



Giving youth a real say in sports

BeST Inclusion Project
European Roundtable on Sport Workforce & Age
Report

The European Roundtable on Sport Workforce & Age took place virtually on the 8th of November, from 16h to 18h CET.

The session counted 14 participants and started with a brief introduction of the BeST Inclusion project by EASE, followed by a presentation on the topic of discussion - Sport Workforce & Age - provided by UNICAS.

The group was then divided into smaller breakout sessions and asked to discuss the theme based on the following questions:

- 1) Age discrimination and bias in labour market: what's the situation in the sport sector?
- 2) Do we need a specific strategy in Europe to enhance work attractiveness to all sport employees no matter what stage of their lifecycle they have reached?
- 3) How can we maintain skills over the employee's lifecycle?
- 4) Do we know any good practices across the EU in terms of promoting an age-inclusive workforce?

Below are the main results discussed by both groups aggregated by question.

1) Age discrimination and bias in labour market: what's the situation in the sport sector?

- Depending on the position/type of work Young People might stay for longer working within the sport sector
- Youth do not always see sport as a career path
- Sport is not a 9h to 17h job, and a lot of young people drop their sport related job because of this

www.youth-sport.net | info@youth-sport.net | +370 5 2310637
Lithuanian Union of Sports Federations | Lietuvos sporto federacijų sąjunga, Zemaites 6, LT-03117 Vilnius, Lithuania





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- Need to invest in young people's education to foster inclusion and empower them through skills acquisition
- Many young people are contributing as volunteers, so the numbers are not clear if they include volunteers or not
- Italy recently introduced a new law which doesn't ensure quality education
- In France there is a legislation which defines a minimum age limit for having senior position, on the other hand, older people are kept in their same position for many years
 - The government tries to provide support with traineeship programmes, by giving financial contributions to organisations that hire young students
- In Estonia volunteering has a totally different concept, people don't act as volunteers, they are pushed to get qualifications and young people are visible in the sport sector
- In Hungary young people have the opportunity to get involved, however this often starts with volunteering roles. To finalise the secondary school there is mandatory volunteer work which needs to be done, internship is also mandatory during university years. Senior positions are often closely connected with political influence.

2) Do we need a specific strategy in Europe to enhance work attractiveness to all sport employees no matter what stage of their lifecycle they have reached?

- We do need a strategy but more at national level
- We have to show all the employment opportunities sport has. Not just as professional athletes or sport scientists, but also other fields of employment in sport: inclusion, education, sustainable development, health, policy, etc.
- We have to showcase the broader perspective of sport at the primary schools level already (and not only advertising as health enhancing activity)
- The statistics are not bad, young people are in the market. The question is rather the quality of employment and salary. It would be ideal if the salary would be correlated with the level of education

3) How can we maintain skills over the employee's lifecycle?

- Better, more inclusive work environment that would allow everyone to professionally develop and provide continuous education to people - as a person (not as employee)
- Intergenerational teams in which generations compliment each other.
- Make training part of work.

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- Also think of volunteers who might also want training & education
- It depends a lot on the management / manager who needs to be able to assess the team and individuals and guide them throughout their work / education.
- In France there are very expensive private schools which offer young people leadership programmes, however job offers don't really follow such demand. Afterwards the educated young people are still considered that they lack experience
- In some roles such as being a coach in many countries it is required by the state that the professionals renew their licence from time to time
- Non-formal education courses are often not recognized enough, where the EU as one could improve this area to make it more official and important, recognized
- Renewing skills should be also an advice for all generations, mostly for those people who are having their same position for many years
- In the corporate sector the companies often offer extra courses, degrees for their employees. The companies pay for the studies and defines a certain year until the employee should stay in the organisation and invest his/her new knowledge back to the company's work. For grassroots sport organisations it is hard to compete with these offers as they don't have the financial backup for this.

4) Do we know any good practices across the EU in terms of promoting an age-inclusive workforce?

- WOS organisation as one example
 - But we could not find any organisation that would literally have an age inclusive strategy.
 - Only governmental programmes that support employment of young people (companies get subsidies for employing young people - France, Italy, Slovenia).
- In Estonia people get more vacation days in case if they are enrolled with studies
- In France civic service works very well, it is like a national traineeship programme
- In the EU there is the Solidarity Corps and Erasmus for Young Entrepreneur

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