



sport for all  
genders & sexualities

Tackling Sexism,  
Trans- & Homophobia  
in European  
Grassroots Sport



HANDBOOK  
**For Inclusive  
Grassroots  
Sport**

Image: unsplash.com\_@nataliablauth



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Kunst, Kultur,  
öffentlicher Dienst und Sport



Co-funded by  
the European Union

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### IMPRINT

Publisher: European Gay and Lesbian Sport Federation (EGLSF) & fairplay – Vienna Institute for International Dialogue and Cooperation (fairplay-VIDC), Vienna, Austria · [www.fairplay.or.at/en](http://www.fairplay.or.at/en) · Editors: Michele Mommi, Hugh Torrance (EGLSF); in cooperation with: Birgit Braumüller and Tim Schlunski (GSU), Andrea Giuliano and Rosario Coco (AiCS), Javier Gil Quintana and Angelica Sáenz Macana (Diversport), Laura Stahl (LSB), Nikola Staritz (fairplay-VIDC) · Graphic Design: Patricia Enigl · Photos: if no other indications SGS-project. @fairplay-VIDC/SGS\_2024

### Disclaimer

This publication is part of the project *Sport for all Genders and Sexualities – Tackling Sexism, Trans- and Homophobia in European Grassroots Sport (SGS), 2022–24*, funded by the European Commission under the Erasmus+ Sport Programme.

Views and opinions expressed in this publication are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Commission. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

# Introduction & background

This handbook on inclusive sport summarises and documents key findings and outcomes from the Erasmus+ project *Sport for all Genders & Sexualities (SGS)*. It provides a practical, comprehensive, and accessible guide to the project, offering an overview of its key outcomes. It serves both as a digest of the main results and as a collection of resources to inspire, educate and empower others. The handbook is designed to ensure ongoing impact beyond the project's duration and will be freely available on the Project Platform

## Project Platform

→ <https://tinyurl.com/5bsu49pd>



Everyone has the right to take part in sport. But LGBTI+ people often experience exclusion, hatred and discrimination, which prevents or denies them access to sport. It is the responsibility of clubs and sports organisations to create safer and respectful spaces. Everyone should be able to play the sport they are good at and/or enjoy it without being harmed. Implementing gender diversity and acceptance for all sexual orientations in everyday sport presents challenges, for which solutions must be sought collaboratively.

Therefore the handbook is structured according to the project design and includes all project components. Tools and measures developed within the project will be introduced and disseminated to guarantee a sustainable use of the outcomes – and to make grassroots sport an open, respectful and safe place for everyone!

## Concepts and terms in the area of sexual & gender diversity are not clear?

Feel free to check our [Factsheet](#) where the most important terms are explained

→ <https://tinyurl.com/mwmn526e>



# 1

## The Project

### SGS – Sport for all genders and sexualities, Tackling Sexism, Trans- and Homophobia in European Grassroots Sport (2022 – 2024)

The project (April 2022–September 2024) builds on the results and partnership established by the Erasmus+ project **Outsport** (2017–2019). SGS aims to establish an inclusive and open sports culture that is open to all genders and sexualities. As the Outsport research found, women as well as LGBTI+ people, but in particular trans, non-binary and intersex athletes face tremendous discrimination and are the most vulnerable group in sport. European sport is still dominated by rather antiquated notions of masculinity and pejorative notions of femininity, as well as the strict division into *men* and *women* categories. This dominant binary and masculine narrative contributes to the discrimination and exclusion of women/girls (sexism), transgender persons (transphobia), lesbians and gay men (homophobia), and all those who cannot/won't be pigeonholed by their gender identity.

#### 1.1. Goals and main activities

The project's main goal is to promote the inclusion and participation of people of all genders and sexualities in European grassroots sports by gaining knowledge and raising awareness of discrimination against LGBTI+ and female athletes while promoting measures to foster an inclusive sports culture truly open to all.

The initial activities included a research study on prevailing gender norms, inclusive policies, and the experiences<sup>1</sup> of women and LGBTI+ people in organised sport, along with a collection of best practice examples for the social inclusion of LGBTI+ people in grassroots sports across various European countries. In the second phase, based on the research findings, a range of measures was developed and implemented in the project's partner countries – Austria, Italy, Spain, Germany, and The Netherlands.

These measures include institutionalised dialogue with stakeholders from organised sport and LGBTI+ experts (Regional Working Groups), guidelines and a checklist for more inclusive sport clubs, a training manual with informative content and training tools, and a factsheet on gender and sexual diversity for sports organisations. Additionally, the **Rising together** awareness raising campaign was launched, providing sports organisations with digital resources to run their own **Rising together** videos, and featuring a Testimonial video collection to showcase diverse athletes and create role models.

1. In this research, the terms homophobia and transphobia were replaced with -negativity/hostility, as this shift more accurately reflects the various instances described, moving away from the misleading use of '-phobia'.

## Materials & Activities

- All developed measures and activities have been disseminated through the partner organisations' channels and their networks and can also be read on the [projects website - fairplay.or.at/en/projects/sport-for-all-genders-and-sexualities](https://fairplay.or.at/en/projects/sport-for-all-genders-and-sexualities)
- All tools, deliverables, and information on the topic are also available on our resource centre on the [Fairplay education platform - edu.fairplay.or.at/en/courses/gender-and-sexual-diversity-in-sport](https://edu.fairplay.or.at/en/courses/gender-and-sexual-diversity-in-sport)
- Find all deliverables listed and linked in [Chapter 8](#)

## 1.2. The partnership

The partnership consisted of 7 partners and 3 associate partners.

1. (Coordinator): Vienna Institute for International Dialogue and Cooperation (VIDC, Austria) | NGO
2. German Sport University Cologne (GSU, Germany) | University for Sport and Physical Education
3. European Gay and Lesbian Sport Federation (EGLSF, The Netherlands) | LGBTI+ umbrella sport organisation
4. Associazione Italiana Cultura Sport (AICS, Italy) | National Sport for All Organisation
5. Diversport (DS, Spain) | Gender-inclusive LGBTI+ sport club
6. Landessportbund Nordrhein-Westfalen (LSB, Germany) | Federal Umbrella Sports Association for organised and public-interest sport
7. Confédération Sportive Internationale Travailleuse et Amateur (CSIT, Austria) | World Federation of Workers' and Amateur Sports Associations

### Associate partners

8. Austrian Figure Skating Association (SKATE AUSTRIA, Austria) | Sport Federation
9. Vienna Roller Derby (VRD, Austria) | Local Sport Club
10. Austrian Centre for Gender Competence in sport (100% SPORT, Austria) | Initiative for Gender Equality in Sport



Kick-Off in Cologne, July 2022.



