Let's Play together

PLAYBOOK

play-together.eu

Community that plays together, stays together.

A Playbook from Let's Play Together - Wrocław, Poland

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V4Sport Foundation, 2026
Revised Final Version

To everyone who made Let's Play Together happen - the Tandem Coaches who showed up despite the challenging weather for the sessions sometimes to be there for a small group of kids; the partners who answered late-night calls without asking why; the schools that gave us their pitches, their gyms, and a corner of their storerooms; the international experts who came to Trzebnica with everything they had; the V4SPORT team that held it all together; and above all the Wrocław families who trusted us with their children - thank you.

This Playbook is yours. So is everything that comes next.

Jakub Kalinowski

President, V4SPORT Foundation

Project Management

Partners

Funding Partners

About this Playbook

What it is, who it's for, and how it's built

This Playbook describes Let's Play Together, a sport-for-integration project delivered in Wrocław, Poland, in 2025 by the V4SPORT Foundation and its partners. Its aim was simple but ambitious: to bring Polish and Ukrainian children together through free, open, neighbourhood-based play, led by Polish-Ukrainian coaching tandems - and to do so consistently, week after week, in the places where children actually live. Over the year, the project delivered 1,001 sessions across 11 neighbourhoods, with 22 coaches and almost 14,500 visits recorded.

It will be most valuable to city officials, sport organisations and NGOs, coaches and practitioners, and researchers or policymakers - anyone weighing whether, and how, sport can help a host community and a newly arrived community grow together. It is not a manual to follow line by line, but a tested kit of elements to adapt to your own city.

The Playbook is built in three movements:

- **Why it matters (Chapters 1-4)** - the refugee context in Poland and Europe, the case for sport as a tool for integration, inspirations from around the world, and the goals the project set for itself.
- **How it works (Chapters 5-11)** - the operational core: the team, the Tandem Coaching Model, the coaches and their training camp, the sessions themselves, community outreach, and the ethics and safeguarding that must be in place first.
- **What it produced, and what travels (Chapters 12-14)** - which elements transfer to other contexts, the voices of children, coaches and partners, and the project in numbers.

Let's Play together

Bringing Communities Together Through Play

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Preface

How Let's Play Together came to be

It must have been 2023, sometime in the first year of the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine. I was on a local sports pitch in Wrocław with my nine-year-old son. We were too few for a football match, and we noticed a small group of Ukrainian boys nearby. My son turned to me and asked in Polish how to say „zagrajmy razem" in English - he assumed English would be the easiest shared language. I gave him the phrase: Let's play together. He walked over, said it once, and within seconds the game had more players. None of us spoke each other's language. None of us needed to. The smiles on everyone's faces, the ball, the body language that was enough to learn each other's names and to have lots of fun together.

That afternoon stayed with me. After more than a decade in sport-for-development, it took watching my son to see, plainly ,what every good coach already knows: a ball in a public space can dissolve a barrier that institutions, programmes, and good intentions often cannot.

At V4SPORT, we started paying closer attention. We watched playgrounds and pitches across Wrocław, and the pattern was hard to miss - Polish and Ukrainian children, side by side in the same city, mostly playing apart. The opening was there, but it would not close itself. We felt someone had to do something about it - creating that bridge that would connect these kids. Sport is a great tool for integration, but sometimes it requires some planning - plan it, staff it, and stand in it consistently - week after week, in the neighbourhoods where it mattered most.

That was the beginning of Let's Play Together. We knew we wanted to do something about it, sparking this connection in those public spaces to connect the kids through play. So we started the design phase. We knew the model would only work if the activities were free, open, and close to where children live; if the coaches were adults the children could trust, including one who spoke their mother tongue; and if it was designed to be repeated, not staged once for a photograph. From there, we began looking for the right partners and the funding to make it real.

Somehow, the universe started to come together. In 2024, we secured funding from the European Commission's Pilot Projects and Preparatory Actions as a tool for integration and social inclusion of displaced and refugee youth from Ukraine, which gave the project its anchor in Wrocław. And then, very unexpectedly, in April 2024 I received an email from FHI 360 - the U.S.-based global development organisation that administers the Sports Visitor and Sports Envoy Programs on behalf of the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. At first it sounded too good to be true. They had come across V4SPORT's earlier work integrating Ukrainian refugee children through sport, and were looking for a Polish partner to co-create a sport-for-healing programme for displaced Ukrainians and Polish young people - one that would bring American mental-health and sport experts to Poland to work alongside our coaches and youth on trauma-informed coaching, psychosocial recovery, and the use of sport as a vehicle for healing.

It was a wonderful mix. A European emergency-youth grant grounded the model in Wrocław, while a U.S. sport-diplomacy partnership added a layer of international expertise we could not have built on our own. Over the next two years, that combined effort built the consortium and the resources behind the project this Playbook describes - V4SPORT alongside Wrocław Centre for Social Development (WCRS), School Sport Federation Wrocław (SZS Wroclaw), the International Sport and Culture Association (ISCA), and FHI 360, supported by international experts from the Center for Healing and Justice the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement MHPSS Hub, and StreetGames (UK).

Between March and October 2025, together with our partners, we delivered **1,001 sessions** across **11 neighbourhoods of Wrocław**, led by **22 coaches** working in Polish-Ukrainian tandems. Almost **14,500 visits** were recorded, and the coaches who knew the children best spoke of the many friendships that took root along the way.

Preface

How Let's Play Together came to be

The most important for all of us was seeing the smiles on kids faces when they interacted and played together. We are super proud of all the friendships that happened on the pitch - friendships that cut across cultures - all kids coming together. As Ukrainian kids were getting new Polish friends they were inspired and motivated to learn better Polish. As the project is coming to an end we hope these kids will be the inspirations for others who have not yet joined the initiative and that the snowball effect will continue.

We are also very proud. In late 2025, that work received one piece of recognition I particularly value. Let's Play Together was selected as a Top 3 finalist worldwide at the SmartCities & Sport Summit in Seoul, hosted by the World Union of Olympic Cities. To be ranked alongside the most innovative urban-sport interventions on the planet - by a body of city government-sand Olympic-Movement experts - was a moment of real pride for the whole consortium, and a powerful endorsement of what we had built together in Wrocław.

This Playbook exists so that none of this has to begin with a chance encounter on a pitch. Everything we learned - what worked, what we adapted, where we stumbled, and what the children, coaches and communities told us - is here. It is yours to adapt to your city and put to work. We understand that the situation in Poland is specific, and that the challenges look different from country to country; this is not about replicating the full model line-by-line, but about taking the elements that make sensefor your context and building from there.

As we have shared our experience nationally and internationally, we have already seen the idea travel. For example we have heard an interest from Iceland, where a large Polish community lives alongside Icelanders, and where the same approach - pairing a coach from each community, opening up free public sessions, designing for trust - could just as easily build bridges as it has in Wrocław.

Because after a couple of years of doing this in Wrocław, I am more certain than ever of the simple truth my son and his new teammates discovered that afternoon without ever needing to put it into words: **a community that plays together, stays together.**

Jakub Kalinowski
President, V4SPORT Foundation
Wrocław, June 2026

Let's Play together

Bringing
Communities
Together
Through Play

How to use this Playbook

A short reader's guide

This document is built to be read in sequence - but rarely will be. Most readers will arrive looking for something specific. The structure below is meant to make that easy.

For different readers

if you are a city official thinking about whether sport-for-integration could work in your municipality, start with Chapter 4 (The Project's Goals) to see what the project set out to do, then jump to Chapter 12 (Carrying It Forward) - it lays out which elements travel best to other contexts and which need careful adaptation. Come back later for the methodologyin Chapters 6 and 9.

If you are a **sport organisation or NGO** considering replication, **Chapters 5 (It Takes a Team), 6 (the Tandem Coaching Model), 7 (the Tandem Coaches), and 8 (the Coaching for Community Camp)** are the operational core. **Chapter 11 (Ethics and Safeguarding**) is the part you must put in place before anything else.

If you are a **coach or practitioner** curious about the work itself, **Chapters 6, 7, 9 and 13 (Voices from the Project)** will give you the most direct sense of what it felt like to do this on a Wrocław pitch.

If you are a **researcher, evaluator, or policy reader, Chapters 1 (the Backdrop) and 2 (Sport as a Tool for Integration)** set out the context, **Chapter 4** the goals, the dashboard chapter (**The Project in Numbers**) the operational results, and the **Bibliography** the sources we drew on.

Reading conventions

Throughout the Playbook you will find marked-up content set apart from the main text:

> ***"Short pulled quotes from coaches, children, and partners, drawn from interviews and observations. They are visible as boxed quotes alongside the main text."***

A note on language

The model described here was built around Polish-Ukrainian cooperation. The principles that underpin it - mixed-nationality coaching pairs, low-threshold sessions, a community-rooted approach - translate beyond that specific pairing. Where we speak about „Ukrainian children" or „Polish children", the reader can usefully read „newly arrived community" and „host community", and the substance of the argument holds.

A note on what the Playbook is not

This is not a manual to be followed line by line. It is a kit of elements, tested in Wrocław, that other cities and organisations are invited to take, adapt, and put to work in whatever combination makes sense for them. There is more on this in Chapter 12.

Chapter 1: The Backdrop

Poland and Europe's largest refugee movement since the Second World War

In the early hours of 24 February 2022, when Russia launched its full-scale invasion of Ukraine, the largest movement of refugees seen in Europe since the Second World War began. Within days, columns of cars stretched along Ukraine's western borders, families walked with children and shopping bags, and trains pulled into Kraków, Warsaw, Wrocław, Lublin and many other cities and towns across Poland. Most of those crossing were women and children. The men who would have travelled with them remained behind, mobilised or staying to help.

Poland - Ukraine's western neighbour, sharing a 535-kilometre border - became the first stop and, for many, the destination. Of all the European countries that opened their doors, Poland received by far the largest share, and within weeks it had become, after Turkey, the second-largest refugee-hosting country in the world. It is worth flagging at the outset that this situation has been, and remains, highly dynamic. People have crossed the border in both directions, moved on to other countries, returned home, and come back again as conditions in Ukraine have shifted. The figures cited throughout this chapter therefore reflect the best available snapshots at specific moments, not a fixed picture.

The scale was felt before it could be counted. By the end of March 2022, roughly two and a half million border crossings from Ukraine into Poland had been recorded since the invasion began - and although that figure included some back-and-forth movement, the inflow of people was unmistakable. Counting both the Ukrainians already living in Poland and those who had just fled the war, the country's de facto population is estimated to have pushed above 40 million for the first time in its history, up from an official 38.27 million at the end of 2020. In a matter of weeks, the war had brought into Poland a population movement comparable in scale to that of a large metropolitan area.

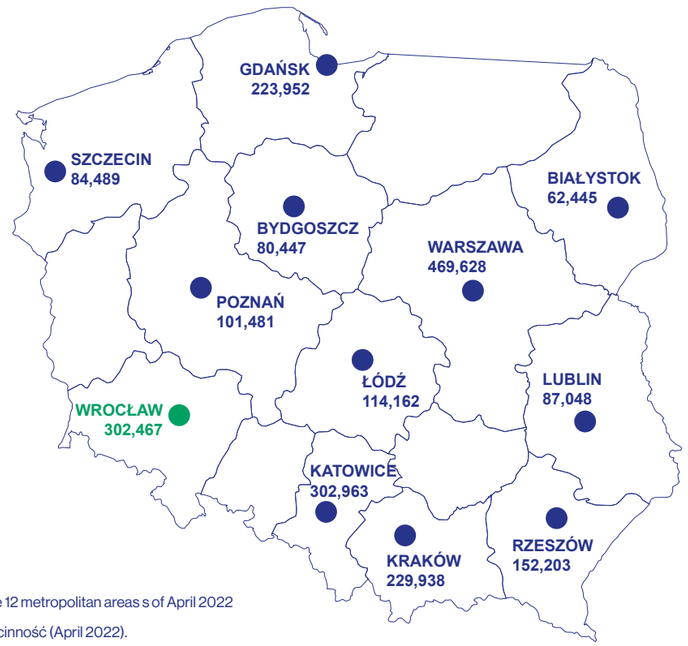
For the first weeks, however, Polish authorities and city governments did not know with any confidence where the new arrivals were settling. Border-crossing numbers were available; what came after was not. As Dr Paweł Cywiński, co-author of the first systematic mapping of the influx, put it bluntly: „we were a bit like children in a fog." That mapping - the Miejska gościnność report by the Union of Polish Metropolises (Unia Metropolii Polskich, UMP), published in April 2022 - was the first attempt to answer where, in fact, Ukrainians were now living, working and going about their days inside Poland.

> ***We were a bit like children in a fog."***
>
> Dr Paweł Cywiński, co-author, Miejska gościnność (UMP, April 2022)

Chapter 1: The Backdrop

Poland and Europe's largest refugee movement since the Second World War

The answer was unambiguous: cities. By April 2022, roughly 70% of all Ukrainians in Poland - over 2.2 million people - were concentrated in the 12 metropolitan areas of UMP, which together absorbed the brunt of the influx. The report's snapshot of those areas is a useful map of where the new Polish reality had taken hold:



Ukrainian population in the 12 metropolitan areas s of April 2022

Source: UMP, Miejska gościnność (April 2022).

These are total Ukrainians in each metropolitan area at that moment - both new arrivals and pre-war residents (workers, students and earlier migrants) - captured through mobile-device data and the national PESEL register. In several cities, the increase was stark: Rzeszów's population grew by 53% in just five weeks, Warsaw's by 15%. Never before, in such a short span, had Polish cities seen growth on this scale.

The composition of this population mattered, because it shaped what kind of integration response was needed. Before the war, Ukrainians in Poland were mostly young men who had arrived to work; after 24 February, the new arrivals were overwhelmingly women and children. By the UMP's April 2022 estimate, 79% of Ukrainians in Poland were aged 15 or over, and 21% were children under 15 - meaning several hundred thousand school-age children had become part of Polish daily life almost overnight.

Three years on, the picture has stabilised in some ways and grown more complex in others. By late 2024, approximately one million Ukrainians remained in Poland under temporary protection or related legal status - many had moved on, some had returned to Ukraine, others had arrived more recently. Among those who stayed were an estimated 300,000 school-age children. According to a joint enrolment report by the Centre for Citizenship Education (CEO) and UNICEF published in October 2024, around 203,000 of them were enrolled in Polish kindergartens, primary or secondary schools by the 2024/2025 school year - roughly 4% of all pupils nationally, and as much as 7.8% in cities like Wrocław. The remaining tens of thousands followed Ukrainian schools online, learned at home, or - for reasons difficult to pin down in the data - fell outside both education systems altogether.

Chapter 1: The Backdrop

Poland and Europe's largest refugee movement since the Second World War

Poland responded with the policy levers it had. From the 2024/25 school year, Ukrainian refugee children living in Poland became subject to compulsory education within the Polish school system. The requirement was tied to eligibility for child-related benefits — including the "800+" child allowance and the "Dobry Start" („Good Start") school grant - to encourage enrolment, although the "800+" attendance condition was applied only from the benefit period beginning in June 2025. Reports from inside the schools, however, continue to flag the same persistent issues: language barriers, emotional strain, low awareness among teachers of how to work with traumatised pupils, and a quiet tendency for Ukrainian and Polish children to function alongside each other rather than with each other. Outside the schools, the picture is harder to see at all: the children who do not pass through any institution leave no trace in the statistics, but they are there, and they are often the most isolated.

The numbers have shifted considerably since the early months of the crisis and are smaller today than at the peak. But a meaningful share of those who came in 2022 have decided to stay: enrolling their children in Polish schools, starting their own businesses, taking up jobs, learning the language, and putting down the kind of roots that turn a temporary refuge into a long-term home. For these families, Poland is no longer a place to wait out a war - it is the place where their future is being built.

And few cities absorbed more of that change than Wrocław, where the project took shape. The capital of Lower Silesia had long been a magnet for Ukrainians: well before the war they already made up roughly a tenth of its residents - around a hundred thousand people, drawn by work and study. Then, in the months after February 2022, that share roughly doubled. According to estimates by the Union of Polish Metropolises, Ukrainians accounted for about 23% of the city's population by April 2022 and close to 28% by that July - at the peak, nearly one resident in three, one of the highest concentrations of any city in the European Union. The first emergency wave has since receded and the figures have settled, but they have not returned to where they began: the city's Ukrainian community is still estimated at between 150,000 and 180,000 people, among them some 80,000 who arrived after the invasion. Let's Play Together was conceived in a city that had, almost overnight, become home to one of Europe's largest Ukrainian populations - and was still, three years on, working out what that meant.

The chapters that follow describe the model we built, the choices we made, and what we learned. But the model was not built in the abstract. It was built against the backdrop sketched here - a backdrop that, three years on, is still very much the present.

Chapter 2: Sport as a Tool for Integration

From performance to social infrastructure

Before introducing the Tandem Coaching Model itself, it is worth pausing on a more fundamental question: why sport at all? In Poland in particular, the answer is far from obvious - and the obstacles to taking sport seriously as an instrument of integration are largely structural.

