- Also consider the story of Houda Loukili, who despite different expectations from her environment, persisted in developing her talent as a kickboxer. With the help and understanding of some family members and her coach, she became a kickboxing champion at 15th of age. This being a good example of the value of the *Coach-athlete relationship* and the importance of a *learning climate*. She was offered a scholarship by

the Richard Krajicek Foundation, that she used to graduate in sports management. Nowadays, she inspires other young women as a sports community worker.

- Another insight is delivered by 20-year old computer science engineering student Dennis Bohm, who was chair of a youth committee at his tennis club Luctor in Almelo, the Netherlands, for 5 years. During this time, Dennis learned some heartfelt lessons, amongst other things that managing is not about completing all tasks oneself. However his *autonomy* in organizing activities at his own judgment and responsibility also grew, it helped him to feel proud of what he did. That experience and the benefits of a *learning climate* of a sports club helped him to find out what worked and what not, together with the *peers* in the Youth board, thus, stressing three factors.
- A professional perspective was given by Tarik Pehlivan from the Alexander Foundation: there is no way to participate in sports because participation is the way. Pehlivan stresses that we must acknowledge that youngsters already are participating in sports and in communities outside sports. Perhaps not the way we want them to do, but they are.
To keep youngsters involved in sports, we must guide youngsters in developing in sports and sports communities, by willingly entering their world. He focusses on 4 relevant factors: not every youngster will experience the freedom of choice, nor feel like she or he is part of the team/club; the relationship between youngster and coach will not always be effective and positive; and not every parent will always encourage his/her youngster to participate in sport. We should be aware of this as main focusses for change.

Exploring special interest groups

After these personal experiences from the youth themselves and professionals involved in their sporting activities, two workshops were chosen to gain insight in two specific groups of youngsters.

In **workshop 1**, Haifa Tlili from UFOLEP, an intercultural research centre to enhance women, focussed on the question: why do girls in French working class neighborhoods not want to practice PA? In France, only 3,6 percent of the girls that live in working-class neighborhoods are members of a sports club. Tlili conducted nationwide research in 2014 in 6 French cities, focussing on young girls between 14-19 and sports professionals who dealt with sports accommodations and offers. Most of the girls did not have a clue what sport means to them. They highly responded to issues like 'beauty' and 'relaxation', but they rejected to offer physical efforts in favor of their health and to participate in collective activities. Sports thus, did not seem to play an important role in their value system. Main recommendations for short term empowering girls in sport participation in France at-risk areas: restore the meaning and need for physical effort in connection to health, offer a wide variety of sports that mainly focus on making fun together and less on competition, investing in meeting girls on platforms to discuss their benefits and needs concerning sports and physical activity and last but not least: parents need to understand the need to practice PA every day.

In **workshop 2**, Diederik Fit, project leader of the Topscore project, focusses on lower socio-economic neighborhoods in Amsterdam. The municipality of Amsterdam contains 14.500 youngsters that come from lower socio-economic classes that live a life close to poverty. In these areas, 60 percent of the youngsters are not participating in sports for at least one hour a day. Most of the effort of the municipality is concentrated in education, community, and sports, and focusses on Primary school programmes, Special needs education programmes

and Secondary school programmes. The after-school programme was focussed on vocational education, in the primary schools where concentrations of lower socio-economic groups are found. The target group consists of 50 schools, 18.000 pupils altogether. After-school programmes are developed in cooperation with the school; the school provides accommodation in the school and coordination, the project provides trainers and methods.

