



# ESOM

ENHANCING SPORT ORGANISATIONS  
AND MANAGEMENT

## ESOM Collection of Good Practice



Co-funded by  
the European Union



UNIVERZA  
V LJUBLJANI



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AND MANAGEMENT

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## SUMMARY

Within the ESOM (Enhancing Sport Organisations and Management) project, co-founded by the European Union, a series of good practices has been identified and shared among project's partners during dedicated workshops and seminars. Project has pinpointed crucial areas of activities for sport organizations – especially in the frame of the university sports. Those areas has been analysed and presented by each country – therefore it has been possible to extract good practice examples.

Following areas has been the topics of the discussion and work of the partners in frame of the project:

- 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

Following organizations – Project's Partners has contributed to the collection of good practices and examples within those areas:

- EUSA Institute
- University of Ljubljana
- University Sports Association of Poland
- Students Sports Association of Montenegro
- Sports Students Union of Ukraine
- Croatian Academic Sports Federation
- Studentensport Netherlands

## ENGAGEMENT AND PARTICIPATION

### GOOD PRACTICE ENGAGEMENT OF STUDENTS



Students Sports Association of Montenegro provides a great example of engagement and participation of students in the processes of development of their organization. As a governing institution they create and develop sport activities for students.

They work on creating a right environment to increase the number of participants in sport activities in their country. They aim at promoting student sports and improve sport facilities and infrastructure that may benefit the development of sport.

#### ENGAGEMENT OF STUDENTS

##### **Research on the needs and expectations of target groups**

To improve the participation in their sport activities, Students Sports Association of Montenegro created a direct survey to students, asking what sports they would like to practice. That resulted in creating a new sport section (hiking) and improvement of participation by around 100%.

##### **Engagement and participation of new target groups**

Due to the process of engaging target group in the decision-making process, not only the general participation improved, but also the organization was able to involve a larger number of women – before 2023, 90% of participants were men. New hiking section consisted in 37% of women.

##### **Engagement of participants in the promotion**

As social media – Facebook and Instagram are important tools for the promotion of organizations' activities, Students Sports Association of Montenegro involved participants in promotion of their activities. Participants sharing the pictures of videos can increase the visibility of the organization as well as encourage next potential participants.

### TIPS & RECOMMENDATIONS

- ➔ while creating sport programs and activities ensure that they match the needs and expectations of target groups;
- ➔ using promotion and marketing tools may increase the participation in the organized activities;
- ➔ social media are a great tool to not only promote and showcase the activities but also to find next potential participants;

## EVENT MANAGEMENT AND ORGANIZATION

### GOOD PRACTICE SERIES OF STUDENT SPORT EVENTS



Studentensport Nederland is regularly organizing a series of quality events for students each year, being a great example of not only event management but also engaging students. It is constantly developing the organization by engaging new students and providing them with an opportunity for self-development.

Student Championships in the Netherlands are attributed each year to different university, that becomes responsible for the preparation and the implementation of the event. It allows students to gather direct experience and gain additional knowledge and skills.

#### ORGANIZATION OF SERIES OF STUDENT SPORT EVENTS

##### Direct involvement of students

Student sports events in the Netherlands are organized by students for students – adding value in terms of good understanding of the needs of potential participants. They gain valuable experience that can be used in the future work.

##### Organizational support

Students organizing events get support from the Studentensport Nederland with the following elements: guidebooks and documents of earlier editions, possibilities to promote the event within the Network, medals and promotional materials. Additionally, few meetings is organized to monitor the implementation and development of the event.

##### Format of the competition

In the Netherlands, there are almost 30 singular events in sports like cycling, judo, tennis, archery or swimming. What's more, one final event is organized each year, gathering participants of around 12 sports like basketball, volleyball, football, tennis, handball, futsal, beach volleyball.

### TIPS & RECOMMENDATIONS

- ➔ good practice example may be dedicated app for the event – with the schedules, scores and more information;
- ➔ involvement of students in the organization may be beneficial in terms of creativity and knowledge of the participants' needs.
- ➔ it's important to pass the knowledge and “know-how” of the events to the next organizers of the events;
- ➔ cooperation with sport federations may support not only a technical side of the events, but also logistical – in terms of adjusting the date of the event.