Sport in Poland is mostly understood as performance

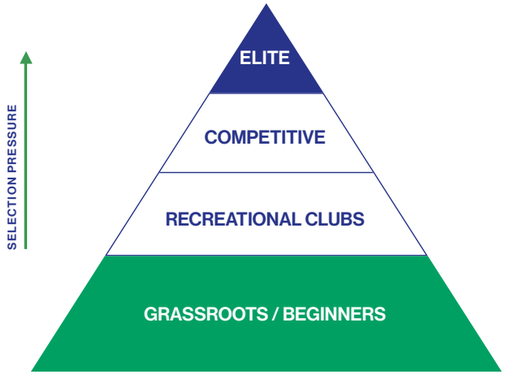
For most of its modern history, organised sport in Poland has been framed as a pyramid. At the base, large numbers of children join local clubs to begin training in a chosen discipline. As they progress, smaller numbers move up through age categories, school competitions, regional federations, and - for a fortunate few - into national-team and professional sport. The system is built around selection, achievement, and athletic excellence. It is designed for producing competitive athletes. It works less well for almost everything else.

This dominant frame has consequences. Most sport on offer to Polish children is delivered by clubs in the form of structured training for a specific discipline, with implicit expectations about commitment, performance, fees, and progression. Children who do not want to compete - or whose families cannot afford the equipment, fees, or time - drop off the bottom of the pyramid early. Children who arrive in a new country, do not yet speak the language, and carry the weight of displacement are unlikely to find a natural entry point in this system at all. The partial exception is the small minority of Ukrainian children who were already part of organised sport back home: for them, Poland's pyramid is familiar territory, and - language barrier aside - joining a local club is a more straightforward step.

The field that exists in much of Europe to serve precisely these children - internationally known as sport for development, or sport-for-all - is still at a very early stage in Poland. The core idea is straightforward: sport designed primarily as a vehicle for social outcomes (integration, mental well-being, leadership, conflict prevention, social skills development) rather than as an end in itself. It is a well-established discipline elsewhere, with its own practitioners, training, and funding lines, but in Poland it remains a relatively new conversation. There are good, most often local examples, but they are exceptions, not the norm.

Model I

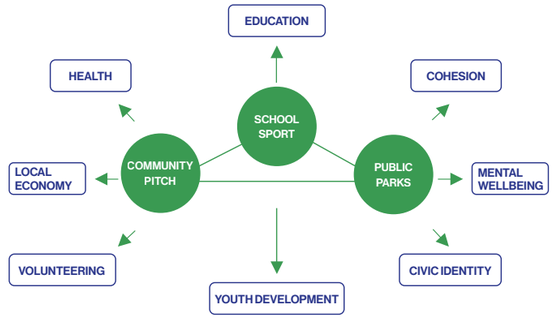
The Sport Pyramid



Talent filters upward. Most participants are a means to producing elite performers.

Model II

Sport as Social Infrastructure



Sport as a node in community life. Value radiates outward to every participant and the wider society.

The pyramid optimises for medals. Infrastructure optimises for people.

From performance to social infrastructure

Sport sits awkwardly across local government departments

A second structural obstacle, particularly for Polish municipalities, is administrative. In most city halls, sport sits in one department, education in another, and social affairs - covering also refugee services, integration support, and family welfare - in a third. Each has its own budget, its own targets, and its own way of working. The integration of refugee children through sport, however, cuts cleanly across all three. It is a sport intervention, an educational intervention, and a social intervention at the same time. None of the existing departmental silos was built for this kind of cross-cutting work; each is measured against indicators specific to its own remit - for the sport department, for instance, the number of children taking part in sport activities.

This is not a uniquely Polish problem, but it helps explain a paradox in the early response to the 2022 refugee influx: much of the work happened outside official municipal sport structures, driven instead by NGOs, neighbourhood initiatives, and individual school principals. Yet the sports facilities, coaching networks, and school playgrounds those structures control are precisely the assets that integration work needs most.

None of this reflects a lack of will - the silos simply were not designed for cross-cutting work. Where municipal structures and grassroots energy come together, sport can become one of the most natural and effective tools a city has for integration.

Why sport, then?

With those caveats on the table, the case for sport as a tool of integration is strong, well-documented internationally, and grounded in straightforward human realities.

A common language that does not require speech.
Sport is one of the few domains in which two children with no shared spoken language can immediately interact, cooperate, and have fun together. A ball, a goal, a count of points - these carry their own grammar. For children whose Polish is still emerging, that lowers the threshold to participation in a way few other group activities can match.

A shared, embodied experience.
Children who play together in their bodies, not just talk together with their words, accumulate the kind of unforced familiarity that early friendships are made of. Repeated, low-pressure shared activity builds trust faster than structured conversation, and in a register children find natural.

A safe space to release stress and recover from trauma.
The link between physical activity and mental health is one of the best-established findings in modern public-health research; the World Health Organization's most recent guidelines on physical activity treat this not as a soft benefit but as a clinical one. Regular movement helps regulate stress, improves sleep, and reduces symptoms of anxiety and depression. For children who have lived through war, displacement, and the abrupt loss of routine, weekly, predictable physical activity - held by adults who know how to handle distress - is a real form of protection. International humanitarian organisations have built their refugee programmes around this premise: UNHCR's 2022 strategy More than a Game explicitly reframes sport as a core tool of humanitarian response, not a pleasant extra, and the Olympic Refuge Foundation, the IOC and the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement's MHPSS Hub all converge on the same conclusion.

Chapter 2: Sport as a Tool for Integration

From performance to social infrastructure

Leveling the interactions.
On a sports pitch, no one is a refugee and no one is a host: they are teammates and opponents, players who pass and players who shoot. Children's hierarchies on a pitch are formed by skill, effort, and loyalty to the team - boundaries that cut across the divisions that separate adults. That equalising effect is one of the most under-appreciated and most powerful arguments for sport as a vehicle of integration.

A natural anchor in public space.
Unlike most integration interventions, sport is strongly tied to places - pitches, parks, schoolyards, gymnasiums - that are already part of local civic infrastructure. Activities can happen close to where families live, free of charge, without enrolment, without forms. That accessibility - low-threshold, in the language of the field - is decisive for reaching children who would never sign up to a formal club programme.

A platform that reaches both communities, not just the newcomers.
Integration is a two-way process. The Polish children who play alongside Ukrainian peers gain something too: language exposure, cross-cultural fluency, and the early experience of belonging to a more diverse community than the one their parents grew up in. Sport is one of the few settings in which both groups can be served at once, in the same activity, on the same terms.

A different role for local sport

Taken together, these arguments make a specific case to Polish local governments and sports organisations: sport is not only a vehicle for producing athletes. It is also a piece of social infrastructure that, with modest reorientation, can do work that no single municipal department can do on its own. Cities already own the assets - pitches, parks, school playgrounds, networks of coaches. What is needed is a willingness to use those assets for outcomes that fall outside the performance pyramid, and to coordinate across the departmental lines that normally separate sport, education, and social affairs.

That is the case Let's Play Together set out to make in practice. The chapters that follow show what it looked like on the ground.

Chapter 3: Inspirations

A short tour of organisations putting these ideas into practice

Chapter 3: Inspirations

A short tour of organisations putting these ideas into practice

The argument made in the previous chapter - that sport, when designed for social outcomes rather than athletic performance, is one of the most effective tools we have for integration - is not an idea Let's Play Together invented. It belongs to a global field, often referred to as sport for development (S4D) or sport for change, that has been building methodologies, evidence, and practitioner networks for decades.

Across every continent, organisations have been using sport - football, running, skateboarding, traditional games, street basketball, surfing - to bring refugees and host communities together, support children through trauma, empower girls in restrictive environments, and rebuild the social fabric of places torn apart by conflict, displacement, or poverty. Many of these organisations are tiny; some are national networks; a few have grown into international movements. They share a common premise: that sport can and should do more than produce athletes.

The list below is a deliberately selective tour, not a comprehensive directory. It includes organisations whose work has shaped how we at V4SPORT think about it. The examples are grouped by continent, with a link to each organisation's website. We encourage readers to follow whichever spark an idea for their own context.

Africa

Cheza - Uganda & South Sudan

Reviving and modernising traditional African games

Founded in 2014 by social innovator Simon Peter Tumukunde, Cheza is a youth-led organisation working across Africa to revive, redesign, and globalise traditional African sports as tools for inclusion, education, and social change. Its central project is the modernisation of Kwepena, one of the continent's most popular traditional games, transformed into a structured, scalable sport now used to engage girls, refugees, and displaced communities across the region.

Cheza's programmes include the Boru Boru Championing Girls Programme in South Sudan, Kwepena for Financial Literacy in Uganda, cultural festivals, school game days, and youth-facilitator training. They tackle gender equality, mental wellbeing, peacebuilding, and financial literacy through community-designed, play-based methods. The organisation has reached over 100,000 young people to date.

Cheza's work is a striking demonstration that sport-for-development does not have to import its tools from elsewhere - that locally rooted games, redesigned with care, can carry social outcomes as effectively as any imported model.

https://chezafoundation.org/

A short tour of organisations putting these ideas into practice

FAME Foundation - Nigeria

Female advocacy, mentoring & empowerment through sport

Founded in 2017 by Arabinrin Aderonke Atoyebi, FAME Foundation is a Nigerian gender-focused NGO using sport as a vehicle to empower girls, young women, and marginalised groups - with a particular focus on residents of Nigeria's internally displaced persons (IDP) camps. FAME runs skills-acquisition centres oriented around poverty reduction and self-sufficiency, complemented by outreach programmes on menstrual health and hygiene and broader advocacy for women's participation in public life.

The foundation's flagship initiatives - FAME Global Leadership, FAME Lead, and Mentoring Support Services - equip young people with values and practical skills to challenge gender inequality and lead change in their own communities. Under Aderonke's leadership, FAME has created safe, structured spaces for girls and young women in some of the most under-resourced parts of Nigeria, offering them a pathway from sport into mentorship, education, and economic participation.

FAME is one of the clearest examples internationally of how grassroots sport, run by and for women, can shift gender norms and build durable local leadership in challenging environments.

https://famefoundationwg.org/

Asia and the Middle East

Skateistan - Afghanistan, Cambodia, South Africa, Jordan, and global

Skateboarding as education and empowerment

Founded in Kabul in 2007, Skateistan began as a project to teach skateboarding to children in Afghanistan, particularly girls. It has since grown into a global NGO supporting programmes in 42 countries and reaching more than 10,000 young people, working through long-term partnerships with locally led initiatives. Its focus is on inclusive access to sport and creative learning, with a particular emphasis on girls and young people facing displacement, discrimination, or poverty.

Skateistan combines skateboarding with classroom-based education in its skate schools - a model that uses an unfamiliar, low-stakes activity (one most children encounter for the first time) as a hook to draw participants into broader learning. Its Lead and Skate programme in Tehran, Iran, brings together Iranian and Afghan refugee children through skateboarding, art, and leadership workshops, and over 40% of participants at Skateistan Afghanistan are internally displaced or returnees.

What makes Skateistan distinctive is its combination of sport, art, and education in a single offering, and its insistence that programmes be designed by local teams who understand their context.

https://www.skateistan.org/

Chapter 3: Inspirations

A short tour of organisations putting these ideas into practice

Asia and the Middle East

Palestine: Sports for Life (PS4L) - Palestine

Sport for empowerment in conflict-affected communities

Active across the West Bank, East Jerusalem, and (until recently) the Gaza Strip, Palestine: Sports for Life uses sport for development as a tool for individual and community empowerment. Working in one of the most challenging environments in the world, PS4L's mission is to engage Palestinian communities through sport - enriching lives, expanding what is possible, and creating safe environments for children, young people, and women in places deeply affected by conflict.

The organisation's programmes go well beyond the delivery of sports activities. They combine sport, life skills, and mentoring, with a strong focus on healthy lifestyles, inclusion, and educational support. A particular emphasis on the empowerment of girls and young women makes PS4L a case study in how sport can shift entrenched stereotypes about who plays, and on what terms. PS4L is also building physical infrastructure - pitches, courts, and community spaces - in places where such facilities are scarce or absent.

PS4L's work is a reminder that sport-for-development is sometimes precisely the intervention that remains possible in environments where other forms of social investment are not.

https://ps4l.org/

GAME - Lebanon (with origins in Denmark)

Youth-led street sport for social change

GAME is an international NGO founded in Denmark in 2002 and operating in Lebanon since 2007, with additional programmes across Africa, the Middle East, and the Nordic region. Its model is built on street sport - basketball, football, dance - delivered free of charge in disadvantaged neighbourhoods by youth volunteers known as Playmakers.

In Lebanon, GAME organises weekly street-sport sessions for over 3,000 children each year, supported by a community of more than 300 Playmakers - young people from the same neighbourhoods who lead the sessions and act as mentors. Girls from host and refugee communities are actively encouraged to participate and challenge gender stereotypes, and GAME has developed a street-sport entrepreneurship-and-leadership incubator programme in Lebanon and Jordan to address youth unemployment.

GAME's combination of free public access, a peer-led delivery model, and a focus on neglected urban spaces makes it a particularly relevant reference point for any city wanting to use existing public infrastructure for integration outcomes.

https://game.ngo/

A short tour of organisations putting these ideas into practice

Europe

Sanctuary Runners - Ireland (and expanding internationally)

Running and walking as a vehicle for solidarity

Sanctuary Runners is an Ireland-based charity that uses running and walking to bring refugees, asylum seekers, and host communities together on equal footing. It was founded to fill a specific gap: the absence of integration initiatives that were genuinely inclusive rather than rooted in charity dynamics. Sanctuary Runners groups are free, open, mixed-ability, and built on a single simple principle: locals and refugees run side by side.

The model has produced strong evidence of integration outcomes - increased public engagement with migration issues, stronger cross-community friendships, and significant improvements in belonging and health among refugee participants. Refugees themselves serve as organisers, group leaders, and board directors. The organisation is supported nationally by Ireland's sporting bodies and patronised by the President of Ireland.

In 2024, Sanctuary Runners launched a UK chapter and held its flagship Global Solidarity Run across 75 countries, with backing from Ireland's Department of Foreign Affairs and the European Commission. It is also developing a Sanctuary Runners-in-a-box toolkit in partnership with World Athletics, intended to make the model easy to replicate elsewhere.

https://sanctuaryrunners.ie/

Fédération Sportive et Gymnique du Travail (FSGT) - France & Palestine

Inclusive and emancipatory sport at federation scale

The Fédération Sportive et Gymnique du Travail (FSGT) is a long-established French sports federation committed to inclusive and emancipatory sport. Since 2015, FSGT has worked in long-term partnership with the Palestinian Ministry of Education, local municipalities, and civil society organisations, using sport as a tool for social integration, intercultural exchange, and collective empowerment in marginalised communities.

One of FSGT's flagship projects focuses on Palestinian refugee camps such as New Askar, Aida, and Al Amari. The federation has trained over 100 young refugees as community sport facilitators who lead inclusive activities for children, youth, women, and people with disabilities - connecting camps with each other and with surrounding towns through inter-camp tournaments and exchanges with municipalities and clubs.

FSGT illustrates a particular role that public-sector and federation-level actors can play in this field: bringing institutional weight, long-term horizons, and policy reach to community-led sport-for-development work.

https://www.fsgt-palestine.org/

Chapter 3: Inspirations

A short tour of organisations putting these ideas into practice

South America

Fútbol Más - Chile, and over 10 other countries

Resilience and social-emotional development through play

Founded in Chile in 2008, Fútbol Más is one of the most established sport-for-development organisations in Latin America. Its methodology is grounded in the idea that football and play can build resilience, meaningful relationships, and community cohesion in vulnerable contexts. The organisation runs programmes for children in disadvantaged neighbourhoods, supports schools through teacher-training, intervenes in humanitarian emergencies, and adapts its methodology for transfer to other organisations.

Fútbol Más is particularly known for its green and blue card system - a deliberate departure from football's traditional red and yellow cards. Green cards reward positive behaviours during sessions; blue cards prompt children to reflect on attitudes that could be improved. The system reframes the pitch as a space for social learning rather than disciplinary control.

In 2023, Fútbol Más was active in 14 countries across four continents, with direct programmes in Mexico, Peru, Chile, France, Spain, and Kenya. It has reached around 26,000 beneficiaries to date and has been recognised by UNICEF, the FIFA Diversity Award, and Beyond Sport.

https://futbolmas.org/

FUDELA (Fundación de las Américas) - Ecuador

Sport for inclusion in vulnerable communities

FUDELA is an Ecuadorian NGO that has worked for over 20 years to promote social, educational, and economic inclusion for children, adolescents, youth, women, and families in vulnerable situations. Its Community Champions programme creates safe, positive spaces for children and adolescents - both Ecuadorian and from refugee or migrant backgrounds - through sport, art, and recreation, with a focus on social-emotional development and risk prevention.

Activities include football, basketball, baseball, table tennis, dance, and music, complemented by educational workshops on financial literacy, rights awareness, and environmental care. Parents, community leaders, and local stakeholders are involved in the design and delivery of activities, ensuring the programme reflects the realities of the communities it serves.

Supported by UNHCR and partners including IOM and the International Table Tennis Foundation, FUDELA's work has strengthened social cohesion, empowered children as agents of change, and shifted local attitudes toward newcomers - particularly Venezuelan refugees in Ecuador's northern border regions.

https://fudela.org.ec/

A short tour of organisations putting these ideas into practice

North America

ACSA Cultural & Sport Association - Canada (with origins in Afghanistan)

Refugee- and women-led sport, culture, and entrepreneurship

Founded in 2009 in Afghanistan as the country's first women's sports complex, the Afghan-Canadian Social Association (ACSA) has since expanded to Canada and now operates programmes in more than ten countries. Its mission is to support refugees, immigrant women, and newcomers through sport, culture, and entrepreneurship - with leadership grounded in the lived experience of its founder, Afghan-Canadian refugee Masooma Sayed Hashim.