Connecting with youngsters

The second day of the conference, 20 youngsters from all over Holland were invited to join and play one of the card games that were developed by the KYI project together with the other participants. Each group they formed was issued a card box, containing the 65 cards. All groups were asked to pick 3 cards that it would believe to be effective for the goal of keeping youngsters involved. All participants worked with the youngsters and chose and discussed cards with liveliness and lots of laughter. Many groups chose cards dealing with the relationship between trainer and pupil or cards that were concerned with lowering the cost borders of sport involvement, such as creating additional funds or alternatives to the formal club membership (free training). There were many suggestions that concerned different approaches of coaches and trainers, such as:

- Establishing the rules and values of sporting together with the youngsters involved, also concerning respect for the opponent (which isn't the enemy) and values as honesty (not to lie or to cheat)
- Build relations of trust and confidence, also by offering challenging tasks and tests
- Ask youngsters what they need in a training programme, but not letting the training programme free to fill in by the youngsters themselves (structure)
- Take the perspective of each individual member, together with individual levels of training
- Involve empathy in the training to make injured athletes welcome to the training with an adaptive programme, but also by taking the initiative to send a greeting card to injured team members by the team.

Towards implementation and dissemination

The KYI project is now moving towards the final stage, where implementation and dissemination in the partner countries is at stake. During the closing hours of the conference, first steps were taken to constructing national plans and programmes. TAFISA, the Association for International Sport for All, is in charge of dissemination of the results of the Keep Youngsters Involved project. Ingrid Martel explained the several ways TAFISA can offer to make the implementation and dissemination of KYI a success. One of the main advises here is: just begin at any level in finding ways to involve one or more of the 14 factors in discussions on grass root levels, e.g. in sport clubs and training facilities. Only by reaching out and involving youth in these conversations, we will be able to gain insight into the factors that matter for them and make their entrance into sports durable and sustainable.

Introduction

The project Keep Youngsters Involved aims to find answers to the question: 'How can we prevent youngsters (age 12-19) from dropping out of sport?'. In many European countries, a lot of youngsters give up their sport due to a lack of motivation, problems with school or job schedule or different interests. The project targets youngsters in general and specifically those from lower socio-economic backgrounds.

Six international project partners want to increase and share knowledge. By creating a common understanding of effective and practice-based elements, partner countries can share their good practices and interventions. Together they aim to select the best products and implement them in grassroots sports within the European countries involved.

To do this, the project partners try to ensure that more youngsters are – and stay – involved in grassroots sports and that fewer dropout. By involving youngsters more actively, for instance by asking them what they like to do, listening to their needs, giving them responsibilities in sports programs, they will develop their own personal skills. At the same time, the project contributes to the active citizenship of young people, an active lifestyle and meeting physical activity guidelines.

The project is funded by the European Commission. It is a collaborative partnership project in the Erasmus+ Sport programme (2016). The project started 1st of January 2017 and will continue until 30th of September 2019.

At 14th and 15th of March 2019, the Knowledge Centre for Sport Netherlands organized a final conference of the project. Aim was not only to present the processes and findings of the project, but also to present a variety of good examples of how youngsters can be involved into sports, interactively discovering ways to involve girls and youngsters from lower socio-economic groups and actually finding ways to implement and disseminate the results and methods that the project came up with in national action plans.

This report focusses on the various presentations and workshops of the conference and hopes to offer inspiration for the first concepts of the national action plans of the participating countries.

Day 1

Welcome and introduction by Bert van Oostveen, CEO Knowledge Centre for Sport Netherlands

Bert van Oostveen, CEO of the Knowledge Centre for Sport Netherlands, warmly welcomed all participants at the start of the first conference day. He briefly summarized the importance of the project, and then offered a quick insight into his personal experience with stimulating his own children for sports. Van Oostveen stressed the importance of enjoying the sport, not so much as to win more or train harder. He himself, being a former CEO of the Dutch National Soccer Federation KNVB, had to adapt to the idea that his sons preferred playing hockey. Not being familiar with the rules, he focussed more and more on the fun they had in playing and in their conversation about sporting. Leaving the audience with this message: listen to the preferences of your children instead of being led by your own ambitions in choosing a sport for your children.