Football Clubs speaking out for diversity.

### 1.3. A methodology for success and sustainability: the regional working groups

Regional Working Groups (RWGs) are an integral part of the project's success. It is recommended as a methodology approach to other partners/ projects/ stakeholders planning on working on a new topic, or kicking-off a new work project in order to:

1. exchange and receive feedback on content, measures and material,
2. engage local stakeholders and include needs, experiences and concerns of grassroots sport into the activities of the project,
3. find and establish allyship in your local context.

This is just an overview of the objectives and benefits that will come with having a consulting working group accompany your work process. Check more here

#### Why having a regional working group (RWG)?

**Knowledge Exchange:** Facilitate knowledge sharing on specific topics (both directions).

**Stakeholder Engagement:** Involve local stakeholders and integrate grassroots perspectives.

**Local Outreach:** Disseminate project information within the local community.

**Allyship:** Identify and establish partnerships.

**Network Foundation:** Create long-lasting connections beyond the project.

**Local Credibility:** Establish trust and relevance within the local context.

**Gender Awareness:** Promote awareness of gender-related challenges in binary sports.

We recommend recruiting experts and relevant stakeholders from all levels, ranging from local grassroots sport clubs to sports federations of all sizes, LGBTI+ sports clubs, organisations and NGOs. This ensures that everyone can contribute with their knowledge and expertise in their specific areas. This could range from sports mentality, club member management, on-pitch practices, to the organisational framework for amending guidelines and rules. This way, members of the working group help ensure that the project's outcomes align with the needs of local sport clubs.

To encourage ownership, it is also advisable to involve members in the direct implementation of project activities. In the case of the SGS project, the developed training and campaign materials were tested in real-life settings. Some partners involved members of the Regional Working Group directly, while others sought advice in identifying the right partners. Either approach strengthens commitment and ownership.

Each RWG was established with a clear timeframe, aligned with the SGS project. Six meetings were planned over this period in each country. To ensure sustainability, the group would assess its progress at the project's end, deciding whether to continue its work or dissolve. This limited time frame made it easier for members to commit, as the workload was predictable. However, most of the working groups have already decided to continue their work after the project's end!



5th Meeting of the Austrian Working Group in June 2024: 19 Sport Federations, 5 NGOs and expert organisations, 7 sport clubs, in addition to the Austrian Sports Ministry and the Sport University Vienna, meet on a regular basis to have an exchange on the topics and learn from one another.

## Insights

1. Each working group is unique in regards to group size. Usually, a group size of 8 to 10 people will allow you to work efficiently and productively providing speaking time for all members.  
**SGS Hint:** The SGS project had working groups ranging from 8 members to 35 members. Consider the number of people needed to moderate and facilitate a meeting, and the appropriate methods to use.
2. It's generally recommended to meet in person for the first meeting to establish the working groups, set ground rules for collaboration, and discuss expectations regarding content, working style, and meeting frequency. These decisions should align with both your needs and those of your members.
3. Combining online and in-person meetings can be a great way to stay connected, save time and costs, and foster engagement.  
**SGS Hint:** Each partner had their own approach to coordinating and facilitating meetings. Some used a mix of in-person and digital meetings, while others relied heavily on active WhatsApp groups. Choose the method that best suits your context and needs.
4. Set incentives for members to attend regularly, such as guest lectures or expert presentations on requested topics.  
**SGS Hint:** Colleagues from GSU Cologne presented their research findings, and representatives of the LGBTI+ community shared their insights and expectations.
5. Value the commitment and dedication of each individual contributing to your project's success. Remember, they are volunteering their time. Show appreciation through personal thanks, communication channels, or small treats like refreshments at in-person meetings.



Regional Working Group developing measures for their organisations.





The German regional working group at the closing meeting after establishing the follow-up network QueerNiS.

# 2

## Research

### on the situation of women and LGBT+ individuals in European grassroots sports

As part of the SGS project, a quantitative online survey with athletes, coaches and board members from organised grassroots sports in Europe was conducted. The main aims were to identify (1) prevailing norms and gender stereotypes in organised sports, (2) inclusive and anti-discriminatory measures in sports organisations and (3) personal experiences based on being a woman or an LGBT+ person. The data was collected through an online survey conducted from November 2022 to February 2023, which was systematically distributed by the organisations within the project consortium and their networks. The findings presented in this handbook are selected key insights and country-specific evidence, and they do not cover all three objectives of the study equally.

→ [Here you can find the comprehensive data report - https://tinyurl.com/yj5vtc8f](https://tinyurl.com/yj5vtc8f)  
on the situation of women and LGBT+ individuals in  
European grassroots sport including country differences



### 2.1. Survey sample

In total, 2838 respondents aged 40 on average and with a rather high educational level participated in the survey. 58% of the respondents come from Germany, followed by Spain (18%), Austria (9%) and UK, Italy and other European countries (each 5%). The sample consists mainly of heterosexual respondents (73%), 13% identified as lesbian/gay, 10% as bisexual and 4% referred to other sexual orientation. With regard to gender identity, 48% identified as men (including 1% trans men), 46% as women (including 1% trans women), and 3% as non-binary persons. 3% of the respondents were not sure about their gender identity/ preferred not to say.

Figure 1 illustrates the distribution of respondents' roles in organised sports: most respondents answered from the perspective of athletes, followed by board members, coaches and other honorary/voluntary roles. Only coaches and athletes were asked about their performance level and the sports they participate in: 48% of them are involved in recreational sports, 40% in competitive amateur sports and 12% in elite sports. Additionally, 58% engage in individual sports; football as well as track and field are the most common sports

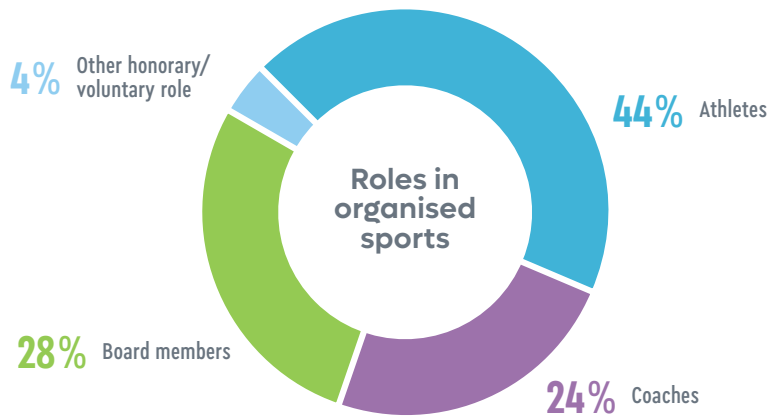


Figure 1: Respondents' roles in organised sports (n=2837)

## 2.2. Overall main findings

### Perceived discrimination in organised sports

Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement with statements regarding attitudes and behaviours in organised sport that discriminate against women or LGBTI+ people. The majority of respondents perceived discrimination against women (77%, regardless of their sexual orientation), gay and bisexual men (81%), as well as trans, intersex and non-binary people (83%; figure 2). This points to a rather high level of awareness and sensitivity towards discriminatory behaviour and attitudes in organised sports.