ACSA runs a wide range of programmes including soccer, yoga, fitness, mentoring, and cultural workshops promoting entrepreneurship. These activities improve health and wellbeing while building confidence, reducing isolation, and helping refugees integrate into their new communities. Programmes are co-designed with participants, delivered in accessible languages and formats, and tailored to be culturally responsive.

ACSA's distinctive contribution is its combination of sport with leadership development, cultural workshops, and economic empowerment - demonstrating how sport can serve as a bridge not only into community life but into broader social and economic transformation. The organisation is now headquartered in British Columbia, Canada.

https://acsaorg.ca/

Glasswing Costa Rica (Fundación Crisalida Internacional) - Costa Rica

Integrating migrants and host communities through sport, legal aid, and therapeutic movement

Glasswing Costa Rica is a regional NGO promoting strategic social investment to drive sustainable change in communities affected by inequality and exclusion. It works closely with migrants, refugees, asylum seekers, and host communities, using a collaborative, rights-based approach with a strong gender-equality focus.

Its **Integrémonos** programme operates in the canton of Desamparados, one of Costa Rica's most diverse and densely populated areas, where migration has shaped local realities significantly. The programme combines economic inclusion, legal guidance for migration regularisation, therapeutic movement, and the creation of safe community spaces. It addresses emotional wellbeing, access to work, and social participation while responding to barriers such as xenophobia, legal insecurity, and limited access to services.

What is most distinctive about Glasswing's model is its integration of psychosocial, economic, and legal support into a single community-led intervention - a recognition that integration is rarely a single-axis problem.

https://glasswing.org/glasswing-costa-rica/

Chapter 3: Inspirations

A short tour of organisations putting these ideas into practice

Oceania

Football United - Australia (UNSW Sydney)

Football as a vehicle for refugee resettlement, anchored in academic research

Football United is an academic-grassroots hybrid based at the University of New South Wales (UNSW) in Sydney, founded in 2006 by Dr Anne Bunde-Birouste of the School of Population Health. It uses football to support young refugees and their integration into Australian society, with a particular focus on the culturally diverse areas of western Sydney, where refugee settlement is concentrated.

The programme is a complex, multi-level intervention combining football training, mentorship, leadership development, and community-building. Its underlying premise is that the universal appeal of football can be redirected - without losing its enjoyment - towards belonging, racial harmony, and social cohesion. Football United operates in partnership with schools, local football associations, and community organisations, and its impact has been documented in peer-reviewed research published by UNSW.

The Football United model is notable for combining grassroots delivery with rigorous academic evaluation - a useful template for any city or federation looking to anchor an integration-through-sport programme in evidence.

https://footballunited.org.au/

Creating Chances - Australia

Sport-based life skills and leadership for refugee and CALD young people

Creating Chances is an Australian youth-development social enterprise and registered charity that uses sport-based life-skills and leadership programmes to empower young people. Working with more than 100 schools across the New South Wales Department of Education, it reaches over 10,000 young people each year - many from First Nations, refugee, migrant, and low-socioeconomic backgrounds.

Its **Girls United i**nitiative, developed in partnership with Football Australia, addresses barriers faced by girls and young women from refugee and culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds in accessing sport and community life. It combines football with social-emotional learning, leadership training, and wellbeing programming. A separate initiative, **Arezo**, focuses specifically on Afghan-Australian girls and women.

Creating Chances's distinctive approach is its co-design methodology: programmes are built with the participation of refugee-background and CALD coaches, ensuring lived experience is built into delivery from the start.

https://creatingchances.org.au/

Chapter 3: Inspirations

A short tour of organisations putting these ideas into practice

A field, not a list

These organisations differ in scale, geography, sport of choice, and political context. What they share is an underlying conviction: that sport, when designed for people rather than for spectacle, is one of the most reliable platforms a community has for bringing strangers into relation, supporting children through difficult periods, and building the social fabric that integration requires. None of them have all the answers; together, they suggest the shape of a field that Polish local governments and sports organisations can join with confidence - and contribute to.

The chapters that follow describe how Let's Play Together added its own answer to that conversation, in a Polish context, with a particular method: the Tandem Coaching Model, to which we now turn.

Chapter 4: The Project's Goals

What Let's Play Together set out to do

Chapter 4: The Project's Goals

What Let's Play Together set out to do

A project's design only makes sense in light of what it is trying to achieve. Before introducing the Tandem Coaching Model itself, it is worth setting out the four objectives that shaped Let's Play Together from its first proposal - and that, in retrospect, shaped almost every choice we made along the way: who to recruit, where to run sessions, how to train coaches, what to measure, and how to talk about the work to outside audiences.

These four objectives were not aspirations; they were the project's purpose. Everything in the chapters that follow is, at root, a description of how we worked towards them.

The four objectives that shaped Let's Play Together

- Promote community integration
- Improve mental well-being
- Facilitate adaptation and build bonds with host communities
- Inspire others

Chapter 4: The Project's Goals

What Let's Play Together set out to do

1. To promote community integration

This is the project's first and broadest goal. Integration in this sense is not assimilation - it is not about Ukrainian children adapting to become more like their Polish peers. It is the slower, more reciprocal process of building shared experiences, mutual recognition, and durable bonds between children of two communities who, as Chapter 1 set out, were living side by side in Wrocław but mostly playing apart.

In practical terms, this meant designing activities that brought Polish and Ukrainian children together routinely, in the same place, doing the same things, on equal footing. It is the goal that drove the choice of mixed sessions in public spaces.

2. To improve mental well-being

Many Ukrainian children arriving in Poland after February 2022 had experienced events children should never experience. Even where the experience itself was indirect - a parent's anxiety, a sudden move, the loss of friends and routines - the psychological toll was real. Goal two recognised that integration without attention to mental well-being was not really integration at all.

This is the goal that drove the project's emphasis on trauma-informed coaching, the partnership with expert organisations, and the inclusion of mental-health-first-aid training for Tandem Coaches during the year. It is also why sessions were designed around predictability, safety, and play rather than competition.

3. To facilitate adaptation and build bonds with host communities

Adaptation here means more than learning the language. It means knowing the local park, recognising other children's faces, having an adult outside the home who knows your name, and beginning to feel that the city you live in is also, in some sense, yours. Goal three is the bridge between integration as a social outcome and integration as an everyday lived experience.

It is the goal that drove the choice to run sessions in the neighbourhoods where Ukrainian families lived, to involve parents and local communities, and to build the project on top of existing local infrastructure - school pitches, ESK Parks, the Trener Osiedlowy (eng. Neighbourhood Coach) network - rather than creating new, parallel structures.

4. To inspire others

Wrocław was always intended as a pilot, not an end-point. From the proposal onwards, the project was built around the assumption that the Tandem Coaching Model - if it worked - should be made available to others in a form they could use. Goal four is the reason this Playbook exists. It is also the reason for the project's investment in dissemination at national and international level.

It is the goal that turns Let's Play Together from a Wrocław intervention into an offer to anyone facing comparable challenges - in Iceland, in France, in Romania, or in another Polish city.

Chapter 4: The Project's Goals

What Let's Play Together set out to do

A further goal built into the model

In addition to the four primary objectives, the project pursued one further outcome that - while less central in the formal grant language - shaped its execution as much as the headline goals did: developing the coaches themselves.

Let's Play Together was designed to produce a cohort of practitioners, Polish and Ukrainian, with skills that would outlast the project: trauma-informed coaching, cross-cultural competence, mental-health first aid, and community organising. The 22 coaches who ran the pilot now carry that expertise forward into other work - some continue working as Neighborhood Coaches with SZS Wroclaw and some are integrating the methodology into their day jobs as teachers and educators.

In addition, 40 young people from Wrocław schools, Polish, Ukrainian and single individuals from other countries also took part in the Coaching for Community Camp to develop as future Coach Assistants. The Camp gave them an early experience of cross-cultural collaboration and trauma-informed practice that many said they wanted to continue afterwards.

What the goals were *not*

It is worth being explicit about what Let's Play Together did not set out to do.

It was not designed to recruit children into competitive sport, build athletes, or feed the local club system. It was not designed to replace the Polish education system or to do the work that schools, social services, or specialised psychological care services should be doing. It was not designed to solve refugee integration on its own - sport is one piece of a much larger puzzle. And it was not designed to be a one-off event: the value of the model depends on regular, sustained activity over time, not a single tournament or showcase.

These boundaries were not failures of ambition. They were deliberate choices about what sport, designed for social outcomes, can and cannot reasonably be expected to deliver - and, equally important, about where it should hand off to other forms of support.

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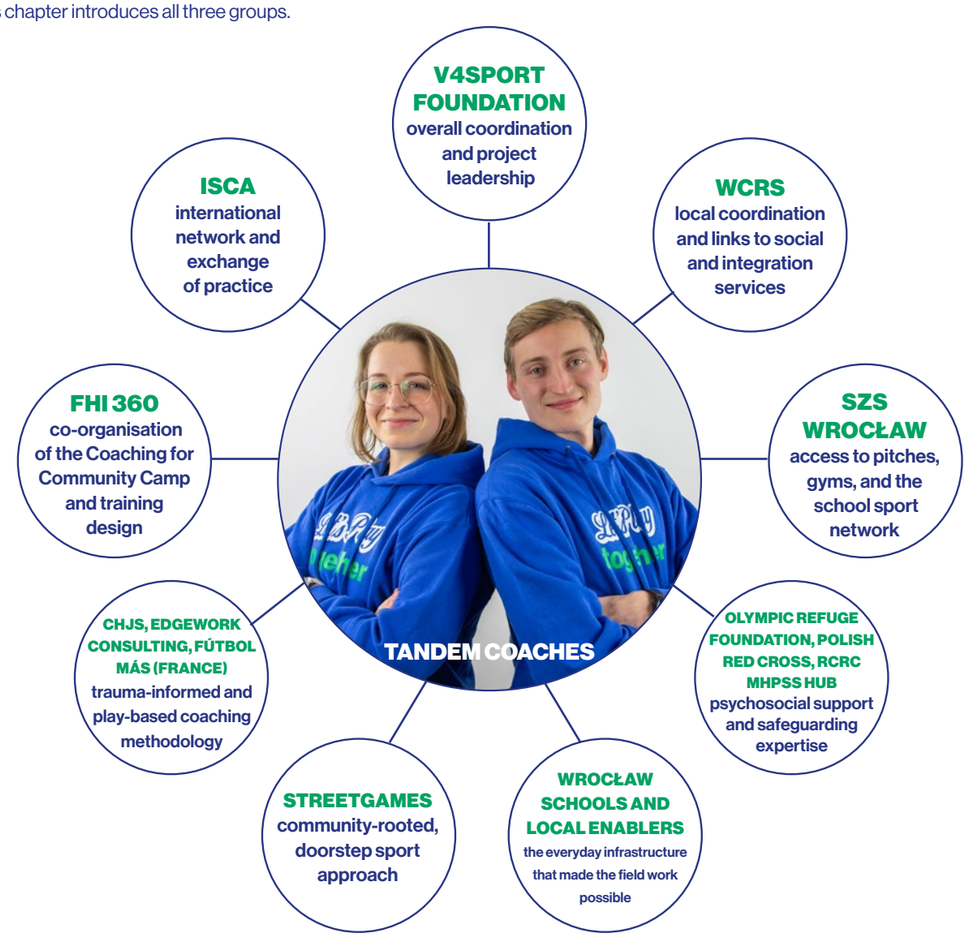
Chapter 5: It Takes a Team to Win a Game

The consortium and partners behind Let's Play Together

The integration of refugee children through sport is not a problem any single organisation is well-equipped to solve on its own. It cuts across at least five distinct fields of expertise: community sport delivery, child psychology and trauma-informed care, refugee integration policy, municipal coordination, and cross-cultural facilitation. It also requires deep local knowledge of the neighbourhoods where the work has to happen - which children live there, which schools serve them, which parks are safe, which families speak which language at home - alongside an awareness of the international evidence base for what works.

To deliver on the four goals set out in the previous chapter, V4SPORT therefore did what any serious emergency-response project must do: we built a team. The consortium that anchored Let's Play Together was assembled deliberately, with each partner chosen for a specific contribution. Around that core, a wider network of international experts was brought in to train the Tandem Coaches at the Coaching for Community Camp and to ensure the methodology was grounded in global best practice. And around them, a quieter but indispensable layer of local enablers - most importantly the Wrocław schools - made the day-to-day work possible.

This chapter introduces all three groups.



Behind one coaching tandem on one pitch stands a whole ecosystem - inspiration, infrastructure, coordination, and care - each partner feeding into the single point where the project meets the children.

Chapter 5: It Takes a Team to Win a Game

The consortium and partners behind Let's Play Together

The core consortium

V4SPORT Foundation - Wrocław, Poland

Lead beneficiary and overall project coordinator

V4SPORT is a Polish foundation established in 2009, working at the intersection of sport, physical activity, education and social development. With well over 15 years of experience in delivering national and international projects, V4SPORT served as the lead beneficiary for Let's Play Together. Its responsibilities included overall project management, financial oversight, the local execution of the Tandem Coaching Model in Wrocław, and the development of this Playbook. It was also the operational link between the international experts contributing to the Camp and the Tandem Coaches working in the field.

V4SPORT is a member of the International Sport and Culture Association and has been active in the integration-of-refugees-through-sport space since March 2022, building on earlier projects such as Integration of Ukrainian Refugee Children Through Sport (IURTS) and We Play Together! - both of which provided foundational learnings that fed directly into LPT.

https://www.v4sport.eu/

Wrocław Centre for Social Development (WCRS) - Wrocław, Poland

Local partner - psychological, pedagogical, and city-level support

WCRS is a unit of Wrocław's municipal authorities with a long track record of designing and coordinating social initiatives across the city's communities, including the humanitarian response to the influx of Ukrainian refugees from 2022 onward. For Let's Play Together, WCRS served as a support point for the tandem coaches, directing them to the Wrocław institutions where they could seek further help whenever they encountered children and families needing a more professional psychological or pedagogical approach. WCRS's experts contributed to the coaches' training and provided a link to Wrocław City Hall, including its education department; promoted the project through their communication channels; and connected the project to other key local stakeholders, enabling greater visibility through the exhibition and airtime on the radio. WCRS also provided the link to Parki ESK (ESK Parks), a network of pavilions and public spaces across several Wrocław neighbourhoods, some of which served as venues for promoting LPT. Finally, WCRS signalled that, if needed, it could offer support through the Passage of Dialogue (Przejście Dialogu), a public space hosting WroMigrant - a multilingual information point for refugees and migrants offering practical guidance and referral support in Ukrainian, English, Belarusian, Russian and Polish.

https://www.wcrs.wroclaw.pl/

The consortium and partners behind Let's Play Together

School Sport Federation Wrocław (SZS Wroclaw) - Wrocław, Poland

Local partner - Tandem Coach employment and operational coordination

SZS Wroclaw has been promoting sport and physical activity among school-aged young people in Wrocław for more than twenty years. Within the LPT consortium, SZS Wroclaw was responsible for hiring the Tandem Coaches, signing their employment agreements, and providing the day-to-day operational coordination of their work in the field - tracking schedules, securing access to facilities, and supporting routine logistics.

SZS Wroclaw is also home to the Trener Osiedlowy (Neighbourhood Coach) programme, a city-wide initiative in operation since 2003 that organises free sports and recreational activities in Wrocław's public spaces. It was the Trener Osiedlowy network of experienced community coaches that formed the recruitment pool for LPT's Polish Tandem Coaches - a continuity that turned out to be one of the project's most important early decisions.

https://www.wroclawskiszs.pl/

International Sport and Culture Association (ISCA) - Copenhagen, Denmark

International partner - communication, dissemination, and access to global expertise

ISCA is one of the largest international networks in grassroots sport, with member organisations across the World. Within the LPT consortium, ISCA's primary role was international communication, dissemination, and stakeholder engagement - ensuring the project's results were visible to relevant policy-makers, practitioners, and funders far beyond Poland. It was through ISCA, for example, that LPT secured a presence at MOVE Congress 2025, one of the largest gatherings of grassroots-sport practitioners in Europe.

Equally important, however, was the role ISCA played as the bridge between V4SPORT and a wider network of international organisations working in sport for development. Through ISCA's Integration of Refugees Through Sport (IRTS) Networking Platform, V4SPORT was able to learn directly from organisations with years of experience in this field - and, just as importantly, to filter what we learned through the realities of the Polish context before putting it into practice. Many of the experts who came to the Coaching for Community Camp in Trzebnica did so through ISCA's network and recommendation.

https://www.isca.org/

Chapter 5: It Takes a Team to Win a Game

The consortium and partners behind Let's Play Together

The international experts at the Coaching for Community Camp

A consortium of four organisations was enough to run the project, but not enough to ensure the Tandem Coaches arrived on the pitch with the specialist skills they needed - particularly in trauma-informed coaching, mental-health first aid, and the use of sport as a vehicle for psychosocial recovery. For that, Let's Play Together drew on a wider group of international experts who came to Trzebnica in February 2025 to deliver the Camp. Their contributions shaped the methodology that the coaches went on to use throughout the year.

