

European Football for



Development Network

EFDN



BEST PRACTICE HANDBOOK

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Dienst Justitiële Inrichtingen
Ministerie van Justitie en Veiligheid

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1. PREFACE

This handbook was collectively developed as part of the ERASMUS Sport, EU funded project Football Works including partners: Dienst Justitiele Inrichtingen (DJI), Stichting European Football For Development Network (EFDN), Administration for the Execution of Criminal Sanctions (Sremska Mitrovica), Stiftelsen Valerenga Fotball Samfunn (VIF), Stichting FC Emmen Naoberschap (FC Emmen), Bohemian Football Club CLG An Cummann Peile Boithemeimeach Cuideachta Faoitheorainin Rathaiochta (Bohemian FC), Saints Foundation, and Bayer 04 Leverkusen Fußball GmbH (Bayer04).

The handbook comprises an extensive research and mapping exercise that the working group conducted on organisations, projects, and methodologies throughout Europe and beyond that use sport in some way to promo-

te sport and education within prisons as well as help to reintegrate prisoners after serving their sentence.

A total of 15 initiatives were identified and are presented. The handbook presents the best practices and then extracts all the key mechanisms and activities of each initiative to identify and better understand the specific inputs that contribute to effective sport participation, education and employment and employability outcomes. This best practice mapping was undertaken to provide a strong foundation and learning for Football Works partners to collaboratively work on a new sport-based methodology designed to specifically create awareness around education and employability of prisoners through sport.



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2. INTRODUCTION

Football Works advocates for the social power of football to create employment opportunities for participating prisoners upon their release. The consortium firmly believes that football offers a unique avenue to engage hard-to-reach target groups, imparting essential life and employability skills that few other organisations can provide.

Professionals contend that participation in sport while incarcerated serves two fundamental objectives: aiding inmates in structuring their lives within the prison system and providing a channel to manage and control aggression (Crabbe, 2000). Moreover, engaging in sporting activities that emulate the roles found within any social organisation helps cultivate transferable skills for post-release employment. The most significant impact of football on prisoners is seen in its ability to facilitate the adaptation process. By accepting designated roles, adhering to game rules, and respecting the authority of referees or trainers, inmates develop skills directly applicable to life after release as they seek employment within the European labour market. Additionally, playing sports during their time in prison provides an opportunity to forge valuable social connections (Spaaij, 2009). Sport programmes delivered in correctional facilities have demonstrated an increase in prisoners' social skills through football, educational courses, and enhanced employability prospects (Bhuller et al., 2018).

In the EU, the average number of prisoners per 100,000 people in 2017 reached its lowest rate since 2000 (Eurostat, 2020). Nevertheless, more recent statistics provided by Eurostat (2023) show that in 14 of the 26 EU countries, which provided data, there has been an increase in prisoner rates compared to 2020. Hence, a significant population remains incarcerated across Europe, necessitating assistance in preparing for release and reintegrating into the community, preferably through direct entry into the workforce to reduce reoffending rates. Between April 2021 and June 2021, in England and Wales, adult offenders had a proven reoffending rate of 24.4%, juvenile offenders had a proven reoffending rate of 31.6%, and adults serving sentences of less than 12 months had a proven reoffending rate of 54.4% (Ministry of Justice, 2023).

This is already an increase to the statistics from January 2018 to March 2018 (Adult Offenders – 28% reoffending rate; Juvenile offenders – 39.2% reoffending rate; adults serving less than 12 months – 62.7%; Ministry of Justice (2020)). However, only a small fraction of these offenders secure employment upon release, contributing to the high reoffending rate. Similar challenges exist in other European countries, where a lack of paid employment opportunities upon release is considered the primary factor driving reoffending. Hence, the need for employability and educational programmes like Football Works is apparent.

Football Works has been developed to provide prisoners with opportunities to acquire the skills they lacked previously, unlock their potential, and increase their chances of securing lawful employment. The skill acquisition available through Football Works enhances their prospects of establishing positive social networks and successfully transitioning back into society. By providing crucial opportunities such as offering a range of skills and qualifications, Football Works directly helps to reduce reoffending rates and increase secure employment after release. Refereeing and coaching qualifications prove particularly valuable, as football's popularity provides numerous coaching and refereeing opportunities within European communities. Moreover, vocational qualifications further expand the range of job prospects. To make the programme as relevant as possible throughout Europe, project partners can make local adaptations. The ability to adapt the project ensures added value for Europe, as each participating European community significantly benefits by targeting specific gaps in the local labour market.

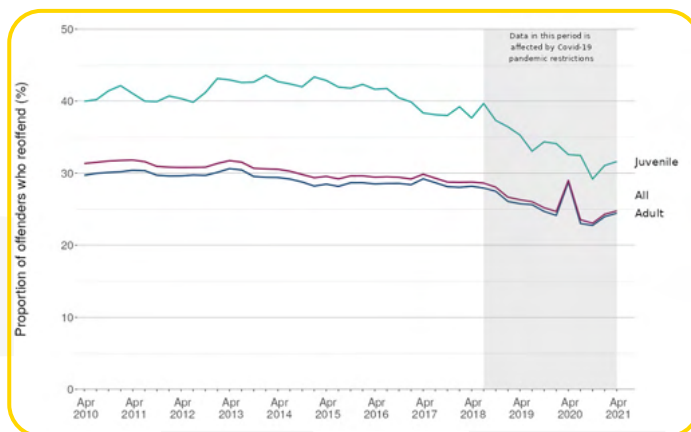
Prison-based sport programmes are designed to address antisocial behaviour and reduce crime (Gallant, Sherry & Nicholson, 2014). Studies indicate that individuals who were unemployed before incarceration but provided opportunities to enhance their employment skills while in prison experience a decline in crime rates upon release (Bhuller et al., 2018). This underscores the importance and effectiveness of programmes aimed at improving employability opportunities for prisoners, justifying the need and benefits of the Football Works Programme.

3. RESEARCH - STATISTICS AND SPORT AS A TOOL FOR EDUCATION AND REINTEGRATION

The topic of prisons and reintegration of inmates has also already received some attention within academic literature. Moreover, the role of sports within this topic has been discussed. Sport has the potential to be an inclusive space to all humans to be involved with and as a way to combat certain social ills within society (Crabbe, 2000). Additionally, it can be a crucial activity in the development of social and personal skills of all people.