Dennis Gebbink, founder of Only Friends Sports Club

Dennis Gebbink was actually the host of the day, for the conference took place at the Friendship Sports Centre, the home of the sports club Only Friends in Amsterdam. Only Friends was founded by him as a sports club for mentally and physically disabled people. Dennis referred in his presentation to his 26 years old son Myron, who from his early youth suffers from double-sided brain damage. Being an active athlete himself, this provided a challenge for Dennis and his family. Myron started playing soccer with the other boys in a regular club. After a while, due to his disability, he became too slow and wanted to stop playing. Dennis started looking for ways to offer his son the opportunity to enjoy sport at his own level and pace. In 1999, with the help of the municipality of Amsterdam, he founded the Only Friends Club, starting in 2000 with 70 disabled boys. The main vision of the club is presented in their slogan: "You are as good as you are". Unlike the competitive elements or the desire to be better than the other team, it is just playing together and have fun.

Myron is a grown up now and is preparing to take over the inspiring work of his father. Dennis underlines the importance of trust, by openly telling the audience that he himself was also struggling with doubts whether his son would manage to deal with the pressure, the energy, and skills needed to take up a leading role. Now, counting as many as 750 members, all youngsters between 10 – 20 years old, Only Friends offers the possibility to join teams in a variety of 25 sports. The members share many experiences together, become parts of each other's lives, find themselves in a warm and strong community, despite the loss of a lot of members that originally joined.

Today, the Friendship Sports Centre turns out to be one of the first sporting centres in the world for sports for the disabled. With about 150 volunteers and 50 trainers, Only Friends has become a large organization that still is successful and growing. Dennis especially is grateful for the contribution of 80 parents that are involved as volunteers.

Due to their work, not only sports activities can be offered, but also annual parties, dinners and other socializing activities that make the club strong and special. A short video concluded Dennis Gebbinks keynote speech by introducing several members of the Only Friends club.



Project Keep Youngsters Involved

What was the project Keep Youngsters Involved all about? Dorien Dijk from the Knowledge Centre of Sports Netherlands and project coordinator of Keep Youngsters Involved, was one of four members of the project team to present the project's layout and results. She briefly presented the outline from the start until the end phase of the project, in which dissemination will be the last goal. She presented the outcomes of the project so far:

- The project found 14 main factors to prevent youngsters from dropout in sports.
- The project developed a card game that will help to improve the policy on youth by creating a sports club action plan.
- The project developed actions for initiators with the 10 most appealing actions dedicated to each identified factor to prevent dropout.
- A toolkit was developed for any partner that wants to implement one of the factors in grassroots sports organizations and clubs.
- An infographic was made in which the integration of research, actions and the ways to implement them are visualized.

Catherine Woods and Joey Murphy from the University of Limerick, Ireland, presented the way in which the project team identified 14 factors that prevent youngsters from dropout from sports. In order to achieve these 14 factors:

- The team collected research information about determinants of sports dropout for youngsters, in order to identify relevant factors.
- The team collected knowledge of motivation, behaviour change methods and effective approaches, in order to develop a framework to understand these factors.
- The team audited examples of practical tools from grassroot sports organizations, in order to create good practice statements that link up factors to strategies used.

The team conducted a rapid review of existing 'grey' literature to identify factors that prevent sports dropout of youngsters. Rapid reviews are a form of knowledge synthesis in which components of the systematic review process are simplified or committed to producing information in a timely manner. A search syntax was developed and entered into the relevant databases, yielding 440 results.

From these 440 studies, three systematic reviews were identified as the most suitable for gathering factors associated with preventing sports dropout. Once the published literature search was complete, the KYI team gathered grey literature from the partner countries. Ten pieces of grey literature were identified and used to support and add to the published literature findings.

In total, nearly 150 factors were found to be linked with sports dropout by youngsters. The KYI team decided to focus on the factors that were known to **prevent** sports dropout. 144 factors were identified in total, 39 of which turned out to be significant, which were filtered down to 14 factors that actually are known to prevent sports dropout. They can be distinguished into three groups:

Predisposing factors:

1. Autonomy

Every youngster should experience certain freedom of choice in his/her actions, thinking, and feeling related to his/her sports practice. Every youngster can take initiative and should experience their behaviour as self-organized.

2. Perceived competence/self-efficacy

Every youngster should feel confident about their ability to achieve a challenging sports-related task or predefined goal. Every youngster should believe that he/she is capable of performing a specific task or managing a challenging situation.