FHI 360 - United States

Co-organiser of the Camp; bridge to U.S. mental-health and sport expertise

FHI 360 is a U.S.-based global development organisation with more than 4,000 staff working in over 60 countries. It joined the project in April 2024 through the U.S. Department of State's Sports Visitor and Sports Envoy Programs, which it administers on behalf of the State Department's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. FHI 360 co-organised the Coaching for Community Camp, brought a delegation of U.S. mental-health and sport experts to Trzebnica, and supported the development of the Camp curriculum on trauma-informed coaching and post-conflict recovery.

https://www.fhi360.org/

Center for Healing and Justice Through Sport (CHJS) - United States

Trauma-informed sport methodology

CHJS is a U.S. national non-profit whose mission is to make sport a healing experience for young people. Drawing on neurobiological and trauma research, CHJS led several of the Camp's core sessions on healing-centred coaching - equipping the Tandem Coaches to recognise and respond to stress, withdrawal, and trauma reactions in children, rather than treating these as discipline problems. The CHJS framework remained a touchstone for coaches throughout the year.

https://chjs.org/

Edgework Consulting - United States

Youth development and non-formal education

Edgework Consulting brought expertise in youth development, non-formal education methods, and practical capacity-building for coaching cohorts. Its sessions at the Camp focused on how sport-based settings can act as healing environments in places where clinical mental-health care is hard to access - a framing that shaped the way the Tandem Coaches thought about the open sessions throughout 2025.

https://www.edgeworkconsulting.com/

Chapter 5: It Takes a Team to Win a Game

The consortium and partners behind Let's Play Together

Fútbol Más France - France

Community-based methodology for social inclusion

Profiled in the previous chapter, Fútbol Más France brought to the Camp a tested methodology for using football and play to build resilience and social inclusion in vulnerable communities - including its distinctive green and blue card system that re-frames the pitch as a space for positive reinforcement rather than disciplinary control.

https://futbolmas.org/

Olympic Refuge Foundation (ORF) - Switzerland

Strategic insight on sport for displaced populations

The Olympic Refuge Foundation, established in 2017 by the International Olympic Committee, supports the use of sport to protect, develop, and empower people affected by displacement. ORF brought to the Camp the strategic perspective of an organisation operating at global scale - including the validation that comes from years of working with refugees through sport in some of the most difficult environments on earth - and contributed insights that helped LPT position itself within the wider sport-for-protection landscape.

https://www.olympicrefuge.org/

Polish Red Cross (PCK) - Poland

Local humanitarian context and integration

The Polish Red Cross provided the project's link to the Polish humanitarian sector, ensuring the Camp curriculum was grounded in the country's broader refugee-response infrastructure and that Tandem Coaches understood where to refer families needing additional support beyond what sport sessions could offer.

https://pck.pl/

Red Cross Red Crescent Movement MHPSS Hub - Denmark

Mental health and psychosocial support in humanitarian settings

The Red Cross Red Crescent Movement's Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Hub, based in Copenhagen, supports the integration of MHPSS into humanitarian work worldwide. At the Camp, MHPSS Hub experts equipped the Tandem Coaches with mental-health first-aid tools and frameworks - knowledge later reinforced during the year through the ABC Mental Health workshop delivered by Charlotte Bruus Dalsgaard at the Moving People - Moving Poland conference.

https://pscentre.org/

Chapter 5: It Takes a Team to Win a Game

The consortium and partners behind Let's Play Together

StreetGames - United Kingdom

Youth leadership and grassroots engagement

StreetGames is a UK charity bringing the benefits of sport to disadvantaged communities through doorstep delivery - sport in the places where young people already are, on terms that work for them. At the Camp, StreetGames focused particularly on the youth Coach Assistants, equipping them with leadership tools and practical examples of how young people can take up active roles in their own communities.

https://www.streetgames.org

A quieter partner: the schools

Less visible in the formal consortium architecture, but indispensable in the day-to-day delivery of the project, were the **Wrocław schools** with which the majority of Tandem Coaches worked. Several schools opened their pitches, sometimes gymnasiums to the project on a regular basis. Some loaned equipment when sessions ran short. A few set aside corners of their storerooms so that balls, cones, training tops, and weather-dependent kit could be kept on-site rather than carried back and forth across the city.

A number of schools went further than expected, acting as informal champions of the project in their catchment areas - sharing information about sessions with pupils and parents, helping the Tandem Coaches connect with participants they might otherwise have missed. This was never universal, and it was never contractually required of the schools - but where it happened, it made a real difference. Most of it was offered out of the same instinct that drives a community sport coach to keep showing up: a sense that this work mattered, and that the institution they ran could quietly make it more possible.

In any city considering replication, the schools are not an afterthought. They are one of the project's most important enabling layers - the difference between a programme that operates near a community and one that operates inside it.

Why this combination worked

What made this team effective was not its size but its deliberate composition. Each partner held a specific piece of the expertise the project required, and no two pieces overlapped. WCRS held the city; SZS Wroclaw held the network of community coaches; ISCA held the international knowledge base; CHJS and the MHPSS Hub held the mental-health frameworks; ORF held strategic credibility; FHI 360 connected us to U.S. expertise we could not otherwise have accessed; the schools providedthe everyday infrastructure on which the model ran.

V4SPORT's job, as lead beneficiary, was to translate between these layers - to take international best practice and filter it through the Polish reality, to keep the Tandem Coaches supplied with the specialist input they needed without overwhelming them, and to make sure that the four goals from the previous chapter remained the project's compass through every conversation with every partner.

It is a model that costs more time and effort up front than going it alone. It also turns out to be why the project worked.

The Community Sports Tandem Coaching Program - the methodology at the heart of Let's Play Together

Chapter 6: The Tandem Coaching Model

The Community Sports Tandem Coaching Program - the methodology at the heart of Let's Play Together

At the heart of Let's Play Together sits a single structural choice: every sports session was led by a pair of coaches, not one - and one of those coaches came from the same country as the children the sessions were designed to reach. This pair is what we call a Tandem, and the model built around it is what the project's grant proposal christened the Community Sports Tandem Coaching Program.

The Wrocław pilot deployed 11 Tandem pairs. Each was made up of one Polish coach and one Ukrainian coach, working together to design, deliver, and reflect on their sessions. They were not co-instructors in the traditional sense - alternating drills or sharing the whistle - but rather complementary practitioners, each bringing something the other could not, and each present at every session for the full two hours.

This chapter explains why that structural choice was made, what it produced, and the wider design principles that follow from it.

Why a tandem rather than a single coach

It is worth being plain that a single skilled coach is enough to run a good football session. The choice of two coaches in Let's Play Together was not driven by sport-technical considerations. It was driven by what the project is for.

The proposal that founded the project listed six concrete advantages that two coaches - working as a Tandem - bring over a single coach in this kind of context:

Personalised attention

A class of children who have just lived through war, displacement, a language change, and a new education system is not a uniform group. Some can follow Polish; some cannot. Some are confident; some are withdrawn. A Tandem can address those individual realities in real time, including by speaking to a child in their mother tongue. A solo coach simply cannot.

Diverse perspectives

Two coaches bring two coaching styles, two sets of life experiences, two ways of seeing the same group of children. For a child unsure whether they fit, the chance of finding an adult they connect with goes up, not down.

Enhanced safety

When something happens on a pitch - a fall, a fight, a child in sudden distress - having a second adult who can step in immediately is not a nicety. It is the difference between a session that handles incidents well and one that does not.

Increased emotional support

Children carrying the weight of displacement need adults who can hold that weight, even briefly, when it surfaces. A Tandem doubles that capacity, and ensures the coach offering the support is one the child can actually communicate with.

The Community Sports Tandem Coaching Program - the methodology at the heart of Let's Play Together

Skill-building and confidence

Vulnerable children gain confidence faster when the adults around them are themselves visibly cooperating across differences. A Tandem demonstrates, every session, that a Polish person and a Ukrainian person can work together on equal terms - and the children learn as much from watching that as they do from any drill.

Redundancy

With a single coach, an absence cancels a session. With a Tandem, the work continues. Across a year-long programme delivering more than a thousand sessions in eleven neighbourhoods, that durability mattered.

In practice, the project's coaches arrived at a more vivid description of the same dynamic. Asked to characterise what made their pairings work, several Tandems described themselves in the same terms: as a „Heart and Brain" combination. Inna Kunitska, a Ukrainian Tandem Coach, put it directly:

> ***"Grzegorz is the brain of the training, I am the heart - together we create a whole, full of passion and empathy."***
>
> Inna Kunitska, Tandem Coach

In most pairs, one coach became the „Brain" - focused on the structure, pacing, and technical delivery of the session, making sure the activities flowed and the time was used well. The other became the „Heart" - focused on the emotional landscape of the group: who was withdrawn, who was on the edge of a conflict, who needed a quiet word in a familiar language. These roles were not rigidly assigned, and both coaches remained fully present throughout. But the division of attention allowed each session to be at the same time well-organised and emotionally held - something a single coach can rarely manage on their own.

Chapter 6: The Tandem Coaching Model

The Community Sports Tandem Coaching Program - the methodology at the heart of Let's Play Together

Why one Polish and one Ukrainian

The dual-nationality composition of each Tandem was the model's most important - and most easily misunderstood - feature. It is sometimes assumed that the Ukrainian coach is there to translate. They are not.

The Ukrainian coach was there for **cultural and linguistic safety**: to ensure that the children whose Polish was still tentative, whose families had fled a war, whose old routines had been broken, encountered at every session an adult who spoke the language they think and feel in. That presence transformed what the child experienced before any activity even began. The threshold of entry to the session was lower; the sense of safety inside the session was higher; the recovery time after a hard moment was shorter. It also lowered the threshold for parents who were far more likely to allow their children to attend a session if they knew a Ukrainian-speaking adult would be there.

The Polish coach was there as an **anchor to the host community**: someone who knew the neighbourhood, the pitch, the school, the local sports network, the Polish parent picking up their child at the end of the session. Without that anchor, the activity would have been parachuted in. With it, the activity was rooted.

Together, the two coaches embodied - visibly, every session, in front of the children - the kind of cooperation across difference that the project was asking of the children themselves. The Tandem was, in this sense, the message as well as the medium.

> ***"Integration is not what the children are being taught; it is what they are watching the adults do."***
>
> A working principle of the Tandem Coaching Model

This is why we describe the project's underlying principle as two-way integration. The Tandem Model would not have worked if its purpose were Ukrainian children adapting to Polish norms. It worked because both coaches, both sets of children, and both communities were engaged in the same exchange.

The design principles that flow from the model

Once a project is built around Tandem Coaches with this division of labour, a series of further design choices follows almost automatically.

Sessions were free, open, and drop-in

A child could come once or come every week. There was no enrollment, no fee, no form, no commitment. The model was designed to reach children - Ukrainian and Polish alike, and any other child of any background who chose to turn up - who would not, and often could not, sign up to a structured club programme.

Chapter 6: The Tandem Coaching Model

The Community Sports Tandem Coaching Program - the methodology at the heart of Let's Play Together

Sessions took place in public spaces children already knew

School pitches, neighbourhood parks, the ESK Park network - places that are part of the everyday geography of the families the project served. A child did not travel across the city to reach an activity; the activity came to where they already lived.

Sessions were designed for trust, not performance

The pace was adapted to the group; the rules were kept simple; the focus was on participation rather than skill development. Children who were not athletically inclined were as welcome as those who were. Sport was the medium, not the goal.

Coaches were trained in trauma-informed practice

Because the project was designed to reach children who had lived through war and displacement, coaches needed tools to hold distress when it appeared. The Coaching for Community Camp - described in the next chapter - was built around this need.

The project was built on top of existing local infrastructure

The Tandem Coaching Program did not create new municipal departments, new sports halls, or new bureaucratic structures. It used what was already there - the school pitches, the Trener Osiedlowy network, the ESK Parks, the WroMigrant information point - and added the missing element: trained Tandem pairs running consistent sessions, week in and week out.

A structural choice, not a stylistic one

It is tempting to read the Tandem Model as one possible way to deliver community sport among many. It is not. The Tandem produces something a single-coach model cannot: a visible, lived demonstration, repeated at every session, that two communities can work together on equal footing in front of the children of both. That is not a delivery preference. It is the project's central method of integration.

Everything that follows in this Playbook - recruitment, training, locations, communication, evaluation - is, in effect, a description of how to set up the conditions in which Tandems of this kind can operate week after week, month after month, across a city. The next chapter introduces the people who became those Tandems in Wrocław.

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Who they were, how they were recruited, what they brought

Who they were, how they were recruited, what they brought

Once the Tandem Coaching Model was set, the question that defined whether Let's Play Together would work was a question about people: who, exactly, would become the 22 Tandem Coaches that the model required? A model of this kind is only as good as the people who carry it out. Pick the wrong cohort, and the methodology stays on the page. Pick the right one, and the methodology is no longer a methodology - it is a year of weekly sessions on Wrocław pitches that mean something to the children who turn up.

The recruitment process was, from the outset, designed as a deliberate, community-rooted exercise rather than a conventional hiring round. The project was not looking for elite sports specialists or highly certified trainers. It was looking for community leaders who happened to know sport - people whose primary qualification was their existing standing among the neighbours, parents and children they would be working with.

The recruitment principle: mindset over credentials

The phrase used throughout the project's planning was that the ideal candidate would combine the qualities of a sports coach, a social worker and a scoutmaster. That formulation captured something specific: the recruitment was character-first. Sport-technical qualifications mattered, but they were secondary to what the project actually needed each coach to be - an open, adaptable adult with natural rapport with children, comfort in cross-cultural contexts, and a willingness to do the slow, unglamorous work of building trust week by week.

> ***Sports coach, social worker, and scoutmaster - combined."***
>
> The shorthand used during recruitment to describe the kind of person the project was looking for

The project leadership was explicit that this was not a recruitment for athletes. As long as candidates had the right disposition for trauma-informed, inclusive work, their sporting background was secondary. The coaches the project needed had to be able to hold a session emotionally, not just deliver one technically. That is a quality that does not show up reliably on a CV.

Chapter 7: The Tandem Coaches

Who they were, how they were recruited, what they brought

Recruiting the Polish coaches: building on Trener Osiedlowy

For the Polish coaches, V4SPORT and SZS Wroclaw made a strategic decision early on: rather than open a fresh recruitment from zero, the project would draw from the established Trener Osiedlowy (Neighbourhood Coach) network - a programme run by SZS Wroclaw since 2003 that already had experienced coaches embedded in the city's neighbourhoods.

The advantage of this choice was significant. The Trener Osiedlowy coaches were already trusted figures in their local communities. They knew the parents, the schools, the council representatives, the parks, and - critically - they knew which children were already on the margins of any organised activity. They understood neighbourhood dynamics in a way no external hire could have done in the time the project had available.

An information meeting was convened to present the project's vision, explain what the Tandem Coaching Model required of its coaches, and clarify how this work would be different from a typical Trener Osiedlowy session. It was a deliberate moment of expectation-setting: candidates needed to understand that the work would prioritise psychosocial outcomes alongside sporting ones, that they would be working in a Tandem rather than alone, and that the methodology would be trauma-informed. Those who engaged with that framing became the Polish half of the cohort.

Recruiting the Ukrainian coaches: a peer-referral approach

Recruiting the Ukrainian half of each Tandem could have been approached as a separate, parallel process - a top-down campaign through Ukrainian community organisations, online appeals, or referrals from refugee support networks. Instead, the project chose a different route, and it turned out to be one of the most important methodological decisions of the early phase.

Each Polish coach who had agreed to join the project was asked to draw on their own community connections - friends, neighbours, acquaintances, fellow parents - to identify a Ukrainian counterpart who fit the same character profile. The logic was simple: a Polish coach already trusted in their neighbourhood knew who the trustworthy Ukrainian candidates around them were, often in ways no external recruiter could discover.

The approach worked. Most Polish coaches returned with viable candidates, and when a Polish coach did not find anyone, SZS Wrocław stepped in to support. It demonstrated the strength of informal community networks in the city, and it produced a level of personal investment in the partnerships that a more formal process might not have generated. By the time the two coaches met to begin training, they were already linked by a mutual connection, not by a placement decision.

A side note: initially, the plan was to recruit the Ukrainian tandem coaches from among the freshly arrived refugees, which could have been a form of support for them - a way to help them find their footing in a new situation. After several interviews and discussions, we learned this was not the best option. Many newly arrived refugees did not yet know what their plans were: whether they were staying in Wrocław, and whether they could commit to such a long-term engagement. More importantly, they did not yet feel comfortable in the city, and they did not speak Polish, which would not allow them to communicate with their tandem coach or the Polish children. The recruitment process therefore focused instead on Ukrainians who had already been settled in Wrocław for some time and whose Polish was good enough to communicate. And it was apparent from the very first meeting with them that this would not be only work for them as tandem coaches; it felt that, with this project, they had been given the opportunity to take on a mission and help their compatriots in a meaningful way.

Who they were, how they were recruited, what they brought

Piotr i Uliana | Yelyzaveta i Daniel | Mariia i Marcin | Ula i Uliana

Nikola i Snizhana | Denis i Wojciech | Aleksandra i Vadym | Andriij i Oktawiusz

Inna i Grzegorz | Rafał i Mykoła | Michał i Anastazja

The 22 coaches who turned up

The cohort that emerged from this process was deliberately diverse - diverse not just in nationality, but in age, gender, profession and life experience.