While the overall numbers of prisoners, or the European imprisonment rate, continues to fall, the issue of reoffending across a large number of countries continues at a high level. For example, according to the Council of Europe (2021), the European imprisonment rate in 2020 was at around 103.2 inhabitants per 100 000 inhabitants across 51 prison administrations out of the 52 within Europe, which compared to 2013 (131 inmates per 100 000 inhabitants) is already a great decrease. Nevertheless, it is difficult to get an exact number across different sources, as for example Eurostat (2023) show a prisoner rate of 106 per 100 000 people, which would be a slight increase on the 2020 numbers. Looking at the reoffending or recidivism rates, former inmates experience multiple issues after release, such as having issues to find work, connect with family members, return to everyday life, that lead to new offences (World Population Review, 2023). Nevertheless, to provide European wide statistics is difficult due to the differing definitions of, for example, recidivism across countries as well as not all countries tracking these type of statistics (World Population Review, 2023) In the UK, for example, the Ministry of Justice keeps track of reoffending, where the reoffending rate is about individuals that have received some form of criminal justice sanction and then commit another offence within a certain time period (Chamberlain, 2013). Within various European countries, Yukhnenko et al. (2020) found that recidivism rates remained similar or increased across multiple year time periods. For example, Denmark have a recidivism rate of around 63% in 2013; The Netherlands slightly improved the recidivism rate from 48% (2007) to 46% (2013); Germany also slightly improved from 48% (2004) to 46% (2007); while Sweden significantly worsened from 43% (43%) to 61% (2011); and England and Wales also slightly worsened from 46% (2000) to 48% (2016). However, some of the drastic changes may also be explained in the differing definitions of recidivism employed throughout the studied time periods. Within Germany, it was also found that the highest reoffending rates are adolescents or younger adults and that women are generally less likely to reoffend, compared to males (Jehle, 2013).

Moreover, the more crimes committed by a person, the more likely they are to reoffend. Similarly, the reoffending rates are in particular high for young offenders (Chamberlain, 2013), showing that it is important to target these groups. Additionally, the Ministry of Justice (2023) in the UK has published reports around the reoffending statistics among adults and juvenile offenders. Additionally, the Ministry of Justice has also published the proportion of reoffenders by multiple age groups, signalling that the highest reoffending percentage is among juveniles.



Proportion of adult and juvenile offenders in England and Wales who commit a proven reoffence, April to June 2021 (Ministry of Justice (2023))

Moreover, the Ministry of Justice (2023) has also found support for the argument that the more offences have been done by a person, the more likely they are to reoffend.



Proportion of adult and juvenile offenders in England and Wales who commit a proven reoffence, by age (left), by number of previous offences (right) April to June 2021 (Ministry of Justice (2023))

The Football Works Methodology can be divided into three main areas – Sport in Prison; Education in Prison; Reintegration after Prison. These areas will be the focus below to display some already present studies.

SPORT PROGRAMMES AGAINST CRIME

As mentioned above, sport is a great inclusive space for all participants. Moreover, sport allows participants to bring some structure to their lives, be emotional in a constructive environment, and work together with other people (Crabbe, 2000). This is further supported by the view that sport can keep participants away from criminal behaviour such as for example not being able to do crime while participating in sports (Chamberlain, 2014); create excitement among participants; greater personal fitness which can also lead to improved mental health (Vila et al., 2020); and provide one with more structure and a sense of control over their own life. Moreover, Lleixa and Rios, (2015) also found that sport within prisons allows participants to feel better about themselves; forget temporarily about the deprivation of freedom; have better relationships with other inmates, especially improved and more respectful communication; and a sharing of the experience with other participants which can foster strong social bonds. By focusing on sport-based interventions, Morgan and Parker (2017) also noted that sporting sessions help to form trust between participants; develop social skills and competencies, create friendships, and provide a sense of identity for participants and coaches play an important role in encouraging the above benefits by creating the right environment and climate. These findings are also supported by Kelly (2012) and Vila et al. (2020). On an individual level, Lleixa and Rios (2015) also noted that this sport participation can help inmates to release tension, forget about negative thoughts and reduce stress. Similarly, by focusing on female sport in prison,

Meek and Lewis (2014) mentioned that their participants benefitted from sport participation by having improved self-esteem, building constructive relationships, work together successfully in team sports and even fighting depression with the discovered motivation for sports. Moreover, according to Chamberlain (2013), activities need to be tailored towards individual needs, rather than trying to reach all participants with the exact same approach.

Prisoners may not only have opportunities to participate in lessons and classes around sports, but may also be given the responsibility to lead some of the classes as this allows them to rediscover their abilities, further develop skills, experiences and mentor other inmates, which will also be an important part of reintegration into the local community after release (Meek and Lewis, 2014; Spaaij, 2009; Lleixa and Rios, 2015). This is especially the case when prisoners are presented with the opportunity to receive particular qualifications such as becoming an instructor or coach. Moreover, the involvement of outside clubs and coaches, that treat participants with respect, helps to increase the feeling of being socially accepted among inmates. This ultimately positively affects their mental health due to increased self-esteem and self-confidence.

By studying the “Football at Penitentiary Centres” program from the Real Madrid Foundation (RMF), Vila et al. (2020) also acknowledged the importance of seven basic principles (respect, autonomy, motivation, equality, self-esteem, health, and companionship), which has some key similarities to the Football Works project and its focus on 11 core values. In fact, participants mentioned that the sport within prison, as well as the personal development that occurred through the use of these values, will help them after the life in prison with the resocialisation into the local communities.



