

about the project

The **INCLUSION PLUS** project shines a spotlight on social inclusion through the values of sport, aligning with the strategic agenda of the European Union (EU) in the sports sector. Its core feature is "PLANET SPORT," a collection of 24 inspirational stories presenting diverse perspectives on social inclusion and sport diplomacy. These motivational narratives will be interwoven with relevant EU sport policies, enhancing their practical application and visibility.

A key goal of the project is to bridge the gap between EU sport policies and the non-governmental sports movement, making these policies more accessible, understandable, and relevant to stakeholders at all levels, including the local level. This objective will be pursued through the development of the digital **INCLUSION PLUS platform**, which will foster engagement and knowledge-sharing.

The project name highlights its broader impact: "PLUS" not only represents the continuation of the previous Erasmus+ project, INCLUSION FIRST, in which inclusion was the central theme, but also introduces a new focus on sport diplomacy. At the same time, PLUS serves as an acronym for the four fundamental pillars of the initiative: **PARTICIPATION, LEARNING, UNITY, and SPORTSMANSHIP**. Building on the achievements and experience of INCLUSION FIRST, the project seeks to further strengthen the role of sport as a tool for social inclusion while expanding its contribution to sport diplomacy.

Through the combination of inspirational stories, relevant EU sport policies, and a dedicated digital platform, INCLUSION PLUS aims to translate European priorities into accessible and practical knowledge for the non-governmental sports movement. The project therefore provides a bridge between European policy developments and the realities of stakeholders working at local level, encouraging greater participation, learning, unity, and sportsmanship. Digital, accessible, and knowledge-oriented, the project places strong emphasis on creating meaningful connections between people, sport, and European policy priorities.

Furthermore, INCLUSION PLUS contributes to the continuation and further development of the networks, knowledge, and experience generated through the previous INCLUSION FIRST initiative, while introducing sport diplomacy as an important new dimension of the project's approach.



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Andrea Gondová



Sports and physical activities are deeply ingrained in my lifestyle, contributing not only to physical health but also to personal growth and a sense of accomplishment. I would like to keep embracing the challenges and enjoying the journey of pushing my limits in various sport activities. Starting the day with physical activity is indeed a powerful routine that can set a positive tone for the entire day.

Clearing head and sorting out thoughts through sports are the therapeutic aspect of my physical activities. I recognize sports as a means to recharge energy and overall, the physical activity not only provides a burst of energy but also enhances overall vitality and resilience.



Inclusion through sports is a platform where people of all abilities, backgrounds, and identities can come together to engage in physical activity regardless of barriers or limitations they may face. Everyone, regardless of age, gender,

race, ability, or socioeconomic status, has the opportunity to participate and enjoy the benefits of being active.

Sport boosts self-confidence improves physical health and mental well-being. Sport creates also opportunities for a social interaction, collaboration, and teamwork, helping to bridge divides and promote inclusion.

If we limit sport to simple jogging or running, there is nothing better, than if you have a chance to have a conversation during the sport activity, to know each other better, it is a perfect moment to share thoughts and ideas, to learn and grow, which in the end will conclude with the social and emotional rewards.

Vladimír Uhrín

Elena Malíková



The connection between sport and diplomacy became clear to me later in my professional career, when I recognised sport's unique ability to bring people together, foster dialogue and mutual understanding, and build bridges across cultural, political and linguistic boundaries. Sport creates opportunities for participation and connection beyond the traditional scope of diplomacy. In this sense, sport diplomacy and social inclusion are closely linked, both relying on respect, openness, cooperation and shared experiences.

This became particularly meaningful during my tenure as Chair of the Council Working Party on Sport, when I addressed sport diplomacy at EU level. Leading the EU Member States towards consensus was one of the most significant experiences of my career. I am proud that our joint efforts contributed to the adoption of the Council Conclusions on Sport Diplomacy during the Slovak Presidency, which remain highly relevant in demonstrating how sport can connect people, communities and countries.



Sport has always been an important part of my life, providing movement, relaxation, inspiration and a balance to my professional work. Since childhood, it has brought me joy while also teaching me valuable lessons through victories, failures, challenges, patience and humility. These experiences have shaped my personality and influenced how I approach everyday life. I also see sport as a field that continuously evolves, with digital technologies creating new opportunities to make it more accessible, attractive and innovative. My journey from competitive table tennis and football to professional work in sport has further strengthened this connection. For me, sport is about participation, learning, unity and sportsmanship – values at the heart of INCLUSION PLUS.

Julián Vojtech

The project's affinity to the general objectives of the call is very close. The project provides cooperation opportunities in sport in line with the Erasmus+ 2021–2027 programme. It highlights four basic project elements: PARTICIPATION, LEARNING, UNITY and SPORTSMANSHIP while addressing the general objectives of the call:

1. Support international cooperation and bring the European dimension to sport through PARTICIPATION. The project creates opportunities to develop new partnerships, strengthen existing networks and build the capacity of organisations to operate transnationally.
2. Promote mutual learning and exchange of good practices through LEARNING. The project supports the exchange of experiences, knowledge and methodologies related to sport and physical activity, helping participating organisations improve the quality and effectiveness of their work.
3. Support social inclusion, equal opportunities and the educational and social potential of sport through UNITY. The project promotes innovative approaches to sport delivery and encourages cooperation between stakeholders from different backgrounds and sectors, using sport as a platform for connection, understanding and social cohesion.
4. Strengthen the link between sport diplomacy and social inclusion through SPORTSMANSHIP. The project uses sportsmanship as a unifying value, promoting mutual respect, dialogue, intercultural understanding and cooperation, while extending European values through the international dimension of sport.

The project's contribution to the priorities outlined in the call is extensive, particularly regarding social inclusion, equal opportunities, healthy lifestyles, education and sport diplomacy. It strengthens inter-sectoral cooperation and supports a better understanding of practices, policies and systems across education, training, youth and sport.

The project is underpinned by a comprehensive needs analysis drawing on relevant EU policy documents, including Council conclusions, resolutions and declarations addressing the role of sport in inclusion and social cohesion. The cooperation with the University of Malta and ŠK Mladost' combines institutional expertise with grassroots experience. Notably, PLANET SPORT, building on the previous Erasmus+ project INCLUSION FIRST and its RUN AND SMILE publication, adds a stronger international and sport diplomacy dimension.