3. Relatedness

Every youngster should feel like he/she is part of the team/club. Every youngster should experience a sense of warmth, affection, acceptance, and security about themselves, about being with others, and about being part of the team/club.

4. Values

Every youngster should value the importance and usefulness of sport participation for him-/herself. Every club should value the importance of sports participation for youngsters and where possible should promote these values.

5. Expectancies

Every youngster should understand what to expect when participating in a sports club. These expectations should cover the physical, social and mental aspects of participation. Every club should understand how youngsters' expectations relating to participation differ depending on age, sex, culture, and socio-economic status, and where possible cater to these variations in expectations and needs.

Reinforcing factors

6. Coach-Athlete Relationship

Every youngster and coach should have an effective and positive relationship, which includes empathetic understanding, honesty, support, cooperation, and respect.

7. Peer-Involvement in Sport

Every youngster should be encouraged by other players and NOT be teased or made feel nervous in a negative sense when partaking in sport. Every club should provide opportunities for youngsters to interact and make friends and encourage youngsters to do so. This should be done formally (organized, planned, evaluated) and informally (unplanned).

8. Parental Autonomy Support

Every parent/guardian should encourage his/her youngster to participate in sport. Every parent/guardian should provide support (e.g. transport, equipment, doing an activity with them, encouragement, etc.), when possible, to their youngster to take part in sport. Every club should support parents/guardians to do so, especially with respect to youngsters who are more likely to drop out of sport (i.e. vulnerable groups).

Enabling factors

9. Time/Goal Balance

Every youngster should manage their time, where possible, to allow for sports participation. Every club should organize activities at suitable, flexible and accessible times for youngsters to be able to participate. Clubs should balance time commitment required with youngsters' participation level (i.e. recreational, advanced or elite) and should be mindful of the time youngsters need to give to other aspects of their lives (e.g. education).

10. Cost

Every youngster should be able to afford the cost of staying involved in sport. Every club should actively try to keep the cost of participating low for youngsters in order to avoid financial barriers to participation. Every club should discuss opportunities for individuals facing financial barriers (e.g. membership in exchange for voluntary tasks at the sports club).

11. Learning climate

Every youngster should receive positive reinforcement from significant others (i.e. coaches, peers, parents) when he/she works hard, and they should help others to learn through cooperation. It should be recognized that every person's contribution is important for the club.

12. Prevention Policy

Every club should have an anti-dropout policy that creates awareness of the factors associated with dropout and that actively strives to prevent dropout. Every club should be encouraged to use the health potential of their particular sport. Every youngster should be an ambassador for participation and continued engagement in sport and physical activity.

13. Accessibility

Every youngster should be able to access the sports facilities safely and conveniently. Every club should make its facilities access as safe and convenient as possible for youngsters and their families.

14. Type of sport offer

Every youngster should have the possibility to participate in sports activities they enjoy and should be able to participate at the level they are most comfortable (e.g. competitive, recreational, etc.). Every club should provide different opportunities for youngsters, where possible, and policies that create opportunities for youngsters with regard to the level of participation, the variation of training and organization of competitions should be encouraged. To cater for a broad range of activities and meet the needs of families, every club should provide a wide range of sports activities if possible (i.e. multisport club).

Dan Boboc from the National Institute for Sport Research, Romania accordingly presented the process in which the 14 factors were translated into understandable actions. In three different subsequent actions, working actions were collected:

- First, all members of the project group chose at least 2 examples of best practices related to each factor. Thus, was created a long list.
- In a transnational meeting in Helsinki, Finland, partners filtered the list by removing projects that were focussed on parents and peers, as being not relevant for the project.
- In another transnational meeting in Lisbon, Portugal, partners again filtered the list by deciding the 10 most significant and implementable actions for every factor.

Tuija Tammelin from LIKES Research Centre, Finland was the last project member in the project presentation. She presented the toolkit development for professionals who work with youngsters at the grassroot level: trainers, coaches, youth committees, boards and so on. The toolkit now contains tips and tricks, video's, recommendations, formats for workshops and good practices. The main product in the toolkit is the card game. There are three game variations described in the Card Games Methodologies.