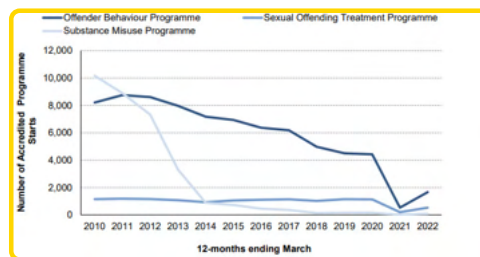
EDUCATION IN PRISON

A lot of the studies around general sports in prison also explored the value sport can be in providing educational opportunities within prison. Specifically, as many of the prisoners may have negative experiences within traditional methods of education, a sport-themed education with specific materials to encourage, for example literacy skills, is well perceived among these prisoners (Meek and Lewis, 2014; Spaaij, 2009). These insights are integral to a successful project around reducing reoffending rates, given that poor educational status and a lack of key skills are associated with a higher chance of reoffending. Not only does the education provide prisoners with a new sense of purpose within prison, but the learnt skills and competencies also play a key role in securing employment after prison. Additionally, securing employment then also leads to better finances, which then also heightens the chance of desisting from crime (Meek and Lewis, 2014). According to statistics of the Ministry of Justice (2022), the number of accredited programmes delivered within prisons are increasing since 2019 and more and more inmates are completing these programmes as well, showing that there is a general interest from prisoners in having personal development. Accredited programmes refers to having programmes that meet a certain theoretical basis and help to reduce reoffending. For this, each programme is assessed in order to make sure it delivers the right outcomes and reaches the right people. Nevertheless, the Ministry also acknowledged that the numbers are lower compared to the pre-Covid times.

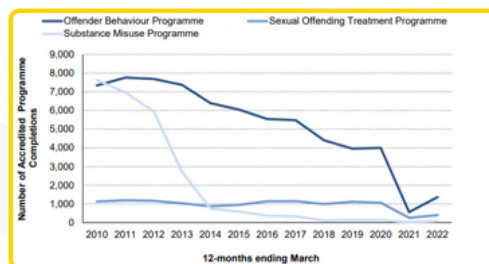
As part of their research into prisoners' personal development, the Ministry of Justice reviewed the ages of those who completed an initial assessment in English and maths between April '21 and March '22 in English prisons. This revealed that younger offenders are more likely to engage with the idea of education with nearly 80% of those age 18–24 undertaking the assessments, compared to just over 70% of 25–49 year olds and around 45% of over 50's.

Moreover, English prisons also offer a variety of accredited programmes within the prisons in order to help prisoners to educate them on topics such as offender behaviour, substance misuse and sexual offending treatment programmes (Ministry of Justice, 2022). Prisons keep track of both starts and completions of programmes as seen below in the two tables.

Proportion of adult and juvenile offenders in England and Wales who commit a proven reoffence, by age (left), by number of previous offences (right) April to June 2021 (Ministry of Justice (2022))



Proportion of adult and juvenile offenders in England and Wales who commit a proven reoffence, by age (left), by number of previous offences (right) April to June 2021 (Ministry of Justice (2022))



While it appears that there have been a significant decrease in programmes since 2010, this is due to a variety of reasons such as some programmes not being run by prisons anymore, leading to other providers such as for example the NHS; offering less mass participation programmes and focusing more on one-to-one or small groups delivery as they have much more success; the Covid 19 pandemic that has caused the sharp decrease since 2019/2020 leading to long pauses in delivery and very strict standards once programmes restarted. The key point in combining sports with education is to use sport as a hook in order to reach participants and encourage and engage them with education and other personal development opportunities (Spaaij, 2009) for the betterment of future chances after prison. Llexia and Rios (2015) support this argument as participation in sporting programme can motivate participants to also participate in other activities, such as educational workshop. Factors such as completing programmes or projects to receive some form of certificates (e.g. coaching certificates) gives participants a physical document that can be helpful for any future endeavours (Spaaij, 2009). This can also be seen by the importance attributed to accredited programmes as seen by the Ministry of Justice in the UK.