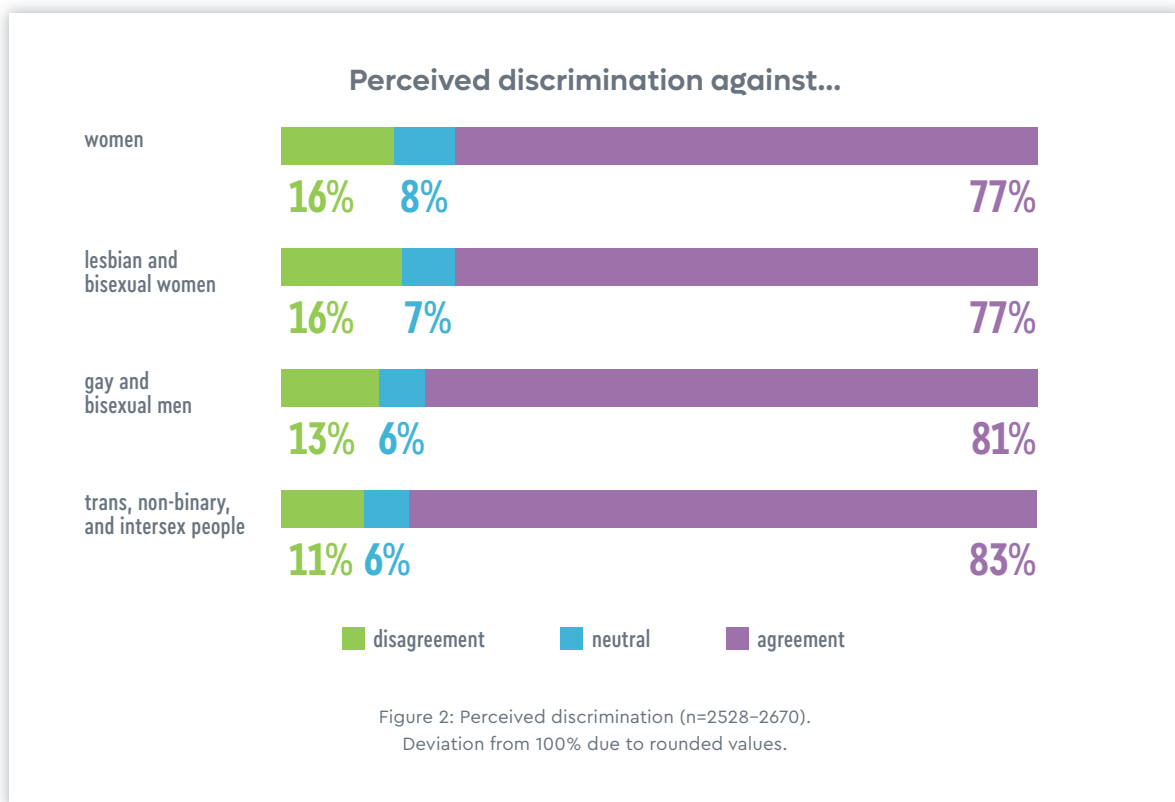
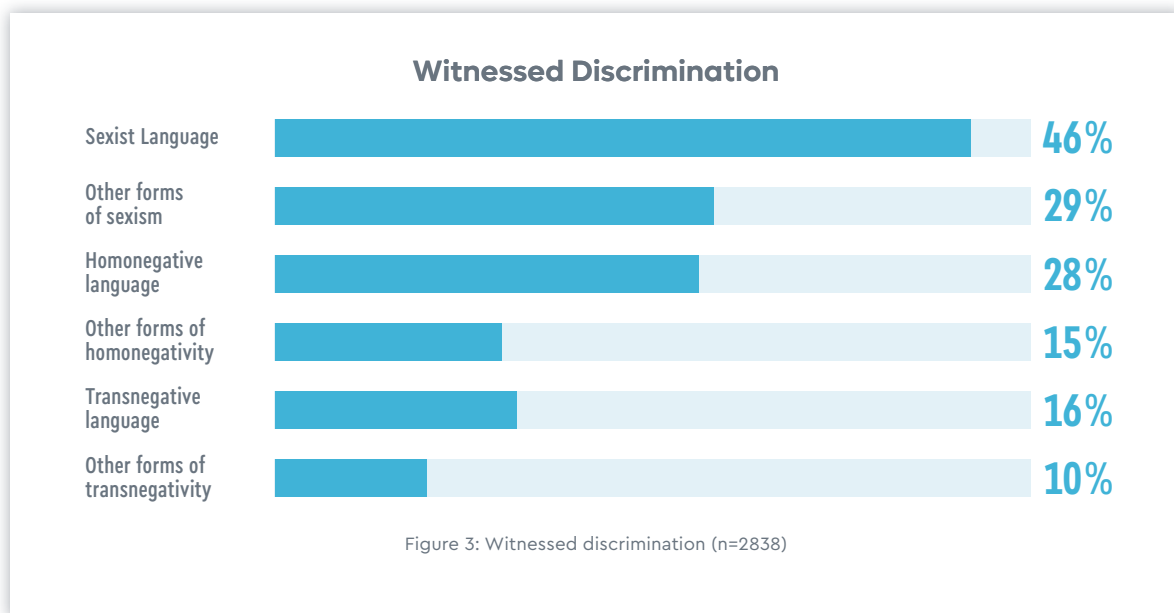


Figure 2: Perceived discrimination (n=2528-2670).  
Deviation from 100% due to rounded values.

## Witnessed discrimination in respondents' sports activity/organisation

To identify further aspects of discrimination in organised sports, respondents were asked whether they had witnessed discrimination in their main sports activity or organisation in the 12 months prior to the survey. Sexism, homo- and transnegativity have been differentiated, each with a focus on discriminatory language and other forms of discrimination (figure 3). Almost half of the respondents witnessed sexist language (46%), while 29% observed other forms of sexism and 28% homonegative language. Along with other forms of homonegativity, respondents witnessed transnegativity least frequently in their sports activity/organisation.