## FINANCES AND FUNDING

### GOOD PRACTICE IMPLEMENTATION OF EU PROJECTS



EUSA has a great example of quality and efficient usage of the EU funds for the activities in the field of sport, especially university sport. Through its Institute they have been involved in numerous projects since 2016 – both as a coordinator and partners, and project experiences actually goes back to 2011, starting with partnerships in preparatory actions in the field of sport.

Effective fundraising is based on the **quality idea** and the **implementation** of those ideas – EUSA Institute throughout the 8 years became an experienced and reliable partner for the projects in the frame of Erasmus+ programme.

#### MAIN EU OPPORTUNITIES FOR SPORT

**Erasmus+ Programme:** EU programme for education, training, youth and sport

<https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu>

**Pilot Projects and Preparatory Actions (in Sport):** New initiatives being tested for being implemented in EU funding programmes

<https://www.eacea.ec.europa.eu/grants/2021-2027/pilot-projects-and-preparatory-actions-pppas/>

**European Solidarity Corps:** Volunteering and solidarity projects (international and local) for young people 18-30

[https://europa.eu/youth/solidarity\\_en](https://europa.eu/youth/solidarity_en)

### TIPS & RECOMMENDATIONS

- ➔ develop your national programmes that align with priorities of EU in the area of sport by adding international dimension;
  - ➔ check possibilities of funding from the government – local or national;
- ➔ develop already existing activities – implement projects based on your expertise and in areas you have experience in;
- ➔ build relations with potential sponsors and partners – it may be long process but your organization may benefit from them in a long-term;

## GOOD GOVERNANCE AND POLICY MAKING

### GOOD PRACTICE WELL PLANNED GOVERNANCE



Hrvatski akademski  
sportski savez  
Croatian Academic  
Sports Federation

Croatian Academic Sports Federation has a detailed and multi-layered structure that ensures transparency on many fields of their activities. It supports decision-making as well as ensures involvement of specialist in various topics.

As a body on the national-level, it supports the work of regional and local university sport movements. CASF introduced a series of documents that allows for a systematic review of work as well as monitoring the regulations and laws connected to the functioning of the sport federation.

#### TOOLS FOR GOOD GOVERNANCE AND POLICY MAKING

##### Well-planned multilayered structure

CASF general organizational structure is consisting of executive board, assembly, supervisory board, commissions and the office. Assembly is the highest body of the organization and it consists of representatives of various city in Croatia. Executive board is responsible for set of tasks and activities during the daily running of the organization.

##### Thematic Commissions

To support the decision-making and policy making processes and ensure participation of experts in specific fields, CASF established various commissions in the topics of: technical, medical, student, commission for scientific research, ethics, for awards and recognitions, for EU projects and financing, for media and marketing, for education and dual careers and volunteers.

##### Documents

A set of documents and regulations supports the work of commissions and other bodies related to the CASF. Following documents has been created: Statue, Development strategy 2024-2028, Work Plan of each commission, Ethical codex of CASF.

### TIPS & RECOMMENDATIONS

- ➔ involving experts in various fields as a advisors in specific areas – commissions;
- ➔ organizing a fair discussions among interested parties that may influence the final decisions and processes of making policies;
- ➔ Involving people of all ages and backgrounds in the key structures in the organizations;

## MARKETING & PROMOTION

### GOOD PRACTICE DEVELOPMENT THROUGH PROMOTION



Sports Students Union of Ukraine showcased a valuable example of importance of marketing and promotion in the field of sport and in the functioning of sport organizations. Due to the active promotion and advocacy, important changes has been made in the legislation in the field of physical culture of sports.

Since 2017 it became possible to attract state funds for financing student sports. Changes like this were possible due to the visibility and promotion of importance of students sports on the national level.

#### PROMOTION OF SPORT ACTIVITIES

##### **Support of national authorities in promotion of activities**

National social project “Active Parks – Locations of Healthy Ukraine” is a project included in the national program of President of Ukraine Volodymyr Zelenskyi – “Healthy Ukraine”, increasing its promotional value.

##### **Promotion by participants**

After the launching of the project, the information about it was mainly spread due to participating students that posted photos and news on social media. Locations of the activities are in almost every city and town, making it widely accessible to general public.

