



A PROJECT TO SUPPORT THE EMPLOYABILITY OF YOUNG NEETS IN THE SPORTS SECTOR BY IDENTIFYING, ANALYZING, AND PROMOTING EFFICIENT PROFESSIONAL INTEGRATION SCHEMES ACROSS EUROPE.

CONTEXT

Over the past decade, European institutions have made youth employment a central priority in their social and economic policies. Despite various initiatives, youth unemployment remains high at 11.4%, and NEETs represent 11% of those aged 15–29 in Europe. The sports sector, which grew by 13.6% between 2021 and 2023, shows strong potential for creating opportunities for young people, as it employs a higher proportion of youth than other industries. However, many jobs in this sector require formal qualifications and strong soft skills, which can be barriers for NEETs. There is therefore a need for more inclusive and tailored professional integration schemes to help them access sustainable employment in this growing field.

NEEDS ADRESSED

1: Low attractiveness of careers in the sports sector

The sports sector may appear unattractive to young NEETs youth because many roles and professions are perceived as low-paid, insecure, and lacking clear career pathways.

2: Insufficient employability among young NEETs for sports jobs

Approximately 11% of the European age category 15 to 29 are considered NEETs (Eurostat, 2024). Although some NEETs may participate in sports activities, they often lack structured pathways into sports-related employment due to limited access to tailored training, soft-skills development, and professional opportunities.

3: Lack of professionalization and qualification in the sports sector

There is a significant skills gap in sports professions: many positions require regulated qualifications, yet young NEETs and current staff often lack these credentials, resulting in qualification mismatches and persistent labor shortages in the sector.

EXPECTED RESULTS

Mapping and analysis

A comprehensive overview and analysis of existing professional integration schemes in the sports sector across Europe, identifying best practices and gaps in supporting young NEETs.

Stakeholder Engagement

National and European consultations with key stakeholders (public authorities, sports federations, NGOs, and youth organizations) to foster collaboration and share knowledge.

Practical Resources

A final report and sustainability plan, offering actionable recommendations and a knowledge base for policymakers, practitioners, and organizations to improve youth employability in sport.

Awareness and Visibility

Increased awareness of the sports sector's potential for social inclusion and employability, promoted through a European webinar, multilingual leaflets, and a dedicated project website.

PARTNERSHIP

The INSPIRE project is driven by a strong consortium committed to social inclusion and the professional integration of young NEETs through sport. Combining expertise from an employers' organization, a government ministry, a non-profit grassroots sports association, and a sport management institute, the partnership brings together diverse experience to deliver meaningful and sustainable results.



Министерство на младежта
и спорта

Ministry of Youth and Sports
(Bulgaria)



apogesd
associação
portuguesa de
gestão de
desporto

APOGESD
(Portugal)

INSTITUIÇÃO
DE UTILIDADE
PÚBLICA

Second Chance
Sports Association



Second Chance
Sports Association
(Hungary)

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INSPIRE

Innovation and Networking
for Sport Professional
Integration Resources in Europe



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