## Personal negative experiences of the respondents

Respondents were also asked whether they had personally experienced any negative treatment within their main organised sports activity or organisation, based on their sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation in the 12 months prior to the survey. Overall, 10% of respondents reported personal negative experiences. However, non-binary persons are the most vulnerable group, with 32% disclosing negative experiences, followed by persons with other gender identities (26%), trans women (25%), cis women (14%), trans men (13%) and cis men (3%; figure 4).

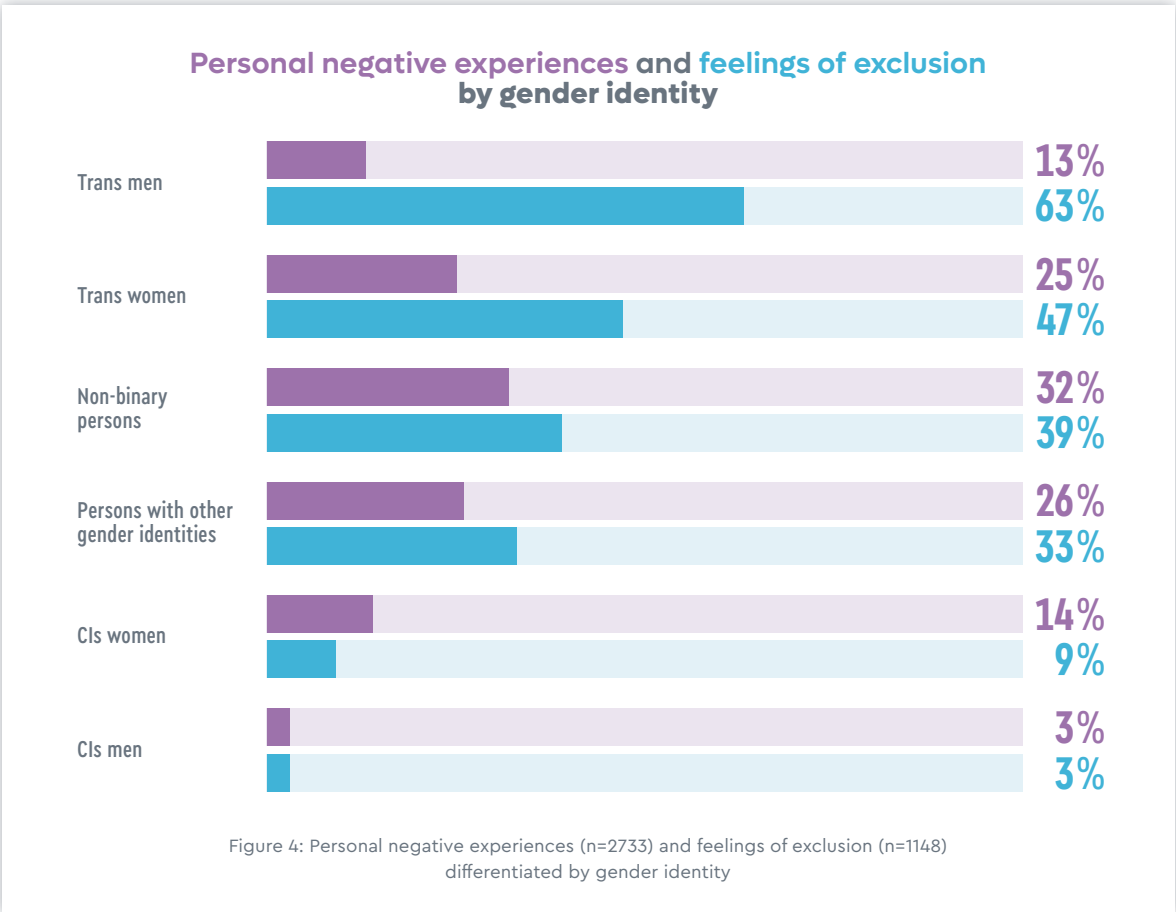
Differentiated by sexual orientation (figure 5) respondents with other sexual orientations (29%) reported the most negative experiences, followed by bisexual respondents (19%) and gay or lesbian respondents (12%). Among heterosexual respondents, 7% reported personal negative experiences within their main organised sports activity/organisation.

## Feelings of exclusion among the athletes

Only athletes in the sample (n=1166) were asked if there are any organised sports they are attracted to, but feel excluded from because of their sex, gender identity or sexual orientation. In total, 9% reported avoiding sports of interest, mainly football, combat sports, swimming and rugby. Feelings of exclusion vary significantly by gender identity (figure 4). Trans athletes (63% men, 47% women) and non-binary athletes (39%) as well as those with other gender identities (33%) feel much more excluded from organised sports compared to cis athletes (9% women, 3% men). Among trans athletes, relatively more men feel excluded, while exclusion is more common among cis women than cis men.

In terms of sexual orientation, athletes with other sexual orientations are again the most affected group, with 39% feeling excluded. 19% of bisexual athletes, and 11% of lesbian or gay athletes also avoid sports

they are interested in due to internalised feelings and fears of exclusion and discrimination. Only 4% of heterosexual athletes feel excluded from sports of interest.



## Anti-discrimination measures and policies within organisations

Besides focussing on discriminatory events and climates in organised sports, a central part of the survey targeted respondents' experience and knowledge regarding measures for anti-discrimination, inclusion, and equality and in sports organisations:

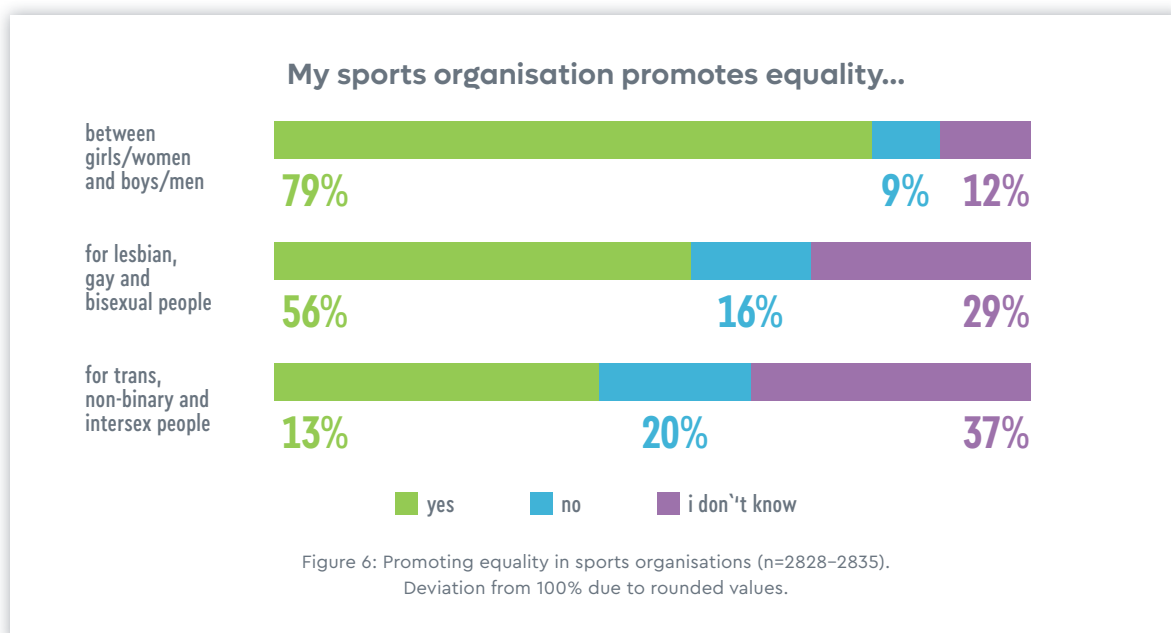
- 40% of respondents report that their sports organisation is committed to inclusive language.
- 39% indicate that their sports organisation provides its members with information about its anti-discrimination policy.
- 25% of respondents are aware that their sports organisation has an anti-discrimination officer or function.
- Between 23% and 29% of respondents did not know whether their organisations had implemented these organisational measures.