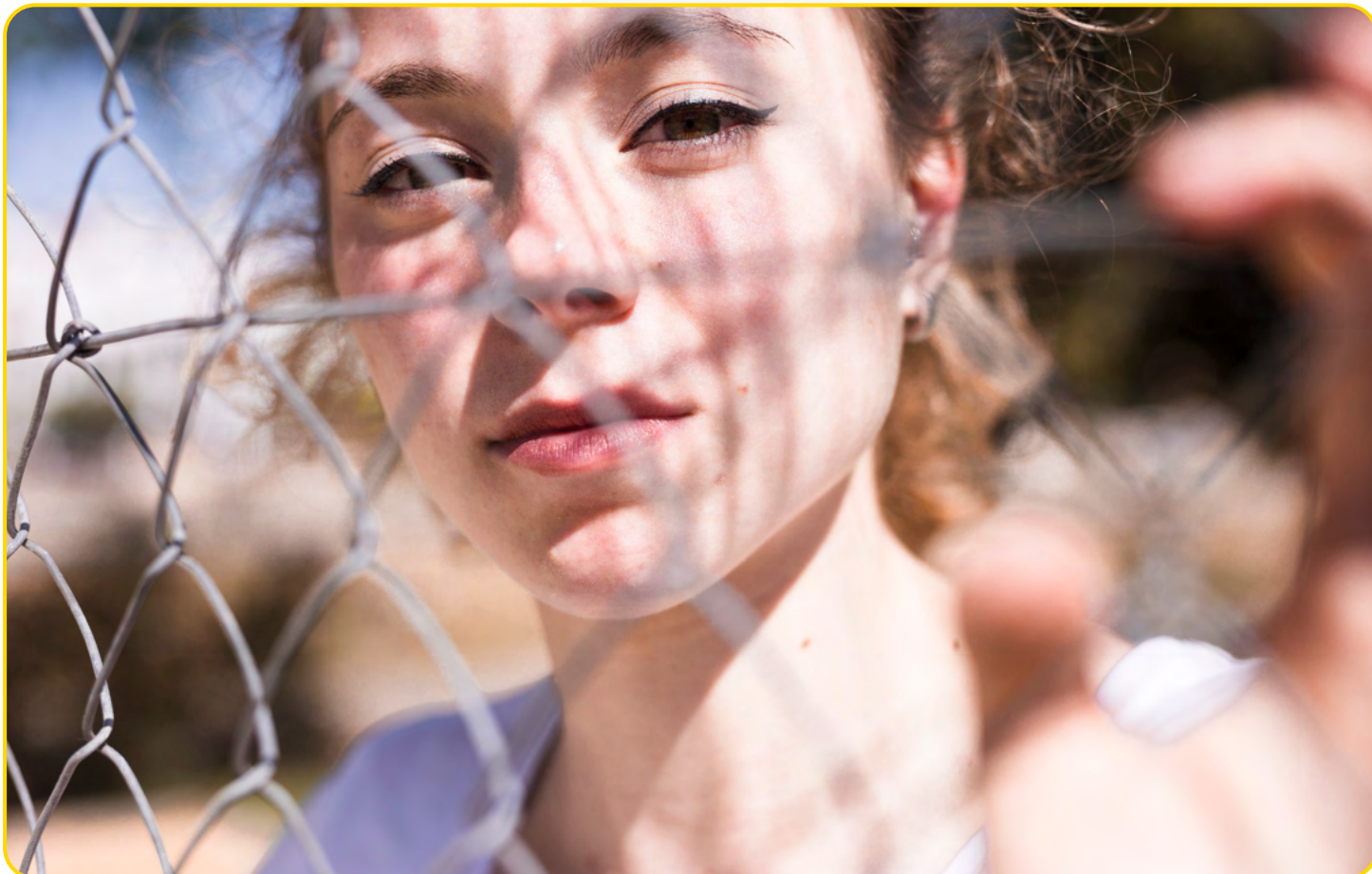
REINTEGRATION AFTER PRISON

The focus should not only be on the importance of sport within prison, but also for the need for sport based interventions and sporting programmes outside of prison. This will not only help to reduce for example youth disengagement and crime (Spaaij, 2009), but also provide former inmates with a structured environment and a sense of belonging after their sentence. Additionally, sport based programmes within prison positively influence physical and mental health, while educational training can significantly help to acquire future employment (Alós et al., 2015).

Moreover, it has been widely argued that prisoners, or released prisoners, which may continue to suffer from a skill deficit such as dyslexia, poor interpersonal skills, low levels of formal education, poor emotional control or a lack of financial and planning skills will continue to have issues to successfully reintegrate, increasing their

chances of reoffending (Alós et al., 2015). In particular, Bhuller et al. (2018) argue that inmates that participate in job training programs, and other programs that can aid around employment, will be less likely to reoffend.

People that participate in the projects and programmes can form a strong social bond and a form of companionship that will be important to every participant in the future. People stay in contact, form friendships and can help each other to find suitable jobs in an effort to improve everyone's chances of being well integrated into the local community (Spaaij, 2009). In fact, former participants that now hold positions within the companies can serve as great role models for current participants in the project. This also goes hand in hand with the program and staff being able to integrate local partner firms into the process of finding jobs for participants as long-term business relationships can be built via projects.



4. **MAPPING BEST PRACTICES**

The Football Works consortium partners undertook extensive research and analysis to identify organisations, projects, and methodologies throughout Europe that use sport to promote physical activity, education and employment opportunities within prisons.

Each project partner gathered best practices by approaching various external organisations. First, partners found out about the initiatives online, which is then followed by sending emails to these organisations. This allows the gathering of information around the initiative, get pictures and also to ask organisations for their participation within the Best Practices report.

To make this process as smooth as possible, the Football Works methodology has been divided within the consortium into three main areas:

- Offering sporting opportunities within a prison
- Offering educational opportunities and workshops within a prison
- The reintegration of inmates after release through sport

In total, the consortium gathered 15 initiatives.



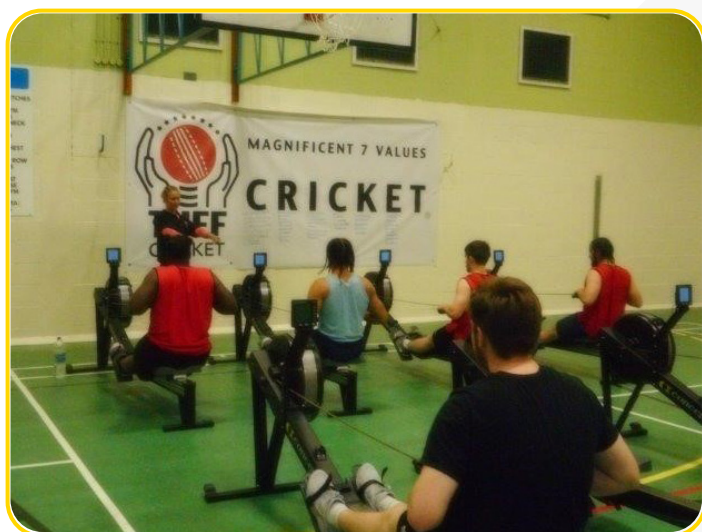
1. OFFERING SPORTING OPPORTUNITIES WITHIN A PRISON

BOATS NOT BARS – ENGLAND

The project “Boats Not Bars” organised by the Fulham Reach Boat Club aims to provide rowing courses in prison, coupled with some educational opportunities as well as benefits upon release. Boats Not Bars has already reached more than 270 people. Moreover, Fulham Reach Boat Club runs rowing courses for six to eight weeks in prison in order to provide participants to provide something new. This allows participants to develop soft skills needed to thrive upon release and to stay away from crime. Depending on the prison, the courses may be accompanied by some workshops around, for example mental health, diet and nutrition, or allowing participants to achieve coaching certificates.

After release, participants can look forward to free memberships to the rowing club. This not only allows them to continue to stay active, but to be welcomed and surrounded by a supportive community, even providing links to potential job opportunities.

More information: <https://www.fulhamreachboatclub.co.uk/boats-not-bars>



FULHAM REACH BOAT CLUB

EST. 2014

PARKRUN UK - ENGLAND

The parkrun project has the aim of promoting inclusiveness and wellbeing among all participants. The project has already reached more than 200 people within HMP & YOI Feltham in the UK, where participants can attend every Saturday to walk, jog or run 5k. Participants can both volunteer to help out, or complete the 5k themselves.

The benefit of this project is that participants can easily participate while still being in prison, while also having the opportunity after release. Moreover, the project fosters on the strong collaboration between prisons and the outside staff involved, which helps to develop professional relationships. Additionally, business partners and agencies can be invited to get involved via the hosting of events, leading to some opportunities for networking for participants.

This project is a great way to improve the mental and physical wellbeing whilst in custody as well as after release at little to no cost.

A more positive behaviour among participants has also been noted since negative behaviour can impact their opportunity to attend. Due to the opportunity for participants to take responsibility, for example through volunteering, participants also noted an improved self-confidence, feeling part of a team and drive as they can give back to the community. Moreover, the event can be used to integrate into their communities, providing the opportunity to foster strong relationships and develop a positive peer group.

