



# ESOM

ENHANCING SPORT ORGANISATIONS  
AND MANAGEMENT

## ESOM Report



Co-funded by  
the European Union





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## PROJECT SUMMARY AND REPORT

The Enhancing Sport Organisations and Management (ESOM) project, co-founded by the European Union between January 2023 and December 2024, brought together eight partners from seven countries. Lead by the EUSA Institute (SLO) university sports associations: Croatian Academic Sports Federation – CASF/HASS (CRO), Hungarian University Sports Federation – HUSF/MEFS (HUN), Students Sports Association of Montenegro – SSAM/USSCG (MNE), Student Sports Association the Netherlands – SSN (NED), University Sports Association of Poland – AZS (POL), Sports Students' Union of Ukraine – SSUU (UKR) and the University of Ljubljana – UL (SLO).

Main aim of the project was to strengthen management and event organisation in sport, with a special focus on university sport. This was done through blended learning, sharing experiences, gaining new information and skills on the pre-defined key topics. Main activities and pillars included research (conducting a survey and collecting good practice), education (online and live workshops and seminars), and dissemination (creating resources and recommendations, conferences).

The project primarily and directly addressed EU priorities on supporting Good Governance in Sport through promoting the quality of coaching and staff, and also indirectly by promoting Sport and Education, supporting the dual careers of athletes.

The partner consortium brought together a European NGO sports entity (EUSA Institute), national university sport bodies in 6 countries (Croatia, Hungary, Montenegro, the Netherlands, Poland, Ukraine) and one university (Ljubljana, Slovenia). Seven countries were involved through the partnership consortium, all of them coming from signatory countries of the Bologna Accord, members of the European Higher Education Area. The partnership represented partners from key areas of education, training, youth and sport.

Sport in tertiary education does not have a unified approach in Europe, and the project engaged entities from different countries and experiences, including Programme and Partner countries. ESOM project aimed and delivered in strengthening management and event organisation in university sport through blended learning, sharing experiences and gaining new information.

Results of the project were 3-fold, contributing to the priorities of the Erasmus+ call: improving cooperation between organisations, strengthening organisations' expertise and activities; improving participation in sports and physical activities in grassroot sport (recreation and non-professional competitions); and supporting student athletes in their dual career paths (ensuring study possibilities for elite and high level athletes). Engaging assorted partners in the consortium, as well as reaching out wider where possible, and sharing the project activities and results in an open way enabled wide dissemination, exploitation and sustainability of the results.

As part of workshops and seminars, several topics have been discussed, and partners presented their experiences and good practices related to the sport organizations and management, especially in the frame of university sports.

The following topics were specifically addressed as part of the project activities: Education of Staff and Volunteers; Engagement and Participation; Event Management and Organization; Finances and Funding; Good Governance and Policy Making; Marketing and Promotion; Media and Communication; Networking and Partnerships; Safety and Security; Volunteer Recruitment and Management.

## PROJECT ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

ESOM project partners met in Ljubljana (SLO) in **February 2023** for a kick-off meeting, setting the course of the project and going through the General training.

In **June 2023**, project partners met in Porec (CRO), also attending the inaugural 4 Healthy Academic Society Conference where apart from ESOM project introduction also one of the project defined topic of Education of Staff and Volunteers was covered.

In **November 2023**, a set of online webinars and workshops were held. As part of the VII International Conference Sustainable Development and Heritage in Sports a satellite seminar was organized, in which the project Enhancing Sport Organisations and Management – ESOM was first presented, and then the topics of Engagement and Participation in University sports; the topic of Media and Communication in University Sport; and Marketing and Promotion in University Sport were presented.

As part of the EUSA-NUSA Webinar, the topic of Finances and Funding, with a focus on EU funding opportunities was also held online in **November 2023**.

In **February 2024**, the partners met in Warsaw (POL), where a seminar was held on the topics of Event Management and Organisation were addressed in one part, and on the topic of Volunteer Recruitment and Management in the other.

In **April 2024**, a project dedicated online webinar covered the topics of Good Governance and Policy Making, as well as part of Safety and Security.

The 2024 European Universities Games in **July 2024** were used to uncover project priorities of the topics of Networking and Partnerships, held as part of the EUSA Forum on Synergies in university sport development, hosted in Debrecen (HUN).

As part of the EUG Observer Programme during the European Universities Games in **July 2024** in Miskolc (HUN) the second part of the seminar on Safety and Security was held in Miskolc (HUN).

The largest university sport event in **July 2024** in Miskolc (HUN) was also the opportunity for partners to meet in person and for representatives of the universities and government, as well as national university sport bodies to discuss the topic of Legacy of sports events

The final major event was held in **August 2024** in Zagreb (CRO), as part of the FISU Forum, where also the ESOM project and the key deliverables were presented.

FISU Forum in **August 2024** was also the opportunity for the project partners to meet for the last meeting of the project consortium, going through the general overview and the activities implemented during the project period.