In order to collect more detailed information, board members (n=810) were asked about inclusion and anti-discrimination policies in their organisations:

- 58% of board members indicated that diversity and equality is included in the statutes, mission statement and/or set of core values of their sports organisation (16% lacked knowledge of this).
- 6 out of 10 board members reported that cases of discrimination based on sex, sexual orientation or gender identity are consistently pursued in their sports organisation (about one third lacked knowledge of this).
- Among those who confirm the consistent pursuit of cases, 52% said there is no standardised organisation-wide procedure, while 31% confirm its existence and 17% lack knowledge of it.

## Promoting equality in sports organisations

All respondents were asked which groups their sports organisations promote equality for. Promoting equality between girls/women and boys/men is most common in the respondents' sports organisations (79%), while 56% report that their organisation promotes equality in terms of sexual orientation, and 43% in terms of gender identity. The proportion of respondents who are unsure whether their sports organisation promotes equality grows significantly as the focus shifts to more specific groups. While only 12% are uncertain about promoting equality between men and women, this uncertainty rises to 37% when asked about promoting equality for trans, non-binary, and intersex individuals.



## 2.3. Country specific findings

### Germany (n=1603)

It is striking that Germany ranks last in all measures for equality, inclusion and anti-discrimination in sports organisations by a considerable margin, compared to the project partner countries and to all other countries of the survey. With regard to equality measures, the values from Germany vary between 33% of sports organisations that promote equality for trans, intersex and non-binary people, and 73% that promote equality for girls/women and boys/men (the range in the total sample is from 43% to 79%). Also, regarding commitment to inclusive language (27%), provision of information on anti-discrimination policy (31%), and anti-discrimination functions (13%) sport organisations in Germany lag far behind the other countries.

Following these findings, a major recommendation for German sports organisations is to implement more measures for equality, inclusion, and anti-discrimination and to communicate them to their members.

### Spain (n=501)

Spain is among the countries with the highest percentage of respondents lacking knowledge if their sports organisations provide their members with information about their anti-discrimination policies and if their sports organisations have an anti-discrimination function (31%). In Spain, compared to other countries, sexist/sexualised language against girls and women was most frequently reported to have been experienced in sports clubs/organisations (51%) and Spain is also above the average of the overall data for other forms of sexism (33%). At the same time, few personal negative experiences are reported in Spain, which can be traced back to either a low level of awareness or to the improvement of LGBTI+ rights legislation in recent years.

From these results, some recommendations are suggested: promote training in inclusion in clubs and sports federations to increase their knowledge, promote campaigns to raise awareness about the use of non-sexist language, create spaces for reporting in entities (email, mailbox...) or designate people who will deal with situations of harassment and sexism to deal with them specifically.

### United Kingdom (n=148)

In the UK data, an interesting relation occurs: at 20%, respondents from the UK report by far the most personal negative experiences and at 27%, most respondents feel excluded from sports that interest them. At the same time, together with Italy, the UK ranks first in almost all organisational measures towards inclusion and anti-discrimination, e.g., 60% of sports organisations are reported to have an anti-discrimination function. This relation points to a higher awareness of sexism, homo- and transnegativity, eventually due to a longer lasting debate about sexual and gender diversity in (organised) sports.

### Italy (n=141)

Among the Italian respondents it is evident that there is a rather low awareness of discrimination against women and LGBTI+ people in sports, which is also reflected in lower prevalence rates for personal negative experiences (7%) and lower feelings of exclusion (3%). At the same time, with regard to the implemented organisational measures, Italy and UK are at the upper end of the ranking.

As a result of relatively few reported incidents despite the presence of anti-discrimination policies within most organisations, a key recommendation is to empower women and LGBTI+ athletes not only through positive promotion and visibility, but also through appropriate diversity and inclusion training for sports staff, technical staff and safeguarding officers.

## 2.4. Recommendations for action

Based on the general results of the study, a number of key recommendations for action can be drawn:

### All stakeholders, individuals and sport organisations must ...

- contribute to inclusive environments and raise their voices in cases of discrimination and exclusion.
- be aware of these phenomena and act as role models and allies.
- report situations of harassment and hostility towards LGBTI+ people to the board of directors.

### Sport organisations in particular must ...

- raise awareness of discrimination and exclusion in organised sports based on gender/sex, sexual orientation and gender identity.
- raise awareness of invisible diversity dimensions and sensitise for the needs and requirements of trans, intersex and non-binary individuals in organised sports.
- anchor and extend measures for equality, inclusion and anti-discrimination in sports organisations (e.g., anti-discrimination officer, standardised procedures in cases of discrimination, internal communication activities).
- anchor and extend the topic of sexual and gender diversity in the educational structures of organised sports.
- ensure a safe environment for all.



Doing sport together and breaking down barriers at EuroGames 2024 in Vienna.