As an extra benefit for employability, participants can also achieve sections of the Duke of Edinburgh Awards by taking part in parkrun via volunteering and physical certificates.

More information: <https://www.parkrun.org.uk/>



Feltham
parkrun



THAI BOXING FOR ADOLESCENTS AND YOUNG ADULTS – ITALY

This project was a collaboration between the Youth Justice Centre, the Municipality of Bologna, social cooperatives and the gymnasium of sports club Sempre Avanti Association (affiliated to UISP Bologna), where the activities took place. By combining a Thai box technical sports course with a socio-pedagogical programme, the project aimed to create a protected space for young people in order to develop healthy relationships with peers; build self-confidence; set and pursue aims; and follow a path of self-awareness and development. These factors enabled participants to integrate into the community by avoiding risky behaviours and moving away from crime. The activity was open for all young people from all backgrounds in order to make the space as inclusive as possible.

The project took place three times a week, for ten months in 2021/2022 and it reached 50 young people. The group was divided into two groups – 7 to 12 years old and 12 to 21 years old. The project encouraged an individual approach, by employing two martial arts trainers with a socio-pedagogical background together with various social workers from the city's social educational services, the Juvenile Justice Centre and community educators.

These parties formed an educational team with regular meetings in order to examine the progress of each individual as well as setting achievable and measurable targets for each. This created an environment of trust between all participants and was a great success factor.

Thai boxing proved to be the perfect hook to reach young people that follow the stereotypical image of becoming stronger and more assertive, while also allowing other young people that are more insecure and shy to gain more self confidence. Due to the range of age groups, older participants took responsibility for the younger ones to act as role models and people were able to form strong bonds and relationships within their groups, and in particular with their sparring partners. On an individual level, the activity allowed participants to experience positive feelings and emotions while also discovering their personal resources and allowing for great personal development.

Some other key success factors included having separate competitions and practice sessions that help to develop trust and respect between participants and learning about the rules and techniques within the sport.



2. OFFERING EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES AND WORKSHOPS WITHIN A PRISON

TACKLE - AFRICA

The Tackle Project in Africa aims to educate inmates around HIV and Sexual Reproductive Health by using football as a tool. It has already reached more than 3000 people and takes place across Africa.

Tackle trains inmates to act as peer coaches in order to deliver football session with inbuilt Sexual Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR) messaging for other inmates in the prison settings. While playing football, these session also provide the opportunity for inmates to discuss these topics with a trained peer in an non-judgemental environment away from prison officers. Tournaments are also being held in order to bring inmates together as this also provides opportunities for inmates to access HIV and SRHR services.

Overall, the main objectives for inmates as trainers are the following:

- To be able to deliver high quality SRHR and HIV sessions through football to their peers.
- To develop an identity within the prison around the project.
- To engage their peers on SRHR, HIV, and Gender Based Violence (GBV).

And the main objectives and outcomes for players include these:

- To maintain physical and mental wellbeing while in prison
- To be a part of something, to have the opportunity to be involved in something structured.
- To improve their understanding around issues relating to HIV, SRHR, and GBV
- Increase in positive attitudes towards female SRHR
- Increase confidence to access HIV and SRHR services
- Increase in coping mechanisms to deal with day-to-day life in prison

A great success factor for the project included the great cooperation with the relevant authorities. More specifically, some of the officers were also trained, leading them to be more engaged and feeling as part of the project. Tackle also aims to give inmates ownership, meaning that some of the sessions are led by inmates, who become trusted peers and quality coaches, who can run sessions almost autonomously without supervision.

More information: <https://tackleafrica.org/>

TACKLE 



UPSDA AND THE PRISON OF STARA ZAGORA – BULGARIA

By employing an Education Through Sport (ETS) model to delivery, this programme focuses on a sport selected by prisoners themselves – badminton! Hence, participants got to enjoy badminton sessions while also combining this with various educational and employment workshops. Moreover, participants were engaged in decision-making and the planning of new “sport plus” and “plus sport” activities and programmes. Additionally, through the engagement in the workshops, participants were presented with personal and career development plans.

The project was put in action via UPSDA, the prison staff and also multiple other organisations and foundations to help with some of the specifics such as the career development plans. While the focus of the project was not on the reintegration after release, but rather to prepare participants for this, UPSDA still engaged their network of organisations to increase the social impact for prisoners through making links with the outside world and bringing inmates together with potential future employers. Critically, the network is already involved in activities and events where possible, and participants can continue to participate in outside events where possible, leading to great networking opportunities.

Badminton proved to be a great sport as it promoted social and personal values including team spirit, discipline, perseverance and fair play. Participants also mentioned an increase in knowledge, motivation and working skills, including the typical health benefits associated with sports. Badminton proved in particular useful to act as a hook as various prisoners were attracted to follow up programs and activities, which is the perfect illustration of ETS.

Not only did participants thus have the opportunity to improve their own skills related to the sport as well as their social competences, motivation and attitudes, but also to participate in employability workshops to prepare them for the life after prison and to connect them with potential employers via UPSDA's network.

A key reason for success of the project was the motivation of the prisoner group. From the outset they were involved in active decision-making; they chose the sport and were responsible for overcoming challenges such as sourcing kit and coaches; due to COVID-19 impacting the availability of external coaches, this prompted the prisoners to undertake the coaches badges themselves to allow the activity to continue. Another factor was partnering with organisations who could offer guidance for the design and delivery of the programme, its implementation was therefore a smoother process and by extension more enjoyable to be involved with. By giving the prisoners ownership of the project, in collaboration with experts who facilitated a constructive environment, it created a highly involved group who became role models in the prison community. The positive impact of the programme on participants, both during their time still in prison and on release, motivated more inmates to want to be part of it and to establish future similar projects.



THE AIRBORNE INITIATIVE - ENGLAND

The Airborne Initiative is a five day residential, outward bound course around Dartmoor for Young People or Young Adults on ROTL (release on temporary licence). To attract eligible participants, the referral process includes other prisons and appropriate agencies such as probation and social services. This initiative has already reached more than 220 people and, while demanding, it proves to be rewarding.

Specifically, the course is designed to challenge participants to help them achieve their potential and to learn and use skills to make a positive change. Moreover, the course takes place in nature, leading to experiences for participants around map reading and orienteering, caving, river crossings, and with activities around adventure training, leadership and team building exercises.