The Polish coaches were, in the main, experienced educators, instructors and teachers with prior involvement in Trener Osiedlowy (en. Neighborhood coach). Many of them taught physical education in schools, ran neighbourhood sport programmes, or worked with children in other capacities. Their professional grounding was in structured, organised sport - and that grounding gave the Tandems a reliable backbone of pedagogical method.

The Ukrainian coaches came from a wider variety of professional backgrounds. Some were experienced physical-education teachers from Ukraine; others had worked in completely different fields and were drawn to the project by their own commitment to sport, to children, or to their community. What they shared was a passion for the work, a willingness to do something new in a country that was still relatively new to them, and the cultural fluency the Tandem Model depended on.

Chapter 7: The Tandem Coaches

Who they were, how they were recruited, what they brought

That diversity of professional formation turned out to be one of the cohort's strengths. The experienced teachers brought structured pedagogical method; the coaches from other fields brought fresh perspectives, creativity, and a readiness to step outside conventional frames. Each Tandem complemented itself - not just culturally, but in terms of skills, methods, and ways of seeing children.

The first organisational meeting

The first organisational meeting after recruitment was, in retrospect, more important than its modest description suggests. It was held in a deliberately neutral space, in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere, with an emphasis on people getting to know one another rather than on agenda items being worked through.

The reasoning was straightforward. Let's Play Together was about asking twenty-two people from two countries to work in pairs, week after week, in some of Wrocław's busiest neighbourhoods, often in conditions where things would not go to plan. That kind of work cannot be sustained on the basis of contracts alone. It requires personal connection - Tandem to Tandem, coach to coach. The first meeting was the project's first investment in that connection. Everything that followed at the Coaching for Community Camp in Trzebnica built on it.

What this kind of work selects for

It is worth pausing on what the recruitment process - and the cohort it produced - tells us about the kind of person this work selects for. Looking at the 22 coaches who carried the project, the qualities that came through were not the qualities of competitive coaches. They were the qualities of community practitioners: openness, patience, curiosity about other people, comfort with mess, and a quiet willingness to keep showing up.

The project asked a lot of them. It asked them to absorb new methodologies (trauma-informed coaching, mental-health first aid), to build a working relationship with a partner from another country in a language neither necessarily fully shared, to pay attention to children in ways traditional sport coaching does not always demand, and to do all of this over the course of a long, often weather-affected year. And because sessions were open, free and drop-in, the Tandem Coaches never knew exactly which children - or how many - would turn up at the next session. That demanded a great deal of flexibility and adaptability, week after week.

What is most telling is what the cohort looked like at the end of the year. Of the **21 coaches interviewed** for the project's evaluation, every one of them expressed a commitment to continuing this kind of work, and the cohort gave the experience an internal satisfaction score of **4.64 out of 5**.

From people to preparation

The chapters that follow describe how this group of 22 was prepared (the Coaching for Community Camp) and how their work unfolded across eleven Wrocław neighbourhoods over the following nine months. Both stories begin and end with the same observation: methodology matters, but people make the difference. The Tandem Coaching Model is, at its best, a careful frame around the work that the right people, in the right pairs, do anyway.

Chapter 7: The Tandem Coaches

Who they were, how they were recruited, what they brought

A cohort that stayed

One last observation about the coaches before turning to their preparation. In a field where workforce churn is normal, Let's Play Together came close to keeping its full cohort together for the full year. Of the 22 Tandem Coaches recruited and employed by SZS Wroclaw, only one had to leave the project during its run.

The remaining twenty-one carried the work from the Coaching for Community Camp in February 2025 through to the final sessions in the autumn - through weather, school calendars, and the ordinary turbulence of nine months of community work. That retention rate is, on its own, one of the project's quieter pieces of evidence that the model held.

Chapter 8: The Coaching for Community Camp

How the team was built - and prepared - for the year ahead

Chapter 8: The Coaching for Community Camp

How the team was built - and prepared - for the year ahead

Recruitment had produced 22 Tandem Coaches and 40 youth Coach Assistants. What happened next determined whether this cohort would arrive on a Wrocław pitch in March 2025 with the skills the Tandem Coaching Model required, the relationships to sustain a year of weekly sessions together, and the shared frame of reference that would let twenty-two people from two countries operate as a coherent project rather than as eleven independent pairs.

The answer was the Coaching for Community Camp - a week-long, residential preparatory training held in Trzebnica, a town just outside Wrocław, from 1 to 8 February 2025. It was the project's first large-scale public moment, its first investment in cohort-building at scale, and the foundation on which everything that followed in 2025 was built.

This chapter describes what the Camp set out to do, who delivered it, and what it produced.

The setting and the cohort

Trzebnica was chosen with care. The intention was to take the Tandem Coaches and the youth Coach Assistants out of their everyday Wrocław environment into a single shared setting where they would, for one full week, eat together, train together, learn together, and grow into a team. A close-by location made this practical without raising costs to the level of a more distant residential venue.

Almost 100 people came together in Trzebnica that week. The cohort included the newly recruited Tandem Coaches, 40 aspiring youth Coach Assistants drawn from Wrocław schools, plus international experts, chaperones, professional interpreters, and the V4SPORT staff coordinating the event. It was, in short, the largest single moment of Let's Play Together - the only point in the project at which everyone working on it was in the same room at the same time.

3 **working languages with simultaneous interpretation**

6 **countries represented in the expert delegation**

7 **organizations represented in the expert delegation**

8 **days of intensive workshops and integration**

+100 **participants including 22 Tandem Coaches and 40 aspiring youth Coach Assistants**

Chapter 8: The Coaching for Community Camp

How the team was built - and prepared - for the year ahead

What the Camp set out to do

The Camp had three deliberate purposes:

To equip the Tandem Coaches with the specialist skills the work required

Most of the coaches arriving in Trzebnica had years of community-sport experience, but few had been trained specifically in trauma-informed coaching, mental-health first aid, or the use of sport as a tool for psychosocial recovery. The Camp curriculum was designed to close that gap intensively, in a single concentrated week, before the coaches went into the field.

To forge the cohort into a team

Twenty-two people who had only just met needed to become a working community by the end of the week - not just acquainted, but bonded enough to support one another through ten months of often-difficult work. That kind of cohesion does not come from agendas; it comes from shared experiences, late-night conversations, and small acts of interdependence. The Camp was designed to produce all three.

To develop the youth Coach Assistants as future community leaders

The 40 young people who joined the Camp came from the different schools across the city with a good balance of polish and ukrainian kids - boys and girls. One boy had roots in the Gulf country. They were genuine project participants in Trzebnica - taking part in the same workshops, working alongside the international experts, and being treated as a parallel cohort with its own developmental track. The Camp was an investment in the next generation of community-sport practitioners as much as in the current one.

How the team was built - and prepared - for the year ahead

The expert-led curriculum

The substantive content of the Camp was delivered by a deliberately international group of experts, brought together through **FHI 360** (which co-organised the event and led on the U.S. delegation) and through **ISCA's** networks. Each contributed a specific piece of the picture:

The Center for Healing and Justice Through Sport (CHJS) from the United States, led on healing-centred and trauma-informed coaching - equipping the Tandem Coaches to recognise and respond to children's stress and trauma reactions in supportive rather than disciplinary ways.

Edgework Consulting - United States also from the U.S., contributed on youth development and non-formal education methods, with particular attention to how sport-based environments can act as healing spaces in places where clinical mental-health care is hard to access.

Fútbol Más France brought their community-based methodology for social inclusion, including their distinctive green and blue card system that reframes the football pitch as a space for positive reinforcement rather than disciplinary control.

The **Olympic Refuge Foundation** offered a strategic perspective from a global organisation working at the intersection of sport and forced displacement.

The **Polish Red Cross (PCK)** anchored the curriculum in Poland's broader humanitarian-response infrastructure, ensuring coaches understood when and where to refer families needing support beyond what sport sessions could provide.

The **Red Cross Red Crescent Movement MHPSS Hub** based in Copenhagen, equipped coaches with mental-health first-aid tools and frameworks for working with children in humanitarian settings.

StreetGames the UK charity behind doorstep-delivery sport in disadvantaged communities, focused particularly on the youth Coach Assistants - supporting them to take up active leadership roles in their own neighbourhoods.

How the team was built - and prepared - for the year ahead

The curriculum combined theoretical sessions, practical workshops, and activities co-developed by the experts on the ground. Most sessions ran simultaneously in two languages - Polish and English - through professional interpreters who allowed everyone in the room to participate equally regardless of which of those languages they were strongest in. When needed, though only occasionally, participants themselves also provided interpretation to and from Ukrainian.

What the week produced for the Tandem Coaches

The structured feedback collected from the Tandem Coaches at the end of the week, and again in interviews months later, points to three things the Camp actually produced.

The first was specialist knowledge they did not have before. Coaches reported receiving „a lot of practical and psychological knowledge about self-regulation, calming children, conducting sessions, and work methods" - the technical core of what trauma-informed coaching actually means in practice.

The second, perhaps more important, was cohesion and motivation. Several coaches described the Camp as a „source of inspiration, motivation and self-belief," and as the moment when they fully understood the deeper social goals of the project beyond the surface of sports coaching. The immersive, week-long format successfully integrated the team of coaches; participants learned about „different cultures, approaches and ways of working with children." Crucially, the Camp was where the eleven Polish-Ukrainian Tandem pairs began to gel as working relationships - the bonding that was indispensable for the smooth functioning of the Tandems through the rest of the year.

The third, honestly reported back, was a realistic critique of the limits of the curriculum. Not all of the games and methodologies introduced by international experts translated cleanly into the energy levels and cultural contexts of the children the Tandem Coaches would later be working with in Wrocław, and Tandem Coaches understood they would need to adapt them to their own local settings. The schedule was demanding - coaches noted that there was „limited time for non-formal integration" toward the end of the week - and several recommended that future iterations balance the intensity with more breathing room.

How the team was built - and prepared - for the year ahead

What the week produced for the youth Coach Assistants

The 40 young people from Wrocław who joined arrived as recruited volunteers; they left as something closer to a peer community of their own. The Camp was their primary involvement with Let's Play Together. It was an investment in the future local youth community leaders. They took part fully in the workshops, worked alongside the international experts, and gained an early experience of cross-cultural collaboration that many described as formative.

Asked at the end of the week to describe the Camp in single words, they reached for terms like „fun," „integration," „best," and „friends." Asked about their future involvement, 33 of the 40 expressed a strong desire to continue with the project in some form.

The signals beyond the content

What made the Camp work - what international experts observing it specifically noted - was not only the content but the texture of the week. Several details mattered more than they might appear to.

Every participant received a starter pack on arrival: colour-coded t-shirts, sport bag, hoodies, and essential training materials. The clothing was a small, deliberate choice. It established visual equality among all coaches regardless of background, signalled belonging to a single project from day one, and was later worn consistently in the field - a quiet thread of continuity from Trzebnica to a Wrocław school pitch. By the end of the week, we could hear from the Tandem Coaches, the youths and the organisers and partners was that they will wear this with pride.

Professional simultaneous interpretation across two languages (polish and english) meant that language was not a barrier to anyone's participation. Whenever needed the translation to Ukrainian has also been provided by the volunteers who spoke the languages. It was striking, and noted by several international experts, that a curriculum delivered partly in English could be received in real time by Polish and Ukrainian coaches in their own respective languages.

Chapter 8: The Coaching for Community Camp

How the team was built - and prepared - for the year ahead

> ***V4Sport Foundation staff left no stone unturned to create a sense of belonging through a wrap-around approach to ensure life-changing experiences took place."***
>
> Kelly Burdett, StreetGames

The international experts themselves described the V4SPORT-led organisation of the Camp in unusual terms: „outstanding," „professionalism and grace," „a wrap-around approach to ensure life-changing experiences took place" (Kelly Burdett, StreetGames); „a safe space for everyone who attended" (Rhiannon Sheen de Jesus, StreetGames).

These are unsolicited testimonials from practitioners who attend many such events. They are useful evidence that the Camp succeeded in creating, briefly, the kind of environment the project would then ask the Tandem Coaches to recreate, in miniature, in every neighbourhood session over the following nine months.

From Trzebnica to the pitches

The Camp ended on 8 February 2025. Within weeks, the Tandem Coaches were running their first open sessions on Wrocław pitches. They carried with them the technical content of the curriculum, the relationships they had built with their Tandem partner and the wider cohort, and the specific feel of a week designed to model the kind of inclusive, safe, generously held environment they would now be asked to create for children, week after week, across eleven neighbourhoods.

The next chapter describes how that work unfolded.

Chapter 9: The Sessions

The year on Wrocław pitches

Within weeks of the Coaching for Community Camp, the Tandems were back in Wrocław and running their first sessions. Before they did that, SZS Wroclaw with the support of V4Sport Foundation provided the necessary links between the Tandem Coaches and local organisations, mostly schools - which pitches they were going to use.

From there, every Tandem pair settled into a rhythm of two or three sessions a week in their assigned neighbourhood, often in the same parks and school pitches their Polish partners had been working in for years. Over the **eight months that followed**, between March and October 2025, that rhythm produced **1,001 completed sessions** across **eleven Wrocław neighbourhoods**, totalling roughly **2,010 hours of direct community-level integration work** with children.

This chapter describes what those sessions looked like.

The formula: free, open and drop-in

The most important design choice, as this was a pilot project to test this approach, about the sessions, as set out in Chapter 6, was that they had no barrier to entry. There was no enrollment, no fee, no registration, no need to justify an absence, and no requirement to attend on any particular schedule. Any child - Polish, Ukrainian, or otherwise - could simply turn up at the announced time and place in comfortable clothes and join in.

That openness was a deliberate methodological commitment, not a logistical convenience. It was the only way the project could realistically reach the children who needed it most: those whose families could not afford fees or equipment, those new in the neighbourhood, those whose schedules were unpredictable, and - critically - Ukrainian children outside the Polish school system who would have been invisible to any sign-up-based programme.

In practice, the openness also meant that the project welcomed children of any background, not only Polish and Ukrainian. The vast majority of participants were Polish or Ukrainian, by design and by neighbourhood demographics; but children from other countries and other linguistic backgrounds also turned up, and were treated exactly the same as the rest of the group. The sessions were not closed to anyone.

The flip side of this commitment was uncertainty. Tandems never knew exactly which children would turn up, or how many, until the session began. A coach might prepare for ten and find twenty; might prepare for an even split and find a group skewed heavily towards one nationality; might find a regular core next to two new arrivals who needed to be welcomed without disrupting the established group's flow. Adapting on the fly, every session, was part of the job.

The year on Wrocław pitches

Eleven neighbourhoods, chosen with care

The eleven neighbourhoods in which Tandems were placed were not picked at random. WCRS, in close cooperation with the information provided by the City of Wrocław's Education Department and SZS Wroclaw, applied three overlapping criteria to the choice:

Proximity to schools with high numbers of Ukrainian-speaking pupils

Identified through the city's education data, these were the schools where Ukrainian children were already congregating during the day, and where their Polish classmates were therefore the most natural pool of session participants.

An existing presence of a Neighbourhood Coach

Where a Trener Osiedlowy already worked, the Tandem inherited a community presence rather than building one from scratch. This continuity, more than any other factor, was what allowed the sessions to fill up faster than they otherwise would have done.

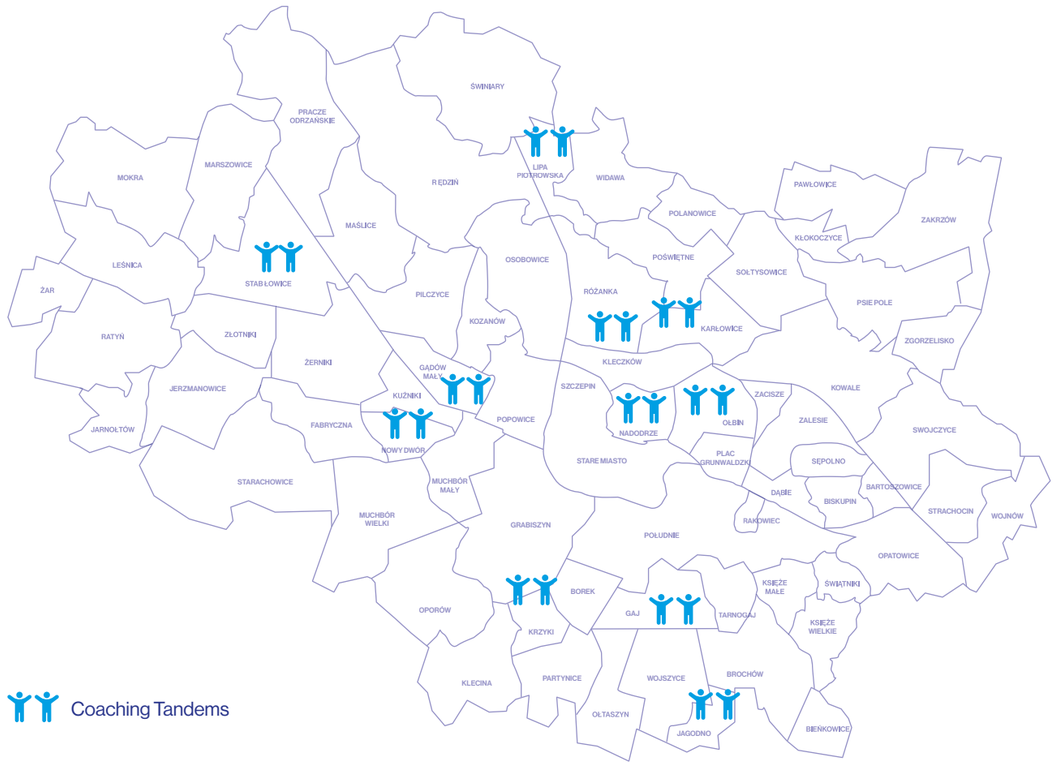
Accessibility to ESK Parks

Several of the eleven neighbourhoods sit in or beside an ESK Park - the network of public-space pavilions managed by WCRS that already host community sport, cultural, and educational events on weekends. Co-locating Tandem sessions with ESK Parks meant the activity inherited an established trusted setting.