Seminars organised as part of the project focused on the wider discussion between project partners. All online events were held as webinars which allowed wider participation and audience beyond the project partners, promoted through project partners members and networks. This included national university sport bodies in 47 European countries and other stakeholders. Similarly, in-person conferences also attracted wider participation, including project partners, as well as other European and International attendees, representatives of universities, sport federations, local and national governments, officials, athletes and volunteers.

## PROJECT OUTPUTS AND DELIVERABLES

Important part of the Enhancing Sport Organisations and Management (ESOM) project were also the deliverables – outputs of the project.

Some achievements and outputs are difficult to measure and demonstrate, like the enhanced sport organisation and management know-how, skills and networking. They are, nevertheless, a very important aspect and result of the project.

The more concrete and measurable outputs are the project deliverables, which were submitted for approval to the funder – European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA), as the project was Co-funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

The project developed 22 deliverables, most of them are also publicly available on the project website <https://esom.eusa.eu> and will be available and archived also at the Erasmus+ Project Platform <https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/projects/search/details/101089975> following the project conclusion and evaluation.

Overview of all ESOM project deliverables:

Deliverable No	Deliverable Name
D1	Quality assurance plan
D2	Report
D3	National information factsheets
D4	Internal research reports
D5	Collection of good practice
D6	Research report
D7	General training report
D8	Workshop report on Finances and Funding
D9	Workshop report on Engagement and Participation
D10	Workshop report on Education of Staff and Volunteers
D11	Workshop report on Media and Communication
D12	Workshop report on Marketing and Promotion
D13	Workshop report on Event Management and Organisation
D14	Workshop report on Volunteer Recruitment and Management
D15	Workshop report on Good Governance and Policy Making
D16	Workshop report on Safety and Security
D17	Workshop report on Networking and Partnerships
D18	Rectors Event - Legacy of Sport Events report
D19	University sport conference report
D20	Website
D21	Communication and Dissemination Strategy
D22	Final evaluation report

## PROJECT PROMOTION AND DISSEMINATION

The task of promotion – communication and dissemination – exploitation of the Enhancing Sport Organisations and Management (ESOM) project was shared by all project partners, lead by the EUSA Institute.

Dedicated project website <https://esom.eusa.eu> has served and still serves as the key reference platform, but the main way of promotion and communication was the established channels of the project partners. Project partners' websites and social media accounts of the partners were the main promotion channels of the ESOM project during the project period.

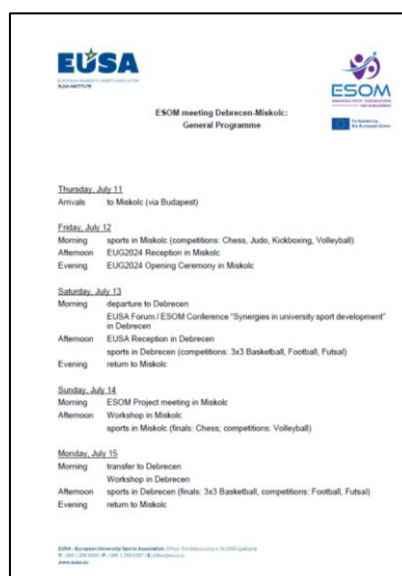
Since the core of the partners is focused on management and organisation of university sport and the project gathered some new data and developed some new resources as well as shared existing good practices and initiatives of the project partners, the project and its outcomes will keep being shared also beyond the project cycle.

The promotion and deliverables mainly followed the visual identity developed by the project, but also using the standard visuals and channels by the partners.