Therefore, participants have the opportunity to learn and develop various skills that are also part of military life as it helps them to build self-worth and provides them with a sense of achievement. These are skills not only valuable in custody, but especially upon release in the community. As part of the strategy for after release, The Airborne Initiative tries to link participants with other organisations that offer mentoring, education, training and help around employment. This should help with the aim of reducing reoffending as participants are presented with various opportunities to develop and receive better chances at employment after release.

More information: <https://airborneinitiative.org/about/>



TWINNING PROJECT (LEICESTER CITY COMMUNITY TRUST) - ENGLAND

The Twinning project, which involves a lot of English Football Clubs was also implemented by the Leicester City Community Trust at HMP Stocken. The aim of the project is to provide education to prisoners and around 30 people have already partaken in the project throughout two delivery phases.

Prisoners are supported to gain Literacy Level 1 Functional Skills English as well as Sports Leaders Qualifications, while some learners can also work towards Level 2. To provide a comparison to UK Education – L1 equates to D-F at GCSE level, while L2 equates to A-C at GCSE. Therefore, participants can look forward to improving their English; social skills; confidence; communication; emotional resilience; reading and writing skills; communication in front of others and confidence to lead a group (through the football coaching sessions).

As it is an ongoing project, there are adaptations with each delivery phase to improve the project. For example, for the first cohort, prison staff were not aware of all requirements, leading to some learners not being able to reach the required in English or Football. With increased collaboration with the prison staff, these issues could be resolved, and many more people were motivated to join the initiative. Moreover, to make the project a success, potential tutors should not only have some teaching skills and qualifications, but also some experience in delivering academic qualifications at any stage of education as it is great to have tutors that understand how externally marked qualifications are delivered and assessed. Experience of working in prisons is also important for all courses due to the unique environment present.

More information: <https://www.twinningproject.org/>



LEICESTER CITY
IN THE COMMUNITY

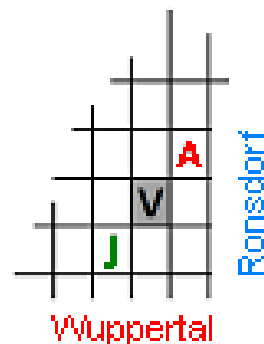
TRAINING TO BECOME A FOOTBALL REFEREE - GERMANY

Across June 2023, the JVA (Jugendvollzugsanstalt) Wuppertal Ronsdorf (adolescent prison) provided the opportunity for inmates to start with a training to become a referee throughout their sentence. Nine inmates voluntarily signed up for the programme, which was done through four workshops in June. The inmates had the opportunity to learn together, collaborate and ask questions. At the end of the programme, participants had to successfully complete an exam around the rules as well as a fitness test. The workshops were provided by the referee instructors of the local county football association Wuppertal Niederberg.

The four successful programme participants can now take more responsibility within the prison by gaining

experience through being a referee at matches and tournament that takes place within the prison walls until their release. After release, they can start to referee the matches outside of the prison walls.

The participants that have failed the final test displayed great motivation to partake in future reruns of the programme in order to become a referee successfully! This shows that participants not only require great determination, but also a high degree of willingness to study independently. Skills that are necessary also after their sentence once they are reintegrated into society, proving the great educational skills that the programme possesses.



STAY ONSIDE: APPLIED FOOTBALL STUDIES – IRELAND

Ulster University (UU) and the Irish Football Association Foundation (IFA) have partnered in 2021 to develop the IFA's sport-based intervention – the Stay Onside programme. Moreover, this programme is made up of a series of UU accredited Personal and Professional Development (PDD) modules under the series title “Stay Onside: Applied Football Studies”. The main goal of this initiative is to engage political prisoners in sport and education, where participants can complete the variety of modules. The programme takes place within the high-security Maghaberry prison and each completed module awards the participant with ten credits towards achieving an undergraduate Honours degree at UU.

As the modules combine sport and education, each module expects participants to conduct around 14.5 hours of independent study per week using assigned module textbooks that are provided to them. For academic assessment, participants are expected to deliver individual and group presentations, complete reflective diaries, and develop and deliver one-hour coaching sessions.

The key outcomes for participants included:

- Increasing physical fitness
- Gaining academic qualifications
- Improving the knowledge and understanding of football's role in society
- Improved confidence and communication skills
- Building future pathways
- Improved “soft skills” and relationships

Due to the unique nature of this project, there were some key challenges around availability to IT facilities in order for participants to do their own research, which was mostly limited to the books provided to them, leading to an over-reliance on them. Moreover, while participants enjoyed academic readings, some also admitted to struggling to understand the more academic language. This led to suggestions around providing some less academic sources such as newspaper resources in order to make the programme more inclusive. Another suggestion for improvement concerned better collaboration between delivering organisations, such as universities, and the prisons in order to introduce class-based taught-sessions with corresponding IT standards that still meets security standards of the prison in order to facilitate the education for participants.

More information:

Piloting an accredited sport-based intervention with prisoners. A Psychological Evaluation of the “Introduction to the Sociology of Football” (PUP385) module (Murray et al., 2022a)

Examining pedagogical and design elements of an accredited sport-based intervention with prisoners. A Psychosocial Evaluation of the “Football and Society” (PUP386) module (Murray et al., 2022b)



STREET SOCCER SCOTLAND - SCOTLAND

Street Soccer Scotland aims to deliver free football themed education with a qualification inside the prison and to continue to engage participants with the programme after their release. By delivering an eight to ten session programme for up to 16 players within prisons, Street Soccer Scotland has already reached more than 250 people. In the programme, participants get to do a mix of classroom and on the pitch delivery around teamworking, planning, communication and more. Additionally, participants get to showcase the learned skills by delivering and organising an event themselves for other prisoners or outsiders coming in. After release, participants can continue their positive change by continuing to attend street soccer.

Street Soccer Scotland aims to help participants to have a more positive outlook on life, away from crime; an improved wellbeing while inside the prison; and provide opportunities for positive engagement and support on liberation to reduce chances of reoffending. Moreover, participants have more confidence and self-esteem, better social relationships with peers and family as well as more faith in themselves and their achievements. To achieve this, staff with experience of being in prison is very helpful as it helps the engagement.