Chapter 9: The Sessions

The year on Wrocław pitches

The result was a deliberate spread across the city - from Stabłowice in the north-west, through Szczepin and Popowice closer to the centre, into Brochów and Jagodno in the south, with eleven Tandem pairs at eleven distinct sites.



Coaching Tandems

What a session looked like

The Tandem Coaches had real autonomy in choosing the form of each session - and that autonomy was deliberate, given how different the eleven neighbourhoods were. Despite that freedom, most sessions followed a recognisable shape:

A short, warm welcome at the gate of the pitch, with the Polish coach often greeting the children by name and the Ukrainian coach offering the same greeting in Ukrainian (and, for some children, Russian). A loose check-in: who was here today, who was new, what was everyone's mood. A warm-up that mixed the physical and the social - light running, easy passing, and small games designed to break the ice between newcomers and regulars. A main activity, often football, sometimes a different sport, sometimes a structured game lifted from the Camp curriculum (Fútbol Más's green and blue cards; CHJS's healing-centred drills). A short cooldown, with the coaches asking how the children felt about what they had just done - and, when the moment was right, allowing a quieter conversation on the side with a child who needed it.

The two coaches, as Chapter 6 described, divided the work between them - one holding the technical structure, the other holding the emotional landscape. In practice, those roles drifted and swapped throughout a session. What stayed constant was that two adults were always paying attention, between them, to all of the children.

Chapter 9: The Sessions

The year on Wrocław pitches

Working alone, learning together

For most of the week, every Tandem pair worked alone - in their own neighbourhood, with their own group of children, on their own pitch. That separation was structural: the model needs Tandems to be embedded locally, recognised by name in the community they serve, and present in the same place often enough to become a fixture. But it also meant a Tandem Coach in Brochów could not easily see what a Tandem in another location was doing differently, and a coach struggling with a particular conflict on her pitch might not know that another Tandem had already worked through the same problem on theirs.

For this reason SZS Wroclaw organised a series of additional activities. One was the supervision visits to the Tandem Coaches by SZS Expert during their session, and also Tandem Coaches joined events, to which tandem coaches would come with their groups of kids, therefore enabling for vertical and horizontal Tandem Coaches feedback and learning, teambuilding and psychological-workshop supervision meetings, held throughout the implementation period. At each of these meetings, the eleven Tandem pairs stepped out of the field, exchanged experiences, discussed challenges and solutions, and received continued specialist input beyond what the Camp had delivered.

The meetings did two things in parallel:

Feedback and methodology refinement

Coaches reported back to SZS Wrocław and to one another on what was working in their sessions and what was not, and reflected on how the Camp curriculum held up in practice. This running stream of practitioner feedback is a major reason the v.1 Playbook produced at the start of the project could be refined into the version you are reading now.

Team-building

The cohort that had bonded so strongly at Trzebnica needed continued reasons to meet as a group rather than as eleven separate pairs. The meetings preserved the sense of shared purpose that the Camp had created, and made sure no Tandem felt isolated in their neighbourhood.

Across the implementation period, the project delivered a series of such meetings - at least the eight committed to in the original proposal - supplemented by dozens of bilateral and small-group conversations between V4SPORT and the Tandems. The cumulative effect was a cohort that worked alone in their neighbourhoods but never alone as practitioners.

The year on Wrocław pitches

What it looked like in practice

The Tandem Coaches who were interviewed for the project's evaluation described a year shaped less by dramatic moments than by hundreds of small ones - the gradual settling-in of children who had been wary at first, the slow easing of language barriers, the appearance, week by week, of new faces brought along by older siblings or friends. As one coach put it: „The project is based on the principle of integration through pleasant sports fun and games, and not on forcing children to participate in joint activities." The looseness was the method, not its absence.

> ***"The project is based on the principle of integration through pleasant sports fun and games, and not on forcing children to participate in joint activities."***
>
> Tandem Coach, in evaluation interview

The Tandem Model produced a structural outcome that the coaches kept noticing: the simple presence of two adults, paying attention together, made it possible to reach children that single-coach sessions reliably miss. As one coach observed: „It is easier to address individual, unengaged participants and provide them with emotional support. The support between coaches in tandem allows for better engagement of children and devoting more time to them." This is the zero-exclusion approach the project aimed at: a session in which no child, regardless of age, gender, background, or sporting experience, was left at the edge.

The realities of delivery

It would be misleading to describe the year only in terms of what worked. Delivering 1,001 sessions across eleven neighbourhoods over nine months also revealed the friction points that any city or organisation thinking of replicating the model should expect.

Weather

Weather was the single biggest operational factor. Most of the Tandems' pitches were outdoor, and many lacked lighting; bad weather and the early autumn dusk on some occasions forced cancellations. The need to book indoor facilities two months in advance - against a pre-existing club and school calendar that was already largely committed - was a structural constraint.

The football preference

The football preference was hard to dislodge. Children - particularly older boys - overwhelmingly wanted to play football, and Tandems had to develop creative strategies to introduce variety: traditional games, group challenges, dance and movement sessions, structured cooperative games drawn from the Camp curriculum.

Chapter 9: The Sessions

The year on Wrocław pitches

Authority dynamics

Authority dynamics showed up where they always do. Younger female coaches reported needing to invest extra effort in establishing their authority with older male participants, particularly on pitches where the dominant culture is competitive boys' football.

Trust took time to build

Initial sessions in some neighbourhoods drew very small numbers, with attendance growing only as the Tandem's presence became familiar. This is the normal shape of community-rooted work, but it is worth flagging for any city assuming that integration sessions will fill up the moment they are advertised. They will not. They fill up when families decide, week by week, that the people running them can be trusted.

What the year built

By December 2025, the eleven Tandems had produced more than the sum of their sessions. They had built local presence - by the end of the year, the Tandem Coaches were known figures in their neighbourhoods, recognised by parents and the schools. . They had built a working community of practice that has now begun feeding the methodology back into the Trener Osiedlowy (eng. Neighbourhood Coach) programme. And they had built, with the children themselves, the kind of relationships that the four project goals from Chapter 4 set out to produce: relationships between two communities that, three years earlier, had been living side by side in Wrocław but mostly playing apart.

The sessions themselves are over for the pilot phase. What they produced - in skills, in connections, in evidence, and in this Playbook - continues. The next chapter describes how that work was communicated to the families who needed to know it existed.

Chapter 10: Letting Kids and Families Know

Communication at community level

A trained cohort of Tandem Coaches, eleven well-chosen pitches, a schedule of two or three sessions a week - none of this is much use if the children the project was designed to reach do not know it exists. Once the Coaching for Community Camp ended in early February 2025, Let's Play Together faced a different challenge: making sure that, by the time the first session opened in March, kids and youth across eleven Wrocław neighbourhoods knew where to come, when, and what to bring with them.

This chapter describes the project's community-level communication - the work done to reach Polish, Ukrainian, and other families directly, in their everyday lives.

A central hub: play-together.eu

The first decision was that there had to be a single, easy-to-find place where any family in Wrocław could discover what sessions were happening, where, and when. That place was the project's dedicated website, play-together.eu.

The site was deliberately practical rather than promotional. Its centrepiece was an interactive map of Wrocław displaying every Tandem's pitch, the regular days and times of their sessions, and a short profile of the pair running them. Families could find their nearest session in a few clicks; new arrivals to the city could see at a glance whether anything was running near them. Alongside the map, the site hosted project information, photo galleries from sessions and the Camp, video material, and contact details - all available in formats accessible from a phone.

The website was not the only channel, but it was the hub everything else pointed to. Posters carried its address. Tandem Coaches mentioned it to parents. Letters to schools referred to it. It became the place where, week by week, schedule changes were posted and kept current.

SZS Wroclaw also supported **play-together.eu** with sharing the links to the website on their website dedicated to the Neighborhood coach.

Communication at community level

Posters in the places families already go

Information on a website only reaches people who go looking for it. Many of the families the project most wanted to reach - particularly Ukrainian families outside the Polish school system - were unlikely to do that. So the project also worked outwards, into the spaces where families spend their days.

Each Tandem Coach was given a stack of printed posters and asked to put them up in their own neighbourhood: in the schools, the neighbourhood community centres, the Local Activity Centres (CALs), the ESK Park pavilions, the libraries, and the community hubs that families pass through routinely. The posters were branded consistently, in Polish and Ukrainian, and pointed to the website for full details.

The advantage of this distribution model was that the people putting up the posters were the same people who would be running the sessions. A community-centre coordinator who took a poster from a Tandem Coach was not just receiving a piece of paper - they were meeting the person whose face would be on the pitch the following week. That coupling of communication and human contact was deliberate.

Through the school system

For the Ukrainian children already enrolled in Polish schools, the most efficient route to families was through the schools themselves. Wrocław's Education Department, working with WCRS, had already identified which schools served the largest numbers of Ukrainian-speaking pupils - the same data that had informed the choice of Tandem locations.

Two pieces of formal communication followed. A letter went to the **Head of the Education Department of the City of Wrocław**, asking the department to support cooperation between Tandem Coaches and the schools in their catchment areas. Targeted emails were then sent to school principals in those neighbourhoods, introducing the project, naming the local Tandem, and asking that information about sessions be shared with pupils and their families.

SZS Wroclaw also communicated directly with the schools' principals.

This route worked. Where school principals engaged actively - sharing information through class teachers, pinning posters on parent boards, mentioning sessions at school assemblies - attendance at the local Tandem's sessions grew faster than where the school remained passive. The project's experience confirmed something many local-government readers will already suspect: a school principal's quiet endorsement does more for attendance at a community sport session than almost any external communication can.

Reaching parents directly

A specific concern of the project from the proposal stage was reaching parents - and in particular Ukrainian mothers, who in the majority of refugee families were the parents making the day-to-day decisions about whether a child attended a free, drop-in session run by people the family had not yet met.

Chapter 10: Letting Kids and Families Know

Communication at community level

Polish and Ukrainian language outreach through schools and community centres reached most Polish parents naturally. For Ukrainian mothers, the project relied more heavily on the informal information networks the Ukrainian community in Wrocław had built since 2022. The result was that, once the first sessions had taken place and a few families had attended, word of mouth among Ukrainian mothers became one of the most reliable sources of new participants. Children brought their friends; mothers told other mothers; a Tandem Coach noticed at a session that someone new had arrived because their neighbour had recommended it. The same pattern, on a smaller scale, played out among parents from other backgrounds - sessions were open to any child of any nationality, and that openness reached families through the same word-of-mouth channels.

A built-in advantage: ESK Parks and Trener Osiedlowy

Two pieces of pre-existing local infrastructure made the project's communication work easier than it would otherwise have been. The first was the Trener Osiedlowy network itself. Each Polish Tandem Coach came from this network and was, in many cases, an already-known face on the pitch they were now staffing. Parents who had seen the same coach work with neighbourhood children for years did not need to be persuaded of the project's seriousness. The handover from a familiar Trener Osiedlowy presence to a Tandem-led format was, for many neighbourhoods, almost seamless.

The second was ESK Parks. Several Tandems delivered sessions in or alongside the ESK Park network - the WCRS-managed system of public-space pavilions that has been hosting community events in Wrocław since 2015. ESK Parks bring their own audiences to a location: families on a weekend walk, neighbours coming for a cultural event, children already used to using the space for play. Co-locating with an ESK Park meant Tandem sessions were visible to families who had not specifically come looking for them, and that became one of the project's most reliable sources of first-time attendance.

Communication at community level

When something went wrong: the cancellation issue

The most useful piece of communication infrastructure the project added during the year was unplanned, and arose from a problem.

Early in the implementation period, a small number of sessions had to be cancelled at short notice - usually because of weather. The fix was a real-time online schedule, hosted on the project's website and reinforced through each Tandem's own social channels, that allowed last-minutese changes to reach families before they left home. From the point this was in place, the cancellation problem effectively disappeared. The lesson - that any open, drop-in programme of this kind needs a tested mechanism for communicating changes in real time - is one of the more practical takeaways from the year.

A wider Wrocław audience: the Świdnicka exhibition and Radio Rodzina

Alongside the neighbourhood-level outreach described above, the project pursued two further pieces of communication aimed at a broader Wrocław public.

The first was an outdoor exhibition on Świdnicka Street, installed from 7 to 25 April 2025 on one of Wrocław's busiest pedestrian thoroughfares, just steps from the market square. Twelve display boards carried photographs of all eleven Polish-Ukrainian Tandem pairs, each accompanied by a short profile of the coaches. With an estimated 15,000 passers-by every day, the exhibition reached residents and families who had not encountered the project through any other channel - Polish parents whose children might join a session, Ukrainian families newer to the city, and the wider Wrocław public.

The exhibition served two purposes simultaneously. It was a visible piece of public recognition for the coaches themselves - several of them later described the boost in motivation that came from being publicly profiled - and it was a strong-signal endorsement of the project, mounted in one of the most prominent public spaces in the city. The exhibition's content was widely shared through social media and reused in promotional materials throughout the rest of the year.

Chapter 10: Letting Kids and Families Know

Communication at community level

The second was an interview on **Radio Rodzina** on **17 June 2025**, ahead of the summer vacation, in which **Jakub Kalinowski** (V4SPORT President) and **Inna Kunitska**, a Tandem Coach, spoke about the origins of the project, the Polish-Ukrainian Tandem Model, and the impact of open, integrative sport on children. They emphasised that the sessions were free, open to children from any background, and required no prior registration; Inna Kunitska also shared her personal experience of more than three years of work towards Polish-Ukrainian integration, and underlined sport as the most effective and natural tool the children themselves could use to build connection across cultural lines. The recording remains available on Radio Rodzina's website.

The interview reached an audience that overlapped only partly with the audience of the exhibition: Polish Wrocław residents who follow local radio, and through them, families who might otherwise have passed a poster in a school corridor without noticing. It also extended the project's voice from the visual into the conversational - letting the public hear, in their own words, the people behind the work.

Closing reflection

By the end of the year, the project's community-level communication had moved from a mix of formal channels (website, school letters, posters) and city-wide tools (the Świdnicka exhibition, the Radio Rodzina interview) to something closer to a self-sustaining local rhythm: families telling families, mothers telling mothers, children bringing children, schools mentioning sessions to pupils, ESK Park visitors discovering activities they had not been looking for. That shift - from announcing the project to being part of the neighbourhood - is the harder, slower outcome that any community-level communication strategy should ultimately be aiming at.

Chapter 11: Ethics and Safeguarding

The non-negotiable foundations of working with children

A project that brings together vulnerable children - refugee or otherwise - with adults who are, in many cases, new to them, in public spaces where attendance is fluid and oversight is by definition lighter than in a school, has a single non-negotiable obligation: those children must be safe, in every sense of the word, every time they come.

This chapter sets out the framework that Let's Play Together worked within, and that any city, sport organisation, or NGO replicating the model will need to put in place from day one.

Employing the Tandem Coaches

For Let's Play Together, the question of how to employ, supervise, and stand behind 22 Tandem Coaches working in eleven Wrocław neighbourhoods was answered by the partnership itself. As Chapter 5 described, the consortium was deliberately built so that each partner brought a specific area of expertise - and the experience of professionally employing community coaches in Wrocław belonged to Wrocławski Szkolny Związek Sportowy (SZS Wroclaw).

SZS Wroclaw had been doing this work for over twenty years through the Trener Osiedlowy programme. Within the LPT consortium it took on the same role for the project's coaches: each of the 22 Tandem Coaches signed an individual civil-law contract (umowa zlecenie - eng. civil-law commission contract) with SZS Wroclaw. By placing coach employment inside SZS's tested institutional infrastructure - contracts, payroll, insurance, supervision lines, and SZS's own published child-protection standards - the project inherited a professional framework on day one rather than building a parallel one from scratch under the time pressure of an emergency-response grant. Responsibility for the project as a whole remained with the full consortium; SZS Wroclaw's specific contribution was the operational and employment backbone that made the rest of the safeguarding architecture work.

The non-negotiable foundations of working with children

The Polish legal floor

Since February 2024, Polish law has required all institutions working with minors - schools, sport clubs, NGOs, summer camps, and any project of LPT's kind - to adopt and publish written Standardy Ochrony Małoletnich (eng. Standards for the Protection of Minors). At minimum, these standards must cover:

- **Personnel safeguarding, including the requirement that staff and volunteers obtain a clean criminal-record certificate (Krajowy Rejestr Karny, KRK - eng. National Criminal Register) and be checked against the Register of Sex Offenders against Minors (Rejestr Sprawców Przestępstw na Tle Seksualnym, RSPnTS - eng. Register of Sex Offenders against Minors).**
- **A code of conduct** governing communication, contact, and relationships between adults and children.
- **Recognition of warning signs** of harm.
- **Intervention procedures, including the Niebieska Karta (eng. Blue Card) (Blue Card) procedure where suspected abuse is involved.**
- **Handling of complaints and accusations.**
- **A designated child-protection officer.**

For Polish municipalities and NGOs replicating the LPT model, this is a legal duty, not a project preference. The Tandem Coaching format does not exempt anyone from it; in fact, the open-access, drop-in nature of the sessions raises the bar for protection rather than lowering it.