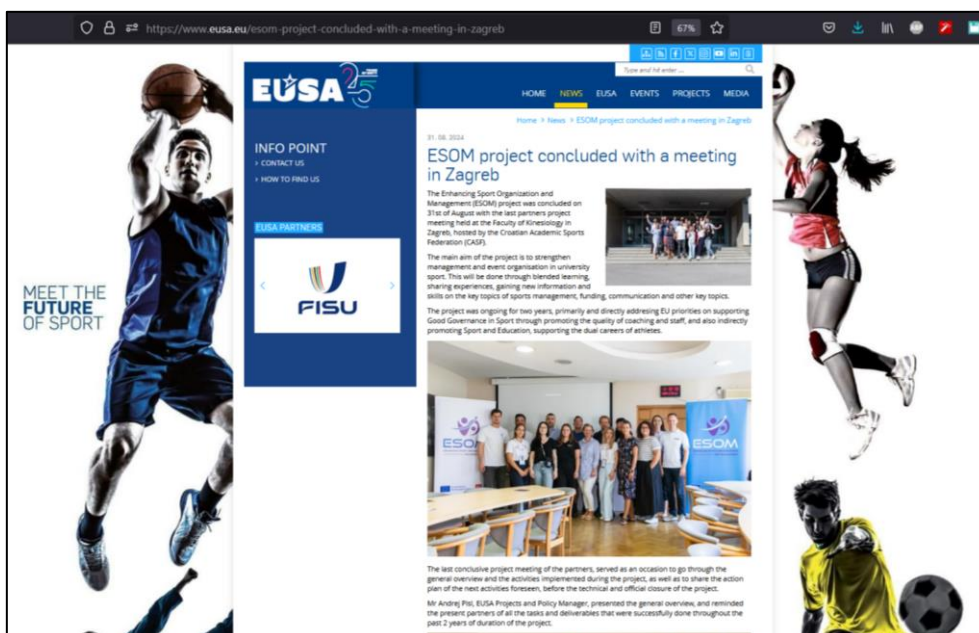
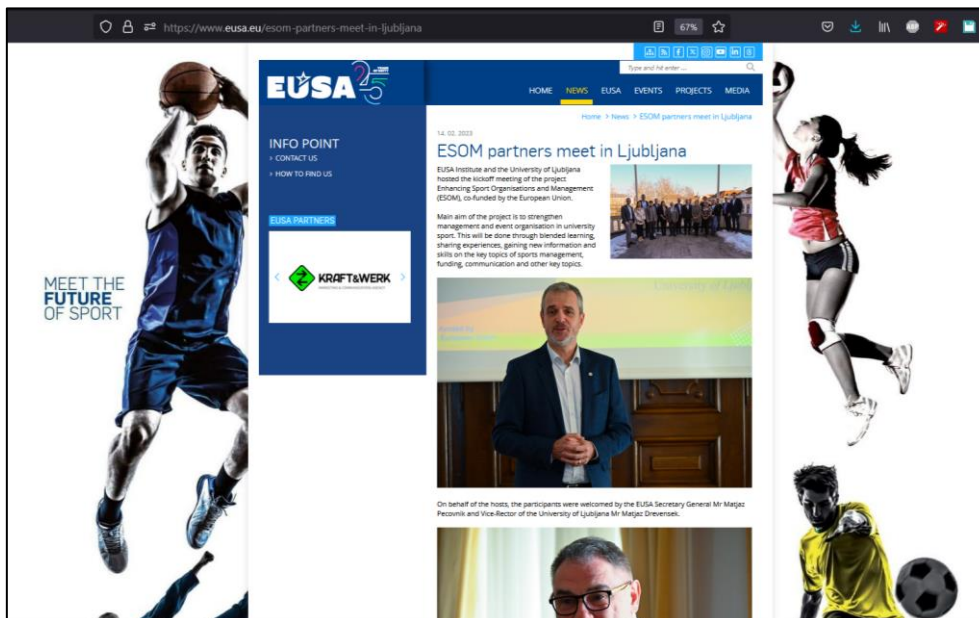
Dissemination and exploitation of results was done at public webinars and in-person conferences, attended by target stakeholders - national university sport bodies in 47 European countries, International University Sport Federation (FISU) and their members in 14 countries worldwide, representatives of universities, sport federations, local and national governments, officials, athletes and volunteers.

Special events and activities used for the dissemination of the ESOM project included the EUSA Forum entitled "Synergies in university sport development" held on July 13, 2024 in Debrecen (Hungary), ESOM Rectors Event - Legacy of Sport Events, held on July 22 in Miskolc (Hungary) – both events were held during the 2024 European Universities Games. The global university sport conference FISU World Forum entitled "University Sport: Creating a Better World" held between August 27 and 31 in Zagreb (Croatia), sharing also the key findings and experiences of the project.

Below we are sharing some examples of the covers of deliverables, presentations, promo graphics, meeting documentation, as well as some examples of news and social media posts. Detailed clipping was submitted as part of the final report to EACEA.









## PROJECT REFLECTION

The Enhancing Sport Organisations and Management (ESOM) project brought together different partners from different profiles, coming from different countries in Europe. Their common field of work is university sport, and an interest to develop it, as well as their skills and capacity.

The partners' reflections shared and proved that the project was successfully implemented and concluded, leaving long-lasting impact and legacy, defacto strengthening the sport organisations and management skills of the partners, sharing the experience, good practices and outcomes also with other stakeholders and wider interested public.

Reflecting back to designing the project concept and project proposal, some of the lessons learned would be to minimise the number of planned deliverables, and to take into account the ever changing environment and circumstances.

Project partners took advantage of key university sport educational and sports events, reaching well beyond project consortium and engaging also other relevant stakeholders.

Project partners express gratitude to the European Union and the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) for the co-funding and their support. At the same time, our feedback to them is to have more understanding to the changes in project dynamics, especially if the changes bring additional synergies and reach, and shift focus from technicalities to the content.

Our recommendation to other organizations interested in Erasmus+ funding opportunities in the field of sport, is to have a project mission that is common to the project consortium partners, to engage in trusted partnerships, developing and using the outcomes for the content and legacy, and not only for the sake of the project itself.