Houda Loukili; bridging cultural differences and expectations

Houda Loukili works at Sport Utrecht, Netherlands as a Sports Community worker. Houda is responsible for promoting sport and physical activity in four neighborhoods in Utrecht. In particular among those with a lower social-economic status, the elderly, and people with health issues. In Amsterdam, she gives lessons in kickboxing and self-defence.



In her youth, Houda practiced different kinds of sports and loved watching films of Bruce Lee. One day she was introduced to kickboxing at school, but at home, her parents were not immediately enthusiastic, because there were only boys to

practice this kind of sport. Despite that, she practiced kickboxing 6 days a week, next to her school and part-time work duties. At the age of 15, she became a national Youth Champion. She was spotted by the Richard Krajicek Foundation in Utrecht and was offered a scholarship.

She was the first Dutch girl with a headscarf to reach for a bachelor's degree in sports management.

At hindsight, the difficulties she met were financial, different expectations from her environment, different expectations from her parents, peer pressure from her girlfriends that did not like her kickboxing activities. She resisted that all, motivated by her urge to prove herself. What helped her was the support of her uncle, sister, and brother, who were always on her side. And also, her teacher supported her. He was more than a coach, very kind, patient and willing to offer flexible opening times for the gym. This too made the combination of kickboxing with her time schedules at work and school possible. And in the end, she got the support of her parents as well: they are very proud of her development.

Dennis Bohm, organizing sports events from a youngster's perspective

Dennis is a 20 years old student computer science engineering. He was also the chair of a youth committee at tennis club Luctor in Almelo for 5 years. He was part of the WhozLucky 8 members youngsters' team that organized different activities to involve players and others. He highlighted three activities:

- WhozLucky open, an introduction to people that did not play tennis, e.g. members bringing young friends.
- Visiting the ABN AMRO tennis tournament in Rotterdam which involved a bus trip for all joining members.
- A Skating Clinic.

As a youngster, becoming involved, Dennis learned some heartfelt lessons. He experienced that his feeling of responsibility eventually led to doing it all himself. Thus, letting others be eased. He learned that managing is not about completing all tasks oneself. On the other hand, the autonomy of being able to organize activities at his own judgment and responsibility, helped him to feel proud of what he did. That experience is also attached to another factor he really supports: the learning climate of a sports club helps to find out what works and what not. And finally, he also mentioned peer involvement: meetings with peers were always fun, although not always as efficient as possible. His message to us: you cannot keep youngsters involved by taking them by the hand, you have to create opportunities that will bring them in an active role.

Tarik Pehlivan (Alexander Foundation): participation is the way

Tarik Pehlivan from the Alexander Foundation had a central message: there is no way to participate in sports because participation is the way. The Alexander Foundation is a Dutch non-profit research and consultancy institute on youth participation. The organization offers participatory youth research, training and coaching programmes for young people and professionals and a variety of methods.

Pehlivan presented two main perspectives on keeping youngsters involved:

- We must acknowledge that youngsters already are participating in sports and in communities outside sports already, perhaps not the way we want them to do, but they are

- To keep youngsters involved in sports, we must guide youngsters in developing in sports and sports communities, by willingly entering their world, rather than exclusively communicate with them from our own outside perspective.

He then presents the idea that there is no definition of participation, but there is a basic understanding of what youth participation is. From that understanding:

- Youngsters are free to involve themselves in social and developmental processes.
- Self-involvement is active, voluntary and informed.

Reflecting on the 14 factors, Pehlivan chooses 4 of them:

- Autonomy: freedom of choice.
- Relatedness: as to feel yourself part of a team or club.
- An effective and positive coach-athlete relationship.
- Parental autonomy support.

In real life these 4 factors will not always be recognized by youth as already being realized:

- Not every youngster will always or yet experience the freedom of choice.
- Not every youngster will always or yet feel like she is part of the team/club.
- The relationship between youngster and coach will not always be effective and positive.
- Not every parent will always encourage his/her youngster to participate in sport.