##### **Involvement of target group**

Project were developed by university teachers and students in various age group, making it possible to adapt the activities and the exercises to different target groups. It made it accessible for people of all ages and nowadays, almost every Ukrainian knows about the project.

## TIPS & RECOMMENDATIONS

- ➔ quality promotion can increase the status and image of the implemented activities;
  - ➔ promotion and marketing tools can directly influence the development and implementation of sport programs by increasing their value for various stakeholders;
  - ➔ in promotion and sport it is crucial to use varied tools available – social networks, science journals, radio, tv, banners, events etc. that will also match the target groups;



## MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION

### GOOD PRACTICE MEDIA & COMMUNICATION STRATEGY



University  
Sports  
Association

#### **MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION STRATEGY – University Sport Association of Poland**

University Sport Association of Poland has built their media and communication strategy for years, and became a reliable partner and organization with a wide reach of their news and activities – having a professional approach to the media coverage of all areas of work.

For an effective media and communication strategy, it is important to keep the consistency and the quality of the provided content. Good quality photos, videos and presentation of organization's activities are key to gain and then keep the attention of target groups.

#### **KEY ELEMENTS TO MEDIA AND COMMUNICATION STRATEGY**

##### **Press Office**

Professional journalist/media content creator can enable creation of high quality news and content for the use of the internal media of the organization as well as internal media outlets that may promote the activities and events. They ensure that the media content is created in a timely manner that highlights the importance of the news.

##### **Usage of new media – social media**

It is crucial to match the news, target group and the tools organization uses for communication about its activities. With the possibilities, nowadays social media can be a low-cost way to create quality content and above all, reach with the information to the wide group of recipients.

##### **Devoted website for university sport news**

A website has been established to inform about all news related to university sport – on the local, regional, national and international level. Local press officers have been nominated to report and promote events held in their regions.

## TIPS & RECOMMENDATIONS

- ➔ plan your strategy in a long term – it is important to keep the website, social media and other information outlets updated;
- ➔ create high quality content – photos, videos of good quality will improve the image of the organized activities;
- ➔ communication and used tools should be adapted to the target group and the potential recipients of your content;

## NETWORKING AND PARTNERSHIPS

### GOOD PRACTICE INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION



#### **INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION & MUTUAL PROJECTS – Croatian Academic Sports Federation & University Sport Association of Poland**

In 2023 Croatian Academic Sports Federation & University Sport Association of Poland developed and implemented a project based on the mobility young leaders from Poland, that attended the European Universities Combat Championships organized in Zagreb, Croatia. It has been a great example of cooperation and partnership between organizations of similar profile.

Project enabled for the leaders to gain additional experience and learn from their peers in another country as well as brought additional quality to the event, having more experience leaders from Poland participating. Both organizations benefited from the cooperation and developed. Project has been co-funded by the European Union in the programme of Mobility of Sport Staff.

#### **MAIN ELEMENTS OF SUCCESSFUL NETWORKING & PARTNERSHIPS**

##### **Build relations with various stakeholders**

Partnerships are created by sport organizations with various institutions – both private and public and on various levels. But in all of them it is crucial to keep good relations and be fair to the partners. It builds on mutual experience that can benefit long-term.

##### **Partnerships can support development of organization**

Cooperation and the exchange of good practices between various organizations can greatly improve and develop organizations' capacity. Both on national and international level it is important to grow and develop new practices that will allow consistent development.

##### **Opportunities created by public funding**

In the frame of sport, many opportunities are created by various public institutions supporting promotion of physical activity and sport. It can be organizations directly involved in sport (like Ministry of Sport), but also local or regional authorities.

## TIPS & RECOMMENDATIONS

- ➔ check the priorities in the frame of sport of public institutions – they may support the kind of implemented activities;
- ➔ develop relations with organizations of similar profile on the international level – it may bring quality exchange of practices;
- ➔ use a chance to cooperate with non-sport organizations like universities of schools – they may be interested in the promotion of sport;

## SAFETY & SECURITY

### GOOD PRACTICE SAFETY DURING SPORT EVENTS



Hungarian University Sports Federation (MEFS) has been one of the main organizers of the 2024 European Universities Games in Debrecen and Miskolc. Topic of safety and security is especially important during big-scale events like this, which enabled a sharing of various good practices.