# 3

## Good Practices

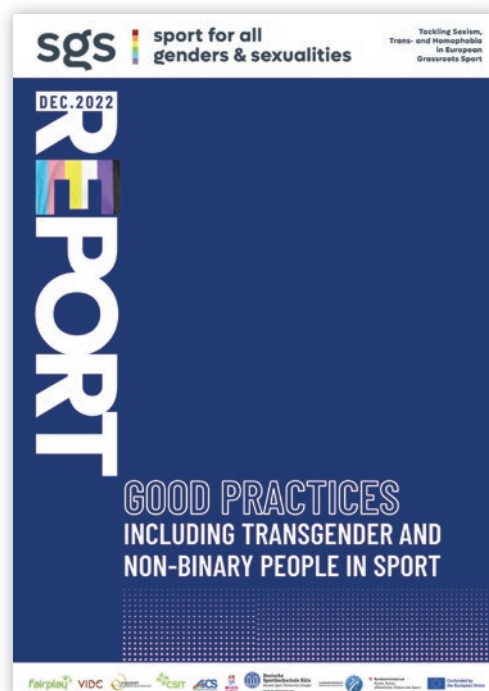
### Report of European good practice examples

Transgender, non-binary, and intersex people experience discrimination, restricted access, and bullying in sport due to the boundaries of traditional divisions between women's and men's sport, as well as the lack of a binding policy for sports federations at all levels (international, national, regional, and local) that ensures bodily integrity and respect for human rights.

One of the project's key outputs is a collection of good practices for including gender-diverse athletes in grassroots sports in the partner countries (Spain, Italy, Austria, Germany, and the Netherlands). The aim is to help national and international sports organisations understand the importance and positive impact of inclusion policies, while also showing how these practices can be implemented. The content of this collection highlights practical ways to address the specific needs of trans- and gender non-conforming individuals, offering strategies that can be adapted and applied by sports organisations in their own contexts.

In this report, the term *good practices* refers to various approaches (initiatives, programmes, activities, experiences, etc.) aimed at effectively promoting the inclusion of transgender, intersex, and non-binary people in sport. These practices not only facilitate access to sport but also demonstrate a lasting commitment to identifying and addressing barriers to participation, socialisation, and motor learning for all individuals, moving beyond the constraints of binary thinking.

These good practices highlight the impact that sports initiatives, federations, and clubs can have in fulfilling grassroots sport's promise of being inclusive to all. They offer practical steps and guidance on where to start, which direction to take, and how to maintain progress in supporting the inclusion of diverse gender identities and expressions.



Cover of the Good Practices Report

# 4

## Instructions for action

### Guidelines towards a club for all

#### Guidelines (checklist) for more gender diversity & sexual diversity in your club or sports organisation

These guidelines are intended to support clubs and associations in the grassroots sports sector in breaking down exclusions and barriers and opening up to people of all genders and sexual identities. A club or association that embraces and welcomes everyone is a valuable asset. The focus is on measures that are simple, practical, and resource-light, ensuring they can be effectively implemented at the grassroots level.

#### SGS Factsheet

→ To raise awareness on the topic before having a training or implementing the guidelines, the [SGS Factsheet On Gender And Sexual Diversity - https://tinyurl.com/3mp4uwmb](https://tinyurl.com/3mp4uwmb) is a good tool to clarify terms and concepts and why sport organisations have to get active.



Ultimately, this is something everyone benefits from! Values such as respect, protection from exclusion and discrimination are not just basic human rights – they are indeed good for everyone: more diversity in a club brings more athletes, more satisfaction and a stronger sense of belonging. Social recognition and social participation make children and young people happier, and in the long run, a respectful environment can also lead to better sporting performance.

The aim is to ensure that people, regardless of their origin, gender, sexual identity, skin colour, social background, ability, or religion, can safely practise the sport they love.

Below is a general introduction to the topic, along with general instructions on what to consider before implementing measures, how to (re)act in specific cases, and how to support the target group. The Checklist, which covers 10 areas of interest, is the core of our guidelines.

#### Checklist

→ [The Checklist is only one part of the instructions - edu.fairplay.or.at/en/lessons/handlungsanleitungen-mein-verein-fuer-alle-2/](https://edu.fairplay.or.at/en/lessons/handlungsanleitungen-mein-verein-fuer-alle-2/) for more inclusive sport organisations and covers 10 different areas.



The Instructions for Action are a living document. They will continue to be developed and revised as more experiences are gathered through the implementation of the suggested measures.

## Checklist

The following measures can be implemented to break down barriers and enable gender diversity. It is not a question of implementing all of these measures and not all recommendations are equally relevant for all sports organizations. The point is to get ideas and pick out those measures that are relevant and feasible for your own organization and create your own small:

Public relations & offer: Creating a welcoming culture for all genders and sexualities	▼
Inclusive and anti-discriminatory regulations, rules & documents: Protect all sports players from discrimination & abuse	▼
Intervention and action plan for discriminatory and/or abusive incidents -> Make sure that everyone in the organization is aware of it!	▼
If possible, design competition regulations in such a way that everyone who meets the requirements can participate!	▼
Revise documents and address everyone, e.g. adapt membership applications, forms, contracts, cover letters and other documents linguistically to a diverse reality Intervention and action plan in the event of discriminatory and/or abusive incidents -> Ensure that everyone in the organization is aware of this!	▼
Athletes, club members & employees: A safe training environment is everyone's responsibility	▼
Everyday training: Creating an inclusive training routine where everyone can do sport	▼
Facilities & infrastructure: Check facilities for barriers for trans, inter and non-binary athletes and develop feasible, creative and sustainable solutions.	▼
Open & diverse sports and club culture: Create a culture of support and respect	▼
Kooperationen	▼

The Checklist is only one part of the instructions for more inclusive sport organisations and covers 10 different areas.

# 5

## Training programme

### on sport for all genders & sexualities

#### 5.1. The training for trainers seminar

The *Training for Trainers* seminar aimed to equip participants from the partner countries with the knowledge and tools to address gender and sexual diversity issues in grassroots sports. The training was delivered over a four-day intensive program, designed to build expertise in three intersecting areas: training skills, sports knowledge, and gender/sex diversity understanding.

The methodology followed for this activity was to select actors (trainees) from organised sport who are best placed to act as multipliers of the topic. They were trained in an immersive *Training for Trainers* experience, and to work with them to deliver this training in a variety of local contexts. The methods used to educate this group included:

- Interactive training methods, using non-formal learning;
- Understanding barriers, enablers and good practices;
- A focus on acquisition of skills for improving practice;
- Instruction in working with tools and following guidance created within the framework of the project.



Activity during the *Training for Trainers* in Seville, September 2023.

Key organisers included experienced trainers like Hugh Torrance and Alex Muir from EGLSF, who provided a mix of policy knowledge, lived experiences, and mentorship. The training programme focused on:

- Empowering participants to become *multipliers* in their local sports environments.
- Expanding awareness of LGBTI+ issues in sports, particularly how the prevailing binary gender norms lead to discrimination.
- Equipping trainers with tools to address barriers for transgender athletes, LGB people, and women in sports settings.

