

Project summary

LGBTQI+ Policy and Leadership in Sport and Society (+PLUSS) enhanced the inclusion and participation of athletes with diverse sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions, and sex characteristics in European grassroots sport through combatting discrimination & addressing intolerance against sex and gender diverse athletes and establishing an inclusive sport culture where all can participate.

The project has:

>Built cooperation and understanding among LGBTQI+ sports clubs in Europe so that sports clubs and their leaders have a network that offers support, motivation and accountability, which has secured the delivery, impact and legacy of LGBTQI+ sport participation.

>Understood successful mechanisms and interventions to tackle exclusion and what really works to help improve inclusion of LGBTQI+ people in and through sport in Europe. This enabled us to create an evidence base for interventions in the form of a research report, as well as allowing us to establish principles and guidance for LGBTQI+ clubs and initiatives to form and flourish, in the form of Community Guidelines.

>Increased capacity of LGBTQI+ sport leaders and clubs so that these clubs can continue to exist and grow to provide inclusive and safe environments for people who are excluded from existing sport structures, and to increase their ability to cooperate with mainstream sport.

>Advocated for the policies and practices that can be adopted to maximise and accelerate inclusion of LGBTQI+ people across Europe through the production of a new Purple Policy Paper.

Coordinator's contact details

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List of participating organisations

- EUROPEAN GAY AND LESBIAN SPORT FEDERATION VERENIGING – NL
(Coordinator)
- DEUTSCHE SPORTHOCHSCHULE KOLN – DE
- SPORTIEQ (former CENTRUM ETHIEK IN DE SPORT VZW) – BE
- QUEER SPORT - UDRUGA ZA SPORT I ZDRAVLJE - HR
- Out for the Win (former Wel Jong Niet Hetero) – BE
- Atlasz Sportegyesület- HU
- SPORTNO DRUSTVO OUT IN SLOVENIJA – SI
- Team München e.V. – DE
- Pan Idræt København - DK



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Project results

The +PLUSS project generated significant results and impacts at organisational, community and European levels, contributing to stronger inclusion of LGBTQI+ people in grassroots sport.

At the level of LGBTQI+ sport organisations, the project strengthened leadership capacity, organisational sustainability and strategic planning. Through workshops, peer learning activities and the implementation of anti-discrimination strategies, participating clubs improved their ability to attract new members, engage with stakeholders and advocate for inclusive sport environments. This capacity building translated into measurable growth in participation, with partner organisations reporting an average increase of more than 37% in sport participation following the implementation of their strategies.

The project also contributed to reducing the sense of isolation often experienced by LGBTQI+ sport initiatives. Survey results from workshops and leadership activities show that more than 80% of participants reported feeling more connected to a European community of LGBTQI+ sport leaders, strengthening peer support networks and facilitating future cooperation.

Another important result was the creation of a stronger evidence base on LGBTQI+ inclusion in sport. The research report produced within the project collected data from 83 sport clubs across 25 countries, providing valuable insights into the barriers faced by LGBTQI+ athletes and the practices that successfully promote inclusive sport environments. This evidence supports future initiatives, research and policy development in the field of sport inclusion.

The project also contributed to strengthening dialogue between LGBTQI+ sport organisations and mainstream sport institutions. Partner organisations recorded 75 interactions with mainstream sport bodies, including meetings, collaborations and advocacy initiatives, significantly exceeding the initial target. These interactions helped raise awareness of LGBTQI+ inclusion issues within the broader sport sector.

In terms of advocacy impact, the project produced practical and policy-oriented resources that can continue to influence the sport sector beyond the project lifetime. The Community Guidelines and policy recommendations provide concrete tools for

sport organisations, decision-makers and civil society actors seeking to promote inclusive sport practices.

Dissemination activities ensured wide visibility and uptake of the project results. Project publications and resources reached tens of thousands of stakeholders through social media and networks, while hundreds of sport leaders and policy actors received materials directly. All outputs are publicly available and can be used by organisations across Europe.

The results of the project demonstrate a strong potential for sustainability and transferability. The research findings, community guidelines and policy recommendations developed through the project provide practical tools that can be adapted and used by sport organisations, public authorities and civil society actors across Europe. By strengthening the capacity of LGBTQI+ sport leaders and organisations, the project has contributed to building a more resilient and connected European network capable of continuing to promote inclusive sport environments beyond the lifetime of the project. Furthermore, the partnerships and collaborations established during the project have created new opportunities for continued cooperation, knowledge exchange and advocacy at European level, reinforcing the long-term impact of the initiative.

The project also introduced an innovative approach by combining grassroots sport capacity-building with research-based policy advocacy, thereby linking local sport initiatives with European policy discussions on inclusion and equality in sport.

Overall, the project strengthened the capacity of LGBTQI+ sport organisations, expanded participation opportunities for LGBTQI+ people in sport, and contributed to advancing inclusive practices within the European sport ecosystem. The outcomes of the project provide a strong foundation for future cooperation, advocacy and policy development aimed at ensuring that sport in Europe becomes more inclusive and accessible to all.

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