To truly reach youngsters, one should keep in mind that there are a lot of variations in the development of youngsters to participate, not only in their sports but also in their sports community and their community outside of sports. Therefore, his advice is:

- Start with connecting where youngsters happen to be in their development.
- Engage and invite experiences and critical reflections: on sports, club and what else matters to them in their experiences.
- Allow them to observe, experience and grow skills they will need as members of their (sports)community.

Workshop 1: keep young girls (12-19) involved in sport

Haifa Tlili from UFOLEP, an intercultural research centre to enhance women, focussed on the question: why girls in French working class neighborhoods don't want to practice PA? This a question that worries policymakers, scientists, professionals, and also parents. In France, 51 percent of the girls are involved in sports, in working-class neighborhoods, only 32 percent of the young girls are involved. Only 3,6 percent of them are a member of a sports club.

This gap is commonly explained by the effect of cultural differences, referring mostly to the negative influence of Islam on female participation generally and in sports particularly. That specific explanation disturbed the researcher Tlili, while maybe the cultural differences are not as obvious as they seem and there might be a more complex set of factors responsible for the gap.

Tlili conducted nationwide research in 2014 in 6 French cities: Paris, Evry, Lille, Calais, Marseille, and Montpellier, focussing on a group of young girls between 14-19 and a group of sports professionals who dealt with sports accommodations and offers.

One of the key questions was: do girls from the south have another relationship with their body than girls in the north? Being offered semi-directive interviews, the girls had to find answers to questions like:

- What does sport mean for you?
- What are the obstacles you experience in sport participation?
- What are your recommendations?

One of the remarkable outcomes is that most of the girls really did not have a clue what sport means to them. They highly responded to issues like 'beauty' and 'relaxation', but they rejected to offer physical efforts in favor of their health and to participate in collective activities. Sports thus did not seem to play an important role in their value system. There should be an alternative offer in a sport to get them interested.

In PA class, girls are to meet up with negative aspects of competition and 'bad' marks. The gaze of others is one of the big brakes; sometimes family duties keep them from investing time into sports. Altogether, being involved in sports is just not profitable for them.

Sport professionals (in the study referred to as Actors) overestimate institutional, social and health constraints and they don't consider the psychological factors and the influence of the life experience of the girls and their familial responsibilities.

Main recommendations for short term empowering girls in sport participation in France at-risk areas (Tlili and Delorme, 2014): restoring the meaning and need for physical effort in connection to health, offer a wide variety of sports that mainly focus on making fun together and less on competition, investing in meeting girls on platforms to discuss their benefits and needs concerning sports and physical activity and last but not least: parents need to understand the need to practice PA every day, from an internal motivation. In a later stage, sports professionals can be made aware of further attention and measures needed to empower girls in sports participation.

Tlili concludes her presentation by stating two programmes that continue to empower girls, one of which the Erasmus + programme provides the funds for, the other being organized with French partners Mosaik and Université de Paris.

Workshop 2: Keep youngsters from lower socio-economic neighborhoods involved in sport.

In this workshop, Diederik Fit, the project leader of the Topscore project of the city of Amsterdam, showed a video about after-school sports programmes for children from lower socio-economic neighborhoods in Amsterdam. The municipality of Amsterdam contains 36.000 youngsters between 13 – 17 years old, 14.500 of which come from lower socio-economic classes and live a life close to poverty. In these areas, 60 percent of the youngsters are not participating in sports for at least one hour a day.

The sports development department of the municipality of Amsterdam offers all kinds of services to the sports sector: organizing side events next to top sports events, playground development.

Most of the effort is concentrated in education, community, and sports, and focusses on the school programmes:

- Primary school programmes
- Special needs education programmes
- Secondary school programmes

The afterschool programme was focussed on vocational education, in the primary schools in the parts of Amsterdam where concentrations of lower socio-economic groups are found. The target group consists of 50 schools, 18.000 pupils altogether. After school programmes are developed in cooperation with the school; the school provides accommodation in the school and coordination, the project provides trainers and methods.