MEFS has to ensure the safety of not only participants but also organizers, volunteers and general public during the event. Various tools has been used to monitor the situation and minimize the risks of the dangerous situations.

#### ELEMENTS OF SAFETY AND SECURITY MEASURES

##### Accreditation system during events

System of accreditation allows for a constant control and monitoring of who is entering the venues and whether the person has a right to do so. A detailed accreditation and venue plan is needed to divide areas and create a system where only necessary persons are allowed to enter specific areas in the venues.

##### Accommodation safety measures

Events during which the organizer is providing the accommodation, it is crucial to ensure the security measures also in those areas. MEFS created regulations that indicate solutions for various scenarios connected to safety and security. That included information on the security in the building, access rules, no drinking policy and quiet hours.

##### Medical services

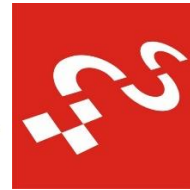
During big-scale events, a constant access to the medical services is necessary to ensure the safety of the participants. Various solutions are considered, including access to the hospital, on-site ambulance and medical staff during competition.

### TIPS & RECOMMENDATIONS

- ➔ during organization of any sport activities it is necessary to check the local law and regulations that may cause the organizer to put in place additional safety measures;
- ➔ establishing regulations of the competition may ensure that the participants will be obliged to follow the rules;
- ➔ it may help to establish the clear responsibilities of the organizer and the participants before the event;

## VOLUNTEER RECRUITMENT AND MANAGEMENT

### GOOD PRACTICE LONG-TERM APPROACH TO VOLUNTEERS



Hrvatski akademski  
sportski savez

Croatian Academic  
Sports Federation

#### **LONG-TERM SYSTEM OF VOLUNTEERS ENGAGEMENT – Croatian Academic Sports Federation**

Croatian Academic Sports Federation is a great example of effective recruitment and management of volunteers. They have designed a thoughtful program, that aimed at not only delivering quality volunteers programme for one event, but also at keeping the volunteers in the system for the future events and engagement.

CASF developed their programme for a big international event in 2016 – European Universities Games Zagreb-Rijeka, after which a UniSport VILA – Volunteers and Leadership Academy has been established – the first systematic educational program intended for future employees in sports management.

### GOOD PRACTICE ENGAGEMENT OF STUDENTS



University of Ljubljana organizes a flagship sport event – “Tek od faksa do faksa” a running event based on running from faculty to faculty around the city. It has not only a great interest among participants, but also volunteers who for example, can become a “rabbit” and support the runners during their run.

It is a great example of looking for volunteers in the close proximity of the organization – many students of the University may be interested in supporting the organization of such event, especially when the participants are fellow students.

#### **MAIN ELEMENTS OF SUCCESSFUL VOLUNTEERS MANAGEMENT**

##### **Establishment of missions and goals**

It is important to realize why it's crucial to develop and implement quality volunteering programme. The benefits of involvement of volunteers are clear, but it needs to be ensured if it can also contribute to the organization's general goals and missions.

##### **Thoughtful planning of the volunteering programmes**

It's necessary to consider all areas and elements of the programme – functional areas, procedures, persons responsible for specific departments, accommodation, transportation, insurance and benefits for the volunteer.

### **Promotion of the programme**

A marketing plan – campaign should be developed to ensure that the information about the opportunities will reach its target groups. The tools of promotion can vary – from local newspapers to university student boards and social media.

### **Selection & Education**

To ensure the satisfaction of volunteers from the programme, the right selection for specific department is important. After that, a specific training and preparation for the future role is necessary to prepare them for what's to come during their involvement.

## **TIPS & RECOMMENDATIONS**

- ➔ give volunteers a chance for development of knowledge, skills and competences throughout educational programs;
- ➔ organize quality volunteering programs with specific tasks for volunteers – no one likes to volunteer and do nothing!;
- ➔ use a chance to cooperate with high schools and universities - it's crucial to be able to reach target group with information about opportunities;
- ➔ think about volunteer's benefits – uniforms, promotional materials, insurance, accommodation etc.;