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SZS Wroclaw's Standardy Ochrony Małoletnich

SZS Wroclaw's own Standardy Ochrony Małoletnich - referred to throughout this chapter as the SOM - is a 21-page document organised across seven chapters:

I. Definitions of terms

II. Safe-relations principles (between staff and children, and between children themselves)

III. Intervention procedures when child safety is at risk

IV. Rules for the protection of a child's image

V. Internet safety

VI. Evaluation of the standards

VII. Publication and accessibility of the standards

Every Tandem Coach was bound by this framework from the moment they signed their agreement with SZS. The full text is published by SZS Wroclaw in line with Chapter VII's accessibility requirement, and any organisation interested in replicating the LPT model - Polish or otherwise - will find it a useful working example of how a Polish Standardy Ochrony Małoletnich document is structured in practice.

What follows is a summary of the parts that bore most directly on the work of the Tandem Coaches.

What this meant in practice

Before deployment: recruitment safeguards

Under the SOM, every coach taking up an SZS contract that involves working with children must, before starting:

- **Provide a clean criminal-record certificate (KRK) and clearance from the RSPnTS sex-offender registry;**
- **Sign a written declaration confirming they have read and committed to comply with the SOM;**
- **Sign a declaration of countries of residence over the previous twenty years (so that equivalent;**
- **criminal-record information can be obtained from any non-Polish jurisdictions);**
- **Sign a declaration of no convictions for crimes against children.**

These declarations are attached either to the personnel file or directly to the umowa zlecenie itself. Without them, a coach cannot be deployed.

Chapter 11: Ethics and Safeguarding

The non-negotiable foundations of working with children

Communication with children

The SOM sets out specific rules for adult-to-child communication during sessions. Among the most relevant for Tandem Coach work:

- **Children are activated and treated equally regardless of physical condition, gender, sexual orientation, ability or disability, social, ethnic, cultural, religious, or worldview background.**
- **Coaches use fair play rules and encourage the same in children.**
- **The well-being and joy of children doing sport come first; coaches do not pressure children to win at any cost or shame them for losses.**
- **Coaches address children by name, not by surname or jersey number.**
- **Shaming, humiliation, mocking, raising one's voice (other than in service of safety), or revealing sensitive information about a child to anyone unauthorised is prohibited.**
- **Vulgar language, suggestive remarks, alcohol, tobacco, or illegal substances around children are prohibited.**

Physical contact

Physical contact is permitted only where necessary for the child (a hand on a shoulder, an instructional touch, a spotted gymnastic move) and only on the basis of clear principles: proportionate to need, age- and culturally-appropriate, never hidden, and never linked to any form of reward or power. Sleeping in the same bed or the same room as a child - outside immediate family relationships - is explicitly prohibited.

Contact outside sessions.

Coaches may not invite children to their homes, meet them outside session hours. Where remote communication with children is needed, it goes through service channels (work email, work phone), and parents must be present in any group communicator.

Conduct between children

The SOM also sets rules for how children should treat one another, which Tandem Coaches were expected to enforce on the pitch: no name-calling, no insulting comments, no bullying or exclusion, no privacy violations, no recording or sharing another child's image without consent. Where conflicts arose, the procedure is to calm the situation, hear both sides, find a peaceful resolution, and - where needed - escalate to the coach.

Chapter 11: Ethics and Safeguarding

The non-negotiable foundations of working with children

Reporting concerns

SZS Wroclaw's SOM names four standing officers responsible for child protection within the organisation: an officer responsible for SOM oversight, an officer responsible for internet safety, an officer responsible for receiving and acting on reports, and an officer responsible for designing support plans for affected children. Tandem Coaches who witnessed or were told about a possible incident were required to report to the named intervention officer and to make a written or email note (notatka służbowa - eng. official memo) of the concern. Where the situation involved a suspected criminal offence, Polish law required notification of the police; the Niebieska Karta procedure applied where appropriate.

Image protection

No child may be identifiably photographed or filmed without the explicit, written consent of a parent or guardian. The same rule applies to coaches photographing one another with children present. Image rights remain with the child and the family.

Internet safety

The SOM treats children's internet access during sport activities as the responsibility of the supervising staff. Coaches were required to monitor any phone or device use by children during sessions, prevent the recording or publication of children's images during activities, and remind participants of the importance of considered social-media use.

Training

SZS Wroclaw commits, through its SOM, to training all personnel on the standards before deployment, and to refreshing training at least every two years.

The non-negotiable foundations of working with children

What Let's Play Together added on top

SZS Wroclaw's SOM was the legal and institutional floor on which Tandem Coach work rested. Let's Play Together added three further layers above it.

Trauma-informed coaching practice, taught at the Coaching for Community Camp by international experts (the Center for Healing and Justice Through Sport, the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement MHPSS Hub, and others), and reinforced through the year at the supervision meetings. Working with refugee children carries safeguarding risks that go beyond what a generic SOM contemplates: a child who has lived through war reads situations differently, regulates emotion differently, and needs adults who are equipped to respond in supportive rather than disciplinary ways.

Mental-health first aid for the coaches themselves. The supervision meetings described in Chapter 9 included structured psychological input, recognising that adults working with traumatised children carry secondary load that needs structured release.

A deliberately minimal data footprint. Working with refugee children - many of whom were not enrolled in any institution, whose families' status was sensitive, and whose well-being could be harmed by even unintentional disclosure - Let's Play Together collected the minimum data necessary. No personal data was taken directly from children; attendance was logged in aggregate by the Tandem Coaches at the end of each session; the project's evaluation deliberately avoided direct interviews with children. Where any data was processed (the website, the schedule platform, communication channels), it was held by V4SPORT in line with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

Chapter 11: Ethics and Safeguarding

The non-negotiable foundations of working with children

A note for international readers

Polish Standardy Ochrony Małoletnich are one country-specific implementation of an internationally recognised set of safeguarding principles. Equivalent frameworks include the International **Safeguards for Children in Sport** (sportanddev.org / Keeping Children Safe), the **FIFA Guardians** safeguarding toolkit, the **UN Sport for Protection Toolkit** (UNHCR / IOC / Terre des hommes), and the **UEFA** and **UK Coaching** codes of practice. The legal architecture differs by country; the substantive requirements do not.

Any organisation replicating the Tandem Coaching Model should expect to operate within whichever legal framework binds them locally, and to add - as Let's Play Together did - the trauma-informed and mental-health-first-aid practice that the specific population of refugee children requires.

A floor, not a ceiling

The principles set out in this chapter are the minimum below which a project of this kind should never operate. They are not what makes Let's Play Together distinctive. They are what makes the rest of the model - the open sessions, the cross-cultural pairings, the trust-based local rooting - defensible to parents, to municipalities, and to the children themselves.

For any reader thinking about replicating the Tandem Coaching Model: this chapter is not the part you can adapt to local taste. It is the part you must put in place before the first poster goes up.

Chapter 12: Carrying It Forward

Sustainability and replication

Chapter 12: Carrying It Forward

Sustainability and replication

A pilot project is only as valuable as what it leaves behind. The 1,001 sessions delivered in 2025, the 22 coaches trained and deployed, the partnerships forged with WCRS, SZS Wroclaw, ISCA, FHI 360, and the international Camp experts - none of this matters in the long term unless something of it persists, in Wrocław, and unless what was learned travels to others.

This chapter describes what the project's sustainability looks like in practice, what is already travelling beyond Wrocław, and how the Playbook is meant to be used by cities, sport organisations, and NGOs thinking about doing similar work in their own contexts.

A Playbook is a kit, not a blueprint

Before anything else, one explicit point. The model described in this Playbook is not meant to be replicated in full, like a franchise. It was developed in one city, in response to one specific refugee crisis, with one set of partners, in one country's legal and institutional context. Replicators in Reykjavík, Lyon, Bucharest, or Łódź will face their own crises, their own communities, their own legal frameworks, and their own existing sport infrastructure. None of those contexts will be ours.

What the Playbook offers is a kit of elements - recruitable parts of the model, each tested in Wrocław, that other organisations can pick up and adapt in whatever combination makes sense for them. Some readers will find the Tandem Coaching pairing immediately applicable. Others will be more interested in the open, drop-in session formula. A municipal department may take the institutional architecture (consortium of city + sport federation + NGO) and leave the field-level methodology aside. A Camp-style preparation week may be the right answer for one city and overkill for another.

Treating the Playbook this way - as a kit of elements - is not a concession. It is the way replication actually works in this field. The wider sport-for-development community grew through partial adoption and adaptation, not through cookie-cutter rollout.

Let's Play Together hopes to take a place in that tradition.

Sustainability and replication

What is continuing in Wrocław

In Wrocław itself, the project's pilot phase has ended, but its presence in the city has not stopped.

The coaches

Some are integrating Tandem Coaching practices into their dayjobs as teachers, instructors, and educators in Wrocław's schools and community organisations. The cohort has not dispersed; it has redistributed itself, and the methodology has gone with it.

The infrastructure

The website, the city map of session locations, the partnerships with ESK Parks, the relationship with WCRS, the schools that worked with the Tandems - none of this has been dismantled. It remains available as the foundation for continued or expanded LPT-style activity, whether by V4SPORT, by SZS Wroclaw, or by any future iteration of the project that secures funding.

Future expansion

Let's Play Together's ambition at the local level is to reach more Wrocław neighbourhoods than the eleven the pilot served. V4SPORT, working with SZS Wroclaw and WCRS, will continue to engage city stakeholders to keep the model on the city's agenda and to mobilise the resources required for an expansion. V4SPORT is currently working on securing funding for future editions.

What is travelling nationally

In Poland, the Playbook is the project's most durable national legacy. It is intended to be a working resource for the sport organisations, local governments, and other stakeholders that face the same integration challenges as Wrocław - and that, increasingly, are thinking about how sport can be part of their response.

The dissemination work the project undertook during 2025 created the audience for that resource. Major Polish cities - through the Union of Polish Metropolises - have now been exposed to the Tandem Coaching Model. The Moving People - Moving Poland conference, the Polish Presidency of the EU Council showcase, and the relationships V4SPORT has built across the Polish sport-for-development sector mean that the Playbook is landing in places where it stands a real chance of being acted upon.

The replication conversation in Poland will be specific to the country's context. The legal framework set out in Chapter 11 is Polish; the Trener Osiedlowy backbone is a Wrocław speciality; the Ukrainian community is concentrated in the largest cities. None of this transfers automatically to Łódź, Białystok, or Lublin. What does transfer is the model's underlying logic - that mixed-nationality coaching pairs in low-threshold public sessions can do work no single municipal department is equipped for - and the practical machinery of how to organise it.

Chapter 12: Carrying It Forward

Sustainability and replication

What is travelling internationally

Outside Poland, two early replication conversations are already underway.

Iceland

Following an LPT showcase, an Icelandic organisation expressed strong interest in piloting the Tandem Coaching approach in Iceland. The interest is meaningful because Iceland has its own integration challenges - a large Polish community alongside Icelanders, plus a smaller but growing refugee population - and an established youth-sport infrastructure that the model could plug into. The same Tandem logic that brought Polish and Ukrainian children together in Wrocław could be used to bring Polish and Icelandic children together in Reykjavík or Akureyri.

France

Fútbol Más France - already a Camp partner, and one of the international experts who shaped LPT's methodology - has initiated discussions with V4SPORT about co-developing a project proposal to further refine and scale the methodology. This is a different kind of replication signal: not a city adopting the model, but a sport-for-development organisation with its own deep expertise wanting to build on it. Both kinds of interest are useful.

Beyond these two conversations, the project's recognition as a **Top 3 finalist worldwide** at the **2025 SmartCities & Sport Summit in Seoul**, its presence at the **MOVE Congress 2025**, and its visibility through ISCA's networks have put the methodology in front of the funders, partners, and city governments whose engagement any further international replication will need. Whatever comes next at the international level will start from a much stronger position than the project began with.

Sustainability and replication

What travels best

For readers thinking specifically about which elements of the model to consider in their own context, our experience suggests the following are most likely to translate well:

- **The mixed-nationality coaching pair.** Wherever there is a host community and an arriving community, a coaching pair drawn from both is a structural advantage that goes beyond language to encompass trust, cultural fluency, and a visible demonstration of cooperation across difference.
- **The low-threshold session formula.** Free, open, drop-in, in public spaces children already know - these design principles are not Polish, not refugee-specific, and not budget-dependent. They are universal good practice for reaching children whom enrolment-based programmes do not.
- **Building on existing community sport infrastructure.** Wherever a Trener Osiedlowy-equivalent already exists - a network of trusted neighbourhood coaches with municipal backing- building on it rather than around it is the single biggest lever any replicator has.
- **The intensive preparation week.** Bringing the cohort and the international experts together in one place for one week is expensive, but it produces cohort cohesion and a depth of practical training that no series of online sessions can match.
- **The supervision structure.** Regular feedback, team-building, and psychological-supervision meetings during the implementation period are non-negotiable; the people doing this work need each other.

Chapter 12: Carrying It Forward

Sustainability and replication

What needs more careful adaptation

Other elements are more context-bound and will need rethinking before they travel:

- **The Polish legal framework described in Chapter 11 is Polish. Replicators in other countries will need to operate within their own equivalent - and the legal architecture differs by country, even if the substantive requirements do not.**
- **The specific consortium architecture (V4SPORT + WCRS + SZS Wroclaw + ISCA + FHI 360) is not a template.** It worked because the partners existed in Wrocław with the relationships and capacities they had. Other cities will need to identify their own equivalent of each role, not copy the names.
- **The football preference** of Wrocław children may differ in other contexts. The methodology is not football-specific, and different cities will find different sports work better.
- **The Camp's international expert curriculum** can be replicated in spirit, but the specific organisations that came to Trzebnica did so because of FHI 360's and ISCA's networks. Other cities will need to build their own expert relationships.

A standing invitation

The most important sustainability mechanism is not in any of the lists above. It is the simple fact that the model now exists outside the heads of the people who built it. That is what this Playbook is for.

If you are reading this Playbook because your city, NGO, or sport organisation is thinking about doing similar work, V4SPORT is happy to hear from you. We do not have all the answers. What we have is a year of fieldwork and a network of partners, coaches, and international experts who are willing to share what they have learned. If we can save you a mistake we already made, or connect you with someone who has solved the problem you are facing, that is the point of the project.

The contact details for V4SPORT are at the back of this document. Do get in touch.

> ***"A community that plays together stays together. A community of practitioners that shares what it knows builds something larger than any single project ever can."***

Chapter 13: Voices from the Project

The people who carried it, in their own words

The image of the Tandem as a Heart and Brain partnership emerged from the coaches' own descriptions of how they worked. **Inna Kunitska**, a Ukrainian Tandem Coach, captured it in a sentence that the project has come to use as its own:

Grzegorz is the brain of the training, I am the heart - together we create a whole, full of passion and empathy."

Inna Kunitska, Tandem Coach (UKR)

Aleksandra Pilipowska, a Polish Tandem Coach, described the project's effect on her own practice:

The project was a very big inspiration for me; it allowed me to open up creatively and develop my existing skills, which had an impact on the more effective implementation of activities with children and youth from both Poland and Ukraine."

Aleksandra Pilipowska, Tandem Coach (PL)

Rafał Świerczek, Polish Tandem Coach and teacher, reflected on what working in a cross-cultural Tandem had given him as an educator:

As a teacher, thanks to the Tandems, I better understood the stronger and deeper meaning of another person - specifically our neighbours from Ukraine. This work helped me communicate with children. I think I gained as a teacher. I gained trust."

Rafał Świerczek, Tandem Coach (PL)

The people who carried it, in their own words

And Inna Kunitska, again, on what kind of coaching the Tandem Model actually produces:

Let's Play Together" is not just sports training - it's two hours of real life on the field. Children have not only a trainer but also a coach who supports them emotionally."

Inna Kunitska, Tandem Coach (UKR)

Voices from the field

Alongside the named quotations, the project's evaluation captured a series of observations that, taken together, describe what the Tandem Coaching Model actually felt like to deliver:

The project is based on the principle of integration through pleasant sports fun and games, and not on forcing children to participate in joint activities."

Children in the sessions have not only trainers but also coaches who support them emotionally."

[Having a Ukrainian-speaking coach] allows children to feel freer, more confident, and safer ... they can communicate in the language that is most comfortable for them at a given moment."

It is easier to address individual, unengaged participants and provide them with emotional support. The support between coaches in the tandem allows for better engagement of children and devoting more time to them."

These are, in many ways, the project's clearest evidence - the coaches' own description of what the model produced, in the working language of practitioners rather than the formal language of evaluation.

Chapter 13: Voices from the Project

The people who carried it, in their own words

From the children

The project's evaluation methodology deliberately avoided direct interviews with children. The vignettes that emerged came instead from the coaches who knew the children best, and from observations made over the course of the year.