The Topscore project discovered a semi-active group: pupils that are interested in sporting but will not be involved in sports clubs. The project issued research: in which sports pupils would like to get involved. Also, the project researched sports clubs in the neighborhood, to monitor their interest in involvement, new members, etc.

The programme itself offered an 8-20 weeks training for pupils to experience sports themselves. They were provided with school sporting clubs within the school, thus connecting the concept of sports clubs to pupils that would never go to a sporting club outside school.

For more information: www.amsterdam.nl/topscore. Instagram: #Topscore020

Day 2

Meeting and playing cards with youngsters.

The most important tool in the toolkit the KYI project developed, are the card games. These card games help clubs, trainers, and coaches to get to know more about how to implement actions in the sports club to keep youngsters (12-19 year) involved and prevent them from dropout. The different card games can help clubs, coaches, and trainers to improve their policy and programmes on youth, by creating a sports club action plan. In total there are 169 action cards. For every factor, a variety of cards has been developed containing each a practical action or plan.

In the morning programme, 20 youngsters from all over Holland were invited to join the conference and play one of the card games together with the other participants. Each group they formed was issued a card box, containing the 65 cards.



Playing the card game with the Youngsters

All groups were asked to pick 3 cards that the members would believe to be effective for the goal of keeping youngsters involved.

All groups joined forces with the youngsters and chose, sometimes with lively discussions and a lot of laughter, their priorities, that were presented in a conclusive session.

What do we learn from that?

Many of the groups involved cards dealing with the relationship between trainer and pupil and cards that were concerned with lowering the cost borders of sport involvement, such as creating additional funds or alternatives to the formal club membership (free training). There were many suggestions that concerned different approaches of coaches and trainers, such as:

- Establishing the rules and values of sporting together with the youngsters involved, also concerning respect for the opponent (which isn't the enemy) and values as honesty (not to lie or to cheat).
- Build relations of trust and confidence, also by offering challenging tasks and tests.
- Ask youngsters what they need in a training programme, but not letting the training programme free to fill in by the youngsters themselves (structure).

- Take the perspective of each individual member, together with individual levels of training.
- Involve empathy in the training to make injured athletes welcome to the training with an adaptive programme, but also by taking the initiative to send a greeting card to injured team members by the team.

Good practices

To inspire the audience, three examples of good practices were shown, before the participants took off to lay the fundamentals of their national action plans.

- **Movie: youngsters from lower socio-economic neighborhoods tell their own story**

In a short video documentary by the Knowledge Centre for Sport Netherlands, ASV LEBO (Amsterdam) and BYTT, young athletes like Adil Boukris, Chifa Kaddour, Anass Ould Saddik, Noa Elkabas tell about their personal experiences and visions about how being involved into sport helps them in their lives. Among other qualities, they sum up the following: better personal energy management, control of violence, developing talent, understanding of their own situation, developing ambitions, perseverance and discovering alternative sports. This video will be available on the KYI website in May 2019.

- **Swimming club TRB RES (Tilburg)**

Freek Gabriels is proud of his role as a young member of the Youth Council of TRB RES swimming club in Tilburg, Netherlands. This club has 650 members and is organized by a board that is aided by 175 volunteers. The Youth Council, one of the 6 staff functions in the board, consists of 5 members in the age between 14 – 16, one coach and one advising mentor. The main goal of the board is to make the swimming pool a safe place to perform with pleasure.

The Youth Council wants to give the youth in the club a voice. They have been organizing all kinds of water sports, some additional to the competitive swimming like swim kick and mini polo. The club sees a growing number of participants and youth volunteers.