While there were some challenges due to limited staff and funding, Street Soccer Scotland managed to engage with PT staff and delivered taster sessions, leading to a good reputation and positive results enabling to work across new prisons.

More information: <https://streetsocscotland.org/>



ESTABLECIMIENTO PENITENCIARIO MILITAR - SPAIN

The Prison Establecimiento Penitenciario Militar in Spain employs many different educational opportunities to engage prisoners and prepare them for the life after release. In particular, by reaching around 80 inmates a year, the prison runs various psychotherapeutic workshops such as social abilities and specific crime-related workshops including gender violence, sexual abuse, finances crimes and more. Further, they also provide workshops around employability advice; recreation and sport (crossfit, gym, sport competitions, etc.); official education around the high school level and university degrees; therapeutic gateway trips including museums or theatre visits, mountain hiking and more; and full personal support.

To achieve this wide range of workshops in an efficient way, the prison collaborates with various external partners to optimise the output and the costs. With this involvement of external parties, they create and promote

creative and innovative projects and activities and manage to tailor their assistance to individual needs. This individual approach is particularly important as they can give attention to everyone, keeping in mind their unique background and case and elaborate a specific programme for the participant, which then will be assessed continuously. Participants can also provide their feedback, leading them to feel more valued and motivated as well as report better quality of life and improved self-esteem.

The prison reports a great success as many inmates are successfully reintegrated into society. While there is not a mandatory post-release support, if former inmates want to continue their treatment, the prison is happy to connect them with specific facilities in their region to continue the treatment.

3. THE REINTEGRATION OF INMATES AFTER RELEASE THROUGH SPORT

START TO COACH - DE RODE ANTRACIET VZW (BELGIUM)

Start to Coach is a cooperation between De Rode Antraciet vzw, the Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB) and Voetbal Vlaanderen with the aim of preparing detainees for their reintegration into society. Specifically, the Start to Coach is a coaching project, where participants have the opportunity to obtain the UEFA youth football coach licence and put their knowledge into practice with a football team outside of the prison wall. This will first be done via an internship and later on as a full-time coach.

The main objectives for participants of the programme are:

- To get the opportunity and chance to work on their future
- To become an UEFA youth football coach
- To get an opportunity to broaden their horizons by working on the sport they love – football
- To learn new social, practical and technical skills
- And to connect with different social environments that are present within clubs

The project is divided into two main parts with the first part taking place within prison walls, while the second part takes place outside, which is the internship opportunity. Thus, the main target group are inmates that are towards the end of their sentence. The first part consists of a practical and theoretical course with a particular focus on the development of social skills such as cooperation, positivity, self-confidence, trust and more. For the second part, the participants can display their learned skills by applying them during the internship at a football club.

The project builds on the belief that football clubs and sporting associations can make the difference to the individual development of the participant. In particular, the involvement of the club from the very start of the programme helps the participants to gain additional skills and tools as well as gain confidence and respect. Additionally, for the successful reintegration, it was also important for participants to put their skills to use in the real world through the internship opportunity outside of the walls. After the programme, many of the participants had a future perspective at the clubs by become fulltime coaches.

Some success factors for the Sport to Coach include a careful collaboration with a wide range of social sector services and judicial services in order to develop a successful project within and outside of the prison. In particular, external partners provided crucial insights to the industry for the participants. Moreover, it is great to involve the outside parties already at the start of the programme within the prison in order to make the process easy to follow, simplify evaluation and to motivate participants. The project is also working on continuous improvements and want to introduce a buddy system soon in order to support participants even better.



FOTBALLSTIFTELSEN - NORWAY

The Fotballstiftelsen project or Street-teams project is a nation-wide project across various football clubs and a total of around 30 teams in Norway, aims to give inmates a better serving time in prison. While reaching more than 100 people, the project wants to bridge the gap for participants towards a good social environment for the inmates after the completed sentence. All players who have or have had substance abuse problems are the target participants. The teams meet two to three times every week for regular football training.

Through the involvement of professional football clubs, inmates can join the clubs environment, which can motivate them throughout their serving time and help

them towards reaching a better place after the completed sentence, where they can continue to be part of the clubs environment. Therefore, the end goal is not the creation of good football players, but rather for participants to be able to fully reintegrate into modern society with jobs, education, family and friends and more. Additionally, after completed sentence, multiple participants come back to the teams and help in the project due to the significant positive impact they have experienced.

More information: <https://gatelaget.no/>



GATELAGET

2ND CHANCE PROJECT - ENGLAND

The 2nd Chance Project, now known as the Alliance of Sport in Criminal Justice has been delivered at HMP YO1 Portland over two years and reached 81 young adults. The project is centred on delivering footballing and rugby academy programmes across 12-15 weeks. Specifically, this included intensive football or rugby coaching, fitness training and matches, as well as group based activities around goal setting, thinking skills, team skills training, guest presentations and peer review exercises. This was done with support of external partners and allowed programme participants to complete a range of coaching, leadership and first aid qualifications.

The specific objectives of the programme for participants include:

- Participation in sport academy programmes
- Increased positive outcomes such as education, work experience and life skills
- Individual resettlement plans tailored to specific needs
- Mentoring and support through the gate and beyond

An integral part of the project centred on transition workers providing individual participants with an individually tailored resettlement plan with the aim of preparing the individuals for a successful transition from custody to the community in order to reduce reoffending. Moreover, the transition worker would stay in contact with participants after the 12-15 weeks in order to engage on an individual basis after release. Specifically, transition workers provided through the gate support, ongoing individual mentoring and each participant

received a personalised resettlement plan along the areas of accommodation; education, training and employment; health; drugs and alcohol; finance, benefit and debt; children and family; attitudes, thinking and behaviour. The key success in the project lay within the collaboration of various social actors – the prison itself and its facilities, the 2nd Chance project workers, and also the involvement of various social workers outside the prison that helped to bridge the gap for participants between the prison and the life after prison. Hence, communication and planning was deemed a key success factor. In particular, given the aim of reducing reoffending, a long term strategy with long term support for participants was pivotal.