The training was designed to increase expertise at the intersection of these three dimensions in order to add significant value to the training.

Participants were required to commit to pre-training activities (online meetings, self-assessments) and post-training follow-up, including mentorship meetings and the delivery of a local training session.

The event was held in Seville (Spain), from Sept 30 to October 3, 2023.

### SGS Trainer Expertise



Training for Trainers in Seville, September 2023.

## 5.2. Cascading trainings

Following the initial training event, participants were expected to design and deliver cascading training sessions in their respective countries. The goal was to ensure that the knowledge gained during the training would be passed on to others in their local sports contexts. These training sessions varied significantly across the countries, with notable highlights:

### Italy

The Italian team delivered a training workshop online, for the introduction of a new gender inclusion policy for the Italian Association for Culture and Sport. Key components included an eligibility process for LGBTI+ individuals and specific guidance for transgender athletes. The first online session had 28 participants from different departments of the association, and further training occasions have been scheduled for 2024.

### Austria

The Austrian team held a *Train the Trainer* session with national NGO representatives in Salzburg. They facilitated discussions on privilege, barriers, and solutions in sports, resulting in actionable plans for participants.

### Germany

The German team piloted a sensitization training for grassroots sports operators, focusing on creating gender-inclusive environments. The session was supplemented with resources like 'The Rainbow Player' and guidance for inclusive practices.

### Spain

The Spanish team launched a series of initiatives aimed at improving LGBTI+ inclusion in sports. This included developing online resources, protocols for sports organisations, and delivering a workshop for 10 sports educators.

Throughout the cascading phase, participants were supported through mentorship meetings. These sessions provided guidance on materials, planning, and feedback to ensure each local training was effective.



Material used during the training sessions.



Pilot Training at ASKÖ Salzburg in Austria.

### 5.3. Main outcomes

The main outcome of the training program included a range of positive impacts, as evaluated through surveys conducted before and after the event. Participants reported significant improvements in their knowledge, confidence, and capacity to act as equality champions in sports. Some key findings include:

- 93% of participants felt they had a high level of knowledge and understanding of sexual orientation issues after the training (a 49% increase compared to the pre-training test).
- Confidence in dealing with issues related to sexual orientation and gender identity increased by 33% and 19%, respectively.
- 100% of participants agreed they understood what promotes or limits participation for sexual minorities in sports.
- Participants gained access to tools and resources to promote inclusivity in sports, with many feeling prepared to be equality champions in their local settings.

Post-training surveys revealed that participants felt empowered to make changes in their environments, with some already engaging in follow-up activities such as training sessions and resource creation. Across the participating countries, over 117 individuals were directly reached through local follow-up training sessions. In addition, online resources developed by participants in Spain reached hundreds of users.

In conclusion, the training successfully developed a network of trainers who are better equipped to address LGBTI+ inclusion in sports. However, while many participants showed significant improvements in confidence and knowledge, there remains a need for continued support to ensure sustained impact across all regions involved.

#### Training Toolkit

→ More information about the [training and the training toolkit - https://tinyurl.com/2kstrwuv](https://tinyurl.com/2kstrwuv)



# 6

## The Campaign

Rising Together – open your sport to all genders and sexualities!



The main image of the *Rising Together* campaign from the *Sport for All Genders and Sexualities* project in all project languages.

The SGS project aims to spread knowledge and provide tools that foster inclusion in the world of sport. Its awareness raising campaign targets a wide audience, reflecting the complexity of the challenge:

- Sports practitioners and educators: Those seeking information and guidance on transgender and intersex participation in sport.
- Sports clubs: Organisations committed to inclusion but lacking the necessary knowledge and resources.
- Sports organisations and federations: Institutions with the capacity to reshape their policies based on new research and insights.
- NGOs, institutions, and decision-makers: Individuals and bodies in search of credible information to counter conservative narratives.

The campaign's message is a clear call to action: *Rising Together – Open your sport to all genders and sexualities!* stresses that sexism and transphobia only create division and impede progress. Just as in sport, success in life can only be achieved if no one is left behind.

In the ongoing debate about whether transgender athletes have a competitive advantage and how to ensure fairness, this campaign offers a fresh perspective using rugby as an example. Rugby, a physically demanding sport often associated with masculinity, naturally showcases diversity. Players come in all



shapes and sizes; some are taller and bulkier, while others are lighter and faster—differences that are key to the game, especially in moments like the lineout lift, which the campaign visuals highlight.

The message is clear: in rugby, as in many sports, diverse body types are a strength, not a weakness. By opening sport to all genders and sexualities, we can elevate the game and ourselves to new heights, celebrating diversity as a source of strength.

A central part of the campaign features a series of testimonials from trans, intersex, and non-binary (TIN) athletes, as well as their allies. These stories highlight the challenges faced by TIN individuals in sport, while also showcasing the importance of community, solidarity, and resilience in breaking down barriers.

Traditional gender roles continue to influence sports in Europe, often leading to unfair treatment and exclusion. Since we believe it's time to change that, the video collection was accompanied by quotes from each testimonial, as well as additional information on international sports regulations.

Launched during the European Week of Sport 2023, *Rising Together* featured social media actions and stories in four different languages. It also emphasises that everyone has the fundamental right to participate in sport, regardless of their gender identity or sexual orientation. Among the notable testimonials are Maje Sanchez, world triathlon champion; Valentina Petrillo, the first openly trans Paralympic athlete; Carl Stichweh, co-author of the inclusive regulations for German hockey; and Sensei Georges Michel from the International Martial Arts Hall of Fame.

**Video**

→ You can watch the videos here  
<https://tinyurl.com/2eftcr3r>



Testimonials speaking out for inclusion in the frame of the *Rising Together* campaign.

# 7

## Conclusions: an evaluation of the main results

The SGS project was independently evaluated by researcher Ruth Stevenson (Ruthless Research, Scotland), assessing the extent to which project and operational objectives were achieved in terms of relevance, effectiveness and impact.

At the close of the SGS project the partners were largely satisfied with the project outcomes and the progress that had been made against project objectives. As planned, a variety of informative and practical outputs were produced which contributed to the evidence-base and built understanding and capacity amongst grassroots sport organisations across Europe.

### The evaluation found that the SGS project was relevant:

- The project plan was informed by past projects including Outsport.
- The timing of the project was opportune as the topic was present in the media and European policy environment.
- The project actions and outputs were informed by local input and tailored to local needs.

### The evaluation found that the approach taken by the SGS project was effective:

- The project was well-planned and realistic in scope.
- The partners were expert in and passionate about the topic, and worked well collaboratively.
- Project coordination was exemplary.
- The approach taken was sufficiently agile to respond to emerging needs and opportunities.
- The combined actions of evidence, awareness and relationship building amplified the impact of the project and were expected to lead to an ongoing *chain reaction* of influence.
- Regional Working Groups were the central catalyst for delivering project success.