Gabriëls, looking back at his first term as a member of the Youth Council, presents a profile of board members: they must be, above all, clear-minded, outspoken, motivated. From the 14 factors that are presented, he chooses:

- Autonomy
- Experience competence
- Connectedness
- Align timing and target
- Handling cost

He concludes his speech with these remarks:

- A successful youth council is only possible with the full support of management or board.
- A good coach and a mentor are crucial
- Fast implementation of success factors helps in creating momentum and enthusiasm

- Participation ladder and workshop Keep youngsters involved were helpful as a tool for development
- **How does the Portuguese football Federation deal with dropout?**

Andre Seabra is the director of the Portuguese Football School and Professor of the University of Porto, Portugal. In his opening remarks Seabra sketches that football is a 'big' issue in Portugal: organizing a total of 35 national leagues, involving 500.000 participants of which 15.300 youngsters, football means a large-scale organization. Participation of the youth rose from 1,7 percent in 2012 to 3 percent nowadays, and the number is still growing. But also, the number of dropouts grew. Research of the dropout figures showed that 71 % of the dropouts were new registrations. 17% of the drop out total concerned the 10 – 19 age group. Therefore, the School started a recruitment programme concerning four groups of participants:

- Regular members
- Informal teams
- Practice in senior categories
- Leisure practices

By organizing lots of regional activities, certification en recreational opportunities, these groups were targeted. With municipalities, efforts were made to introduce football in schools and the creation of women en girls football teams.

National Action Plans in your country

PDCA	TRL applied to KYI	National level (Policy)	Regional level (Strategy)	Grass roots level (Operational)
National action plans				
We have the intention to work on the problem (Concept/policy)	We have an analysis of drop out data (TRL1)	Yes	Yes	Yes
Do:	We have a policy about drop out (TRL2)	Yes	Yes	Yes
We are working on it. The elaboration is in development (working elements)	We have knowledge about the 14 factors to prevent drop out (TRL3)	Yes	Yes	Yes
Check:	We have knowledge about actions for clubs and trainers to prevent drop out (TRL4)	Yes	Yes	Yes
First process of evaluation. We find ways to improve. (working elements)	We have an idea how to implement these actions to prevent drop out (TRL5)	Yes	Yes	Yes
Act:	Local project managers can use the toolkit to implement the actions (TRL6)	Yes	Yes	Yes
The process is being monitored and continually and systematically improved	Grass roots trainers and club managers can use the toolkit (TRL7)	Yes	Yes	Yes
	The toolkit is implemented at grass roots level (TRL8)	Yes	Yes	Yes
	There is a systematic use of the toolkit and evaluation of the implemented actions (TRL9)	Yes	Yes	Yes

Jan Seghers and Bart Verschueren from the University of Leuven introduced the need and an approach for national action plans. The main project partners of Keep Youngsters Involved planned on how to disseminate and implement the outcomes of the project in their countries. There are differences between the countries, organizations and levels (policy, strategy and operational level). The participants will work (further) on their national action plan in their country.

How TAFISA will lead the European implementation and dissemination of KYI

TAFISA, the Association for International Sport for All, is in charge of dissemination of the results of the Keep Youngsters Involved project. Ingrid Martel introduces TAFISA as an active international sport policy body that, with headquarters situated in Frankfurt, services a total of 330 members in 170 countries throughout the world. The main communication goals of TAFISA are to reach as many people as possible, to raise awareness, to formulate a clear

message about Keeping Youngsters Involved and to lead the implementation and dissemination process with the project partners.

TAFISA can contribute in several ways to make the implementation and dissemination of KYI a success:

- At an international perspective, dissemination through Europe, TAFISA can reach influential political levels.
- TAFISA can offer an answer to the question of how to address parties that are already overwhelmed with initiatives and projects. By seeking connection with existing models e.g. the Frankfurt model, the KYI results can be adjoined to existing processes.
- TAFISA has a variety of communication channels which can help to distribute news, insights, and methods to several members.
- TAFISA office could deal with the language issue, offering services to translate some playing cards, methods, and materials into a variety of languages.
- TAFISA can address the KYI project to members in the countries that took part in the project to take up contact with the project members and open dialogue on implementation and dissemination.
- TAFISA can present the KYI project at several meetings, such as TAFISA World Congress, TAFISA World Sport for All Games, European Week of Sport, CIGEPS, EU Sport Forum, ERASMUS+ Projects.

In a later stage of the dissemination process, project members and [TAFISA](#) will discuss the needed supportive actions in detail.

Colophon

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