The programme was a great success as the reoffending rate of participants of the project was reduced to only 18%, compared to the prison average of 48% after one year. Moreover, there were significant improvements around conflict resolution, aggression, impulsivity, and attitudes towards offending. The project has not only created a positive atmosphere for participants, but for prison staff as well, providing a great opportunity to engage with prisoners, even those hard-to-reach. Due to the success, 2nd Chance are delivering across prisons within the UK as well as provide support for the programmes overseas, leading to the creation of the Alliance of Sport in Criminal Justice.

More information: <https://allianceofsport.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/42541-Rugby-Football-Report-Under10mb.pdf>

ALLIANCE OF SPORT
in Criminal Justice

2nd Chance Project



GET ONSIDE (SARACENS FOUNDATION) – ENGLAND

The Get Onside project, hosted by the Saracens Foundation, aims to reduce the overall reoffending statistics of its participants and helping participants to return to full-time education or employment after release. More specifically, this project is delivered using classroom workshops, practical rugby sessions and one-to-one mentoring.

The classroom workshops aim to improve the participants confidence as well as provide skills around employment and help to create plans for the future, while rugby sessions are also supported by a match against an external team in front of family and friends. As part of the mentoring, participants are able to talk to a professional mentor, who will provide support and coaching within prison and also after release. Therefore, participants should benefit from better employability skills, more confidence, improved communication skills and heightened fitness levels.

It was mentioned that the identification of external partners and organisations is helpful in order to achieve and an individual approach is also needed to guarantee higher success and more impact for the participants.

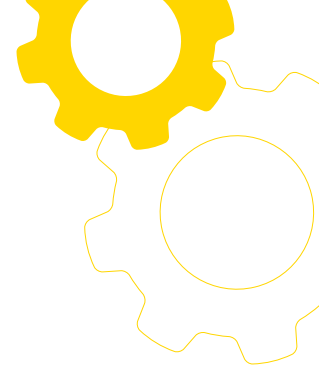
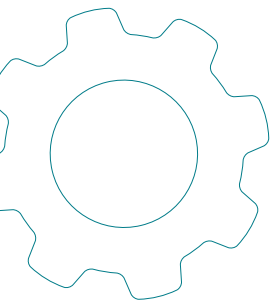
However, while it is difficult to get the exact statistics around reoffending, the project makes sure to introduce various activities to heighten the chance of reduced reoffending. Apart from the individual mentoring, there is also a full-time project officer available for support. For example, there is support to help find participants a local rugby club so they can integrate to a new social circle. Moreover, Saracens Foundation host the Mean Machine game at the StoneX stadium, which provides an opportunity for released Get Onside graduates to join the Saracens Foundation team to play a rugby match against a prison officer team from HMP The Mount & HMP/YOI Feltham.

More information: <https://www.saracenssportfoundation.org/get-onside/>



SARACENS FOUNDATION
GET ONSIDE

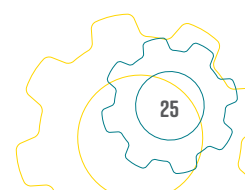


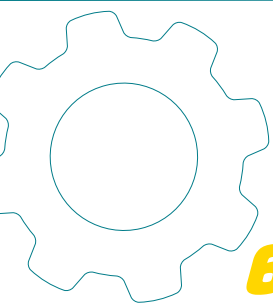


5. ***CONCLUSION***

The described best practices, which have been successful across Europe will be a key input for the project partners of the Football Works project. In particular, after each delivery phase within the project, the consortium will discuss the benefits and negatives of the characteristics of the Football Works methodology and discuss any adaptations to increase the success. The best practices will be a great source of information to make more informed decisions in optimising the Football Works methodology.

The project and its methodology will be tested and implemented in England, Ireland, Norway, Germany, the Netherlands and Serbia. The project takes place between 2023 – 2026 with the following Football Works Partners: Saints Foundation, Bohemian Football Club, Stiftelsen Valerenga Fotball Samfunn, Bayer 04 Leverkusen, Dienst Justitiele Inrichtingen, FC Emmen Naoberschap and the European Football for Development Network.



**6.**

GLOSSARY OF TERMINOLOGY

Accredited programmes: Programmes that have been checked for quality and evaluated correspondingly to meet certain standards

Adolescent: This is the phase between childhood and adulthood. Usually, people are between 10 to 19 years old.

Best Practice: A procedure that is seen as the most effective in reaching outcomes when followed

Education Through Sport: A non-formal educational approach that uses sports in order to develop key competencies of individuals and groups to aid with personal development.

Hard-To-Reach Groups: Certain groups of people may find it difficult to take advantage of available opportunities. Therefore, these need to receive careful consideration in order to find a way to engage them in activities. This includes for example drug users, people that live in isolation, in a difficult social environment, or have some form of mental health issues, that may subconsciously lead them to a criminal life.

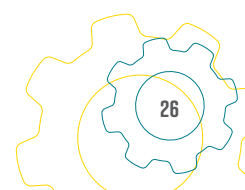
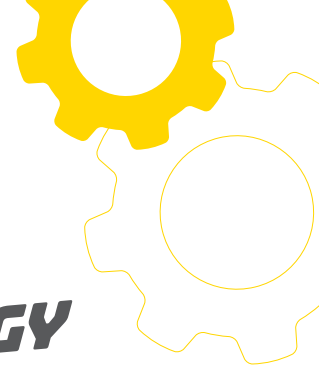
Juvenile offenders: a person below the age of adulthood (usually around 18 in most countries) that has committed a crime.

Plus Sport: The focus is on nonsporting outcomes. Thus, sport is used as a tool within these programmes in order to help create social change.

Recidivism Rate: Recidivism is about the tendency of a previously convicted criminal to reoffend. Recidivism Rate concerns the overall rate of convicted criminals to reoffend. It is measured by criminal acts that result in rearrest, reconviction or return to prison.

Sport as a Tool / Means: While sport provides obvious health benefits for participants, it can also be a key way to engage participants to achieve wider goals. Sports can be used to teach participants about other areas as a non-traditional way of education due to teaching a diverse set of skills that are not only relevant in sport, such as discipline, hard work, communication, but that are a key to success in many other areas of life. Moreover, sport can be seen as a fun activity, enjoyed by a wide range of audience, and be an inclusive environment, which, especially in a prison environment, allows to reach the hard-to-reach groups.

Sport Plus: The main focus is increasing sport participation. Due to the sport participation, secondary benefits such as fitness, health, development of life skills, education and more can arise as well.



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