### The evaluation found that the SGS project has had impact to a certain extent:

- The project added to the evidence-base and created conversations around Europe.
- The project generated momentum around the topic.
- It is hoped that the Regional Working Groups will be self-sustaining.

Arising operational issues have been resolved during the project, which is testament to the excellent coordination led by VIDC. More strategic learning points arose around documentation of impacts, plus dissemination and influencing. Change takes time, and the influence of the SGS project is likely to continue to develop beyond the project period meaning that the true impact may be yet to emerge.



LGBTI+ Sports Conference, Eurogames. Vienna, July 2024.

# 8 Resources

The several resources produced by the SGS project are listed below. These outcomes are freely available to anyone interested in the topic, especially sport organisations:

## Data report: Research findings on the situation of women and LGBT+ people in European grassroots sport

(German Sport University Cologne/SGS project, Vienna/Cologne 2023).

The research aimed to identify prevalent gender norms and stereotypes in organised sport, assess inclusive measures, and explore the personal experiences of women and LGBT+ people regarding discrimination and exclusion in grassroots sport.

→ [download](#)

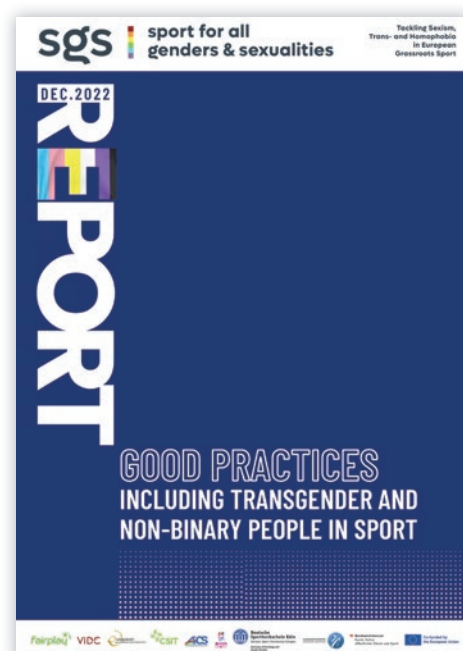


## Good Practice Report: European good practice examples for gender and sexual diversity in sport

(fairplay/SGS project, Malaga/Vienna 2022, English)

A collection of 16 good practices has been produced to show that inclusive and safe sport is possible for everyone:

→ [download](#)



Data report, Cover of the Good Practices Report.

## Factsheet Gender & sexual diversity in sport

(fairplay, Vienna 2024)

This factsheet raises initial awareness of the situation of LGBTIQ+ people in sport, clarifying the most important terms in the area of gender and sexual diversity, why the exclusion of people is discrimination, and why sport needs to take action. Sport organisations are encouraged to download the factsheet and use it to raise awareness in their own environment and tackle the issue!

→ [download](#)



## Instructions for action: One club for all! Guidelines and checklist for more gender diversity & sexual diversity in your club or sports organisation

These instructions are designed to support grassroots sports clubs and associations in dismantling barriers and opening up to people of all genders and sexual identities. A club or association that embraces and welcomes everyone is a valuable asset. The focus is on simple, practical measures that require minimal resources, ensuring they can be easily implemented at the grassroots level.

→ [download](#)



## Campaign *Rising Together* – open your sport to all genders and sexualities!

This campaign builds on the project's values and findings, starting with the research study results and the report on best practices. It provides sports clubs with graphics and slogans they can adopt to champion diversity. *Rising Together* highlights that everyone has the fundamental right to participate in sport, regardless of gender identity or sexual orientation, while stressing that sexism and transphobia create division and hinder progress. Just like in sports, we can only achieve our goals in life if no one is left behind. Diversity is power!

→ [download](#)



Main cover of the *Rising Together* campaign from the Sport for All Genders and Sexualities project, Instructions for action.

## Testimonials for gender diversity: creating role models

It is often said that sport is no place for LGBTI+ athletes – but that's not the case! Although they are often met with discrimination and exclusion in sport, there are courageous people who are open about who they are. Such role models are important – not least for young people, for whom they show positive paths and show us all how we can work together to make grassroots sport even more open and inclusive.

Among the several testimonials are Maje Sanchez, world triathlon champion; sprinter Valentina Petrillo, first out trans Paralympic athlete; Carl Stichweh, co-author of the new inclusive regulations for German hockey; and Sensei Georges Michel from the International Martial Arts Hall of Fame.

→ [download](#)



## Training & workshops: Creating awareness

The Training Toolkit equips organisations with essential methods and insights to raise awareness of gender and sexual diversity within sport clubs. It was developed during a four-day train-the-trainers seminar with experts and representatives from various sports organisations. The seminar is documented and evaluated in a comprehensive training delivery report.

→ [download](#)



## Regional Working Groups: Exchange and knowledge building between sports organisations

Institutionalised working groups exchange information on the topic, develop knowledge through shared input and identify the needs of (organised) grassroots sport. The ultimate goal is to support sports organisations in finding inclusive solutions for gender and sexual diversity within their structure. Together, we aim to develop practical, sustainable and inclusive solutions to support grassroots sport.

→ [download](#)



## Fairplay Education Platform

All tools, deliverables, and information on the topic are also available on our resource centre at the [Fairplay education platform](#).





Project group at a pilot activity together with the Catch'n Serve Ball Austrian Federation for EuroGames 2024 in Vienna.

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Project team meeting in Vienna at VIDC office during EuroGames 2024, wearing our *Rising Together* team tricots.



This handbook on inclusive sport summarises and documents key findings and outcomes from the Erasmus+ project **Sport for all Genders & Sexualities**. It provides a practical, comprehensive, and accessible guide to the project, offering an overview of its key outcomes and experiences.

Everyone has the right to take part in sport. But LGBTI+ people often experience exclusion, hatred and discrimination, which prevents or denies them access to sport. It is the responsibility of all – clubs and sports organisations, athletes, trainers and sport governing bodies – to create safer and respectful spaces. In this handbook you find practical advices to open you sport for all genders & sexualities!

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→ [fairplay@vidc.org](mailto:fairplay@vidc.org)

### Project Website

→ <https://www.fairplay.or.at/en/projects/sport-for-all-genders-and-sexualities>

### Project ressources platform

→ [edu.fairplay.or.at/en/courses/gender-and-sexual-diversity-in-sport](https://edu.fairplay.or.at/en/courses/gender-and-sexual-diversity-in-sport)