Zachar was a Ukrainian boy who arrived at his first session withdrawn. The first time the coach greeted him in his mother tongue, he visibly relaxed. Within a few weeks he was bringing other children - friends he had previously kept at a distance - to join the activities. The session had become, for him, a place where he was met in the language he thought in.

Andrii, eight years old, was initially shy and silent. His Tandem Coach noticed the shift the moment Andrii realised one of the coaches spoke both Ukrainian and Russian: he opened up immediately, became one of the most engaged children in his Tandem's sessions, and - a few weeks later - began speaking with his Polish peers in their language. The change rippled outward into his family. His father started attending the sessions himself and joining in the activities. What had begun as a sport session for one child had become a point of contact for the whole household.

These are two stories of dozens. The coaches kept track of these moments because they were the point of the work.

From the youth Coach Assistants

The forty young people from Wrocław who joined the Coaching for Community Camp as Coach Assistants were asked, on the final day, to describe the week in single words. The words they reached for were:

Fun. Integration. Best. Friends."

They described the atmosphere as „great" and „super positive," and the staff and experts as „amazing people with good sense of humour." They spoke of learning „how to be a leader and cope with stress," developing skills in „group work and communication," and discovering the value of „getting out of their comfort zone." The practical sessions were widely rated „10/10."

Asked on the same day whether they wanted to continue with the project in some form, **33 of the 40** said yes.

The people who carried it, in their own words

From the international experts at the Camp

Some of the most striking testimonials about the project came not from V4SPORT or the Tandem Coaches, but from the international experts who came to Trzebnica to deliver the Camp. These are practitioners who attend many such events; their descriptions of Let's Play Together's organisational culture were unsolicited:

V4Sport Foundation staff left no stone unturned to create a sense of belonging through a wrap-around approach to ensure life-changing experiences took place."

Kelly Burdett, StreetGames

A safe space for everyone who attended."

Rhiannon Sheen de Jesus, StreetGames

Language was not a barrier."

Guleed Dualeh, Red Cross Red Crescent Movement MHPSS Hub

These descriptions are evidence that the kind of environment the project asked the Tandem Coaches to recreate, in miniature, on every Wrocław pitch - generous, organised, inclusive, attentive - was first practised in Trzebnica, by the staff who built the programme, in front of the people who would carry it for the rest of the year.

Chapter 13: Voices from the Project

The people who carried it, in their own words

From the Tandem Coaches on the public stage

In June 2025, two Tandem Coaches sat on a panel at the Moving People - Moving Poland conference in Wrocław, speaking to teachers, school principals, and city-government representatives from across Poland.

Daniel Kasyan observed that the cooperation between two people with different backgrounds allowed them to complement each other and bring fresh perspectives to working with children. He added, more pointedly, that after just a few sessions the children themselves no longer focus on who knows whom, which class they attend, or where they come from. What matters, he said, is shared activity, relationship-building, and mutual support.

Inna Kunitska, on the same panel, emphasised the importance of having someone on the coaching team who speaks the children's native language -

especially in moments of emotional difficulty, when children want to express themselves in the language in which they think and feel most freely."

Inna Kunitska, Tandem Coach (UKR)

These were the project's own practitioners speaking, on a public stage, to the audience the proposal's fourth goal had been built to reach.

Video material (digital edition)

Coaching for Community Camp - overview video.

A short summary of the week in Trzebnica, capturing the atmosphere, the workshops, and the cohort that gathered around them.

Coaching for Community Camp - participant testimonials.

Tandem Coaches and youth Coach Assistants, in their own words, on what the Camp produced for them.

Coaching for Community Camp - international expert reflections.

Short interviews with the international experts who delivered the curriculum.

Chapter 13: Voices from the Project

The people who carried it, in their own words

A final word

If anyone reading this Playbook wants to know whether the Tandem Coaching Model works - really works, on a pitch, with real children, on a wet October afternoon when half the planned activity is going sideways - the answer is in the words above. It is not in the numbers, the methodology, or the framework. It is in what the people who did the work said about it when asked.

Inna Kunitska, who appears more than once in this chapter, gave perhaps the project's most honest summary in a single sentence:

Once I wondered how this project would go ... today I cannot imagine not being part of it."

Inna Kunitska, Tandem Coach (UKR)

Chapter 14: The Project in Numbers

Let's Play Together at a glance

Chapter 14: The Project in Numbers

Let's Play Together at a glance

The pages that precede this chapter describe what Let's Play Together did, why we did it, who carried it, and what it produced on the pitch. This chapter pulls the operational shape of the pilot into one place - the team, the preparation, the year of work, the people reached, and the audiences the project has gone on to engage. Read it as a dashboard rather than a narrative.

The Team

4 core consortium organisations: V4SPORT, WCRS, SZS Wroclaw, ISCA

7 international expert organisations contributing to the Coaching for Community Camp, in addition to FHI 360 as co-organiser

22 Tandem Coaches deployed in the Wrocław pilot (11 Polish, 11 Ukrainian)

11 Tandem pairs

40 young people from Wrocław schools who took part as Coach Assistants at the Camp

The Preparation

8 days of the Coaching for Community Camp (1-8 February 2025)

+100 participants including 22 Tandem Coaches and 40 aspiring youth Coach Assistants

3 languages - Polish, Ukrainian and English, delivered with simultaneous interpretation

6 countries - represented by the international expert delegation: United States, France, Switzerland, United Kingdom, Denmark, Poland

Chapter 14: The Project in Numbers

Let's Play Together at a glance

The Year on the Pitches

+8 months of implementation period

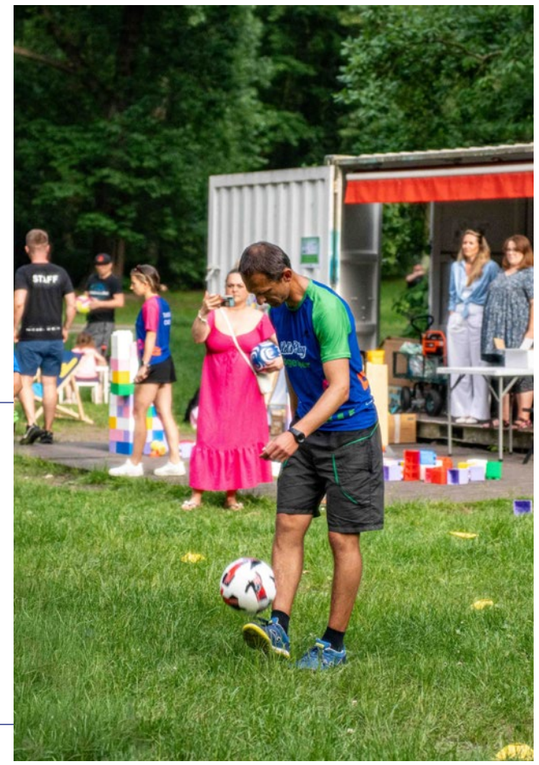
11 neighbourhoods of Wrocław served continuously

1,001 sports sessions delivered

2,010 hours of direct community-level integration work

2-3 sessions per Tandem, per week, throughout the year

+8 Tandem-Coach feedback, team-building and psychological-supervision meetings held during the implementation period



Chapter 14: The Project in Numbers

Let's Play Together at a glance

The People Reached

14,486 total participant visits across all sessions

9,855 visits by Polish children

4,631 visits by Ukrainian children

The Cohort, by Year-end

4.64/5 overall satisfaction score reported by the Tandem Coaches

21/21 coaches interviewed for the evaluation who expressed a commitment to continuing this kind of work

33/40 youth Coach Assistants who, at the end of the Camp, said they wanted to continue with the project in some form

3 trainers currently formally employed by SZS Wrocław, who contribute their methodology to the Neighborhood Trainers Network program

Chapter 14: The Project in Numbers

Let's Play Together at a glance

Reach Beyond Wrocław

≈200 participants at the Moving People - Moving Poland conference (Wrocław, June 2025)

12 major Polish cities represented at that conference, via the Union of Polish Metropolises

≈900 participants at MOVE Congress 2025

≈15,000 daily passers-by on Świdnicka Street during the project's outdoor exhibition (7-25 April 2025)

Top 3 worldwide finalist at the 2025 SmartCities & Sport Summit in Seoul, recognised by the World Union of Olympic Cities

Featured at the conclusion meeting of the Polish Presidency of the EU Council in the field of sport

One sentence to take with you

"Eleven tandem pairs of Polish and Ukrainian coaches, in eleven Wrocław neighbourhoods, delivered 1,001 free, open, drop-in sessions that produced 14,484 child visits - and showed, by their own working together, that integration is something children learn from watching adults do."

Bibliography & Further Reading

The references below are grouped by category for ease of use.

Polish context: refugees, education, cities

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- **Centre for Citizenship Education (CEO) & UNICEF** (October 2024). ***Enrolment of Ukrainian refugee students in the Polish education system***. ceo.org.pl
- **UNHCR Operational Data Portal - Ukraine Refugee Situation.** data.unhcr.org/en/situations/ukraine
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Sport for development: policy and frameworks

- **UNHCR** (2022). More than a Game. UNHCR strategy on sport for inclusion of refugees and stateless people. unhcr.org
- **WHO** (2020). Guidelines on Physical Activity and Sedentary Behaviour. World Health Organization. who.int
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- **Olympic Refuge Foundation**. olympicrefuge.org
- **EU Erasmus+ Sport - Inclusion and diversity priority**. erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu
- **ISCA - International Sport and Culture Association.** isca.org
- **ISCA Integration of Refugees Through Sport (IRTS) Networking Platform & Inspiring Examples 2025.** irts.isca.org

Safeguarding and child protection in sport

- **Standardy Ochrony Małoletnich - Polish standards for the protection of minors, mandatory since February 2024 under amendments to the Act on Counteracting Threats Against Sexual Inviolability of Minors.** sejm.gov.pl
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- **International Safeguards for Children in Sport. sportanddev.org**
- **Keeping Children Safe - International Child Safeguarding Standards.** keepingchildrensafe.global
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- **UEFA - Toolkit for Activators on Physical Activity and Healthier Lifestyles.** uefa.com
- **UK Coaching - Code of Practice for Sport Coaches.** ukcoaching.org
- **Terre des hommes - Safeguarding policy.** tdh.ch

Bibliography & Further Reading

The references below are grouped by category for ease of use.

Sport-for-development organisations referenced (Chapter 3)

- **Cheza Foundation (Uganda / South Sudan) -** chezafoundation.org
- **FAME Foundation for Girls and Women Empowerment (Nigeria) -** famefoundationwg.org
- **Skateistan (founded in Afghanistan, now global) -** skateistan.org
- **Palestine: Sports for Life (PS4L) (Palestine) -** ps4l.org
- **GAME (Lebanon / Denmark) -** game.ngo
- **Sanctuary Runners (Ireland) -** sanctuaryrunners.ie
- **Fédération Sportive et Gymnique du Travail (FSGT) (France / Palestine) -** fsgt-palestine.org
- **Fútbol Más (Chile, with operations in 14 countries) -** futbolmas.org
- **FUDELA - Fundación de las Américas (Ecuador) -** fudela.org.ec
- **ACSA Cultural & Sport Association (Canada / Afghanistan) -** acsaorg.ca
- **Glasswing Costa Rica (Fundación Crisalida Internacional) -** glasswing.org
- **Football United (UNSW Sydney, Australia) -** footballunited.org.au
- **Creating Chances (Australia) -** creatingchances.org.au

Camp expert organisations (Chapter 8)

- **Center for Healing and Justice Through Sport (CHJS) -** chjs.org
- **Edgework Consulting -** edgeworkconsulting.com
- **Fútbol Más France -** futbolmas.org
- **Olympic Refuge Foundation (ORF) -** olympicrefuge.org
- **Polish Red Cross (PCK) -** pck.pl
- **Red Cross Red Crescent Movement MHPSS Hub -** pscentre.org
- **StreetGames -** streetgames.org
- **FHI 360 -** fhi360.org
- **U.S. Department of State - Sports Visitor and Sports Envoy Programs (SVSEP).** sportsvisitorenvoy.org

V4SPORT and partner programmes

- **V4SPORT Foundation -** v4sport.eu
- **Wrocław Centre for Social Development (WCRS) -** wcrs.wroclaw.pl
- **WroMigrant Information Point -** wromigrant.wroclaw.pl
- **ESK Parks (Parki ESK) -** parkiesk.pl
- **School Sport Federation Wrocław (SZS Wroclaw) -** wroclawskiszs.pl
- **Trener Osiedlowy (Neighbourhood Coach programme) -** trener-osiedlowy.pl

Earlier V4SPORT projects on Ukraine integration (referenced in the Preface)

- **Integration of Ukrainian Refugee Children Through Sport (IURTS) -** irts.isca.org/ukraine
- **We Play Together! -** irts.isca.org/weplaytogether

Appendix: Session Scenarios

Ready-to-use lesson plans for team-building activities

Session Scenarios

Ready-to-use lesson plans for team-building activities

From the very first project proposal, we decided to include in the Handbook a set of ready-to-use lesson plans for integrating children from diverse backgrounds. Their carefully designed structure addresses potential flashpoints and aims to create a safe, supportive atmosphere in every session.

The scenarios were developed alongside this Handbook, drawing on the Coaching for Community Camp methodology, the coaching teams' experiences from nine months of fieldwork during the project, and the expertise of international specialists from the Center for Healing and Justice Through Sport, Edgework Consulting, Fútbol Más France, the Olympic Refuge Foundation, the Polish Red Cross, the Red Cross Red Crescent Movement MHPSS Hub, and StreetGames. They are particularly inspired by the StreetGames approach to inclusive, accessible community sport.

The scenarios are intended to provide coaching teams — and other practitioners replicating the model — with a practical library of activities that can be easily selected, adapted and delivered in the field. They include warm-ups, main activities, team games, conflict-resolution exercises and calming practices, along with brief adaptation notes and guidance on what to avoid when working with children with resettlement experience.

Content development: **Maciej Jakubaszek**

Scenario 1: Communication and Breaking the Ice

Main theme: Komunikacja niewerbalna, współpraca w grupie, integracja międzykulturowa

Duration: 90 minutes

Target group: Culturally diverse group, 8–20 people

Location: Open space (park, sports field) or indoor space (gym, large workshop room)

Materials: Sashes 20–40 pieces, balls, markers, rings
Optionally: cones/bottles as obstacles for the „Minefield" variant

Objectives and assumptions:
MAIN OBJECTIVE: Integrating the group through tasks that require communication (verbal and non-verbal) and cooperation, including an exchange of cultural experiences.
SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES:

- The participant experiences and understands the importance of non-verbal communication
- Is able to cooperate in a pair and in a larger team to achieve a common goal
- Builds trust and positive relationships with other members of the group
- Shares elements of their own culture in a safe and open atmosphere

Cultural integration element: After the icebreaker, participants share the birthday traditions of their family (country). The summary questions encourage reflection on differences and similarities in styles o f communication and cooperation.

Introduction – opening (5 minutes)

WELCOME

- Welcoming the group, introductions, and a brief discussion of the aim of the session: playing together, getting to know one another better, and developing communication skills.
- Explaining that the prepared tasks will be based on movement, cooperation, and the active involvement of participants.
- Emphasising the rules of safety, mutual respect, and care for the comfort of every person in the group.

TIPS FOR THE COACH

- Make sure to create a friendly and relaxed atmosphere and maintain eye contact with the participants.
- Ask the participants how they feel and whether they are ready for physical activity.
- Emphasise that what matters most is the shared process, having fun, and involvement — not winning itself.

ACTIVITY 1 - Icebreaker

„Silent Calendar"

10 minutes

SKILLS DEVELOPED BY PARTICIPANTS

- **non-verbal communication**
- **cooperation and working in a group**
- **logical thinking and organisation**
- **empathy and respect for others**
- **the ability to listen and observe**
- **social and intercultural competences**

SETUP

- **Participants spread out randomly across the area.**
- **The coach introduces the rule of silence and asks that no one use words, as this will be needed in the upcoming activity.**
- **The coach then explains the rules of the activity.**

INSTRUCTIONS (description of the game/activity)

The participants' task is to line up in a row by date of birth – from 1 January to 31 December – while remaining completely silent. They may not use words, make sounds, or write.

Once the task is done, check that the line-up is correct – each person says their date of birth out loud (day and month). If the order is wrong, ask the participants to correct it.

When all participants have said their dates of birth, ask them to take their places in a circle, which will be needed for the next task related to cultural integration.

CULTURAL INTEGRATION ELEMENT

Cultural questions: How do you celebrate your birthday? Are there any special traditions or customs during your birthday? If participants come from different countries, you can also ask what birthday traditions look like in their culture and country of origin.

TIPS FOR THE COACH

- Observe the group dynamics and pay attention to who takes the initiative while completing the task.
- Do not intervene unless the group gets stuck — in that case you can gently suggest gestures symbolising particular months.
- Make sure everyone has space to speak, as this is key to building a sense of acceptance and safety in the group.

VARIATIONS (how the game/activity can be modified)

- For younger participants the task can be simplified by asking them to line up from shortest to tallest.
- If the group struggles with the task, you can add extra hints, e.g. the left hand indicates the day of the month and the right hand the month, or ask them to show the month first and then the day of the month.
- For shy participants, during the „Cultural integration" task it is worth asking more detailed questions, e.g.: Do your favourite dishes appear at your birthday? Do you prepare the decorations yourselves with your parents, or do you rather buy them? Are birthdays held at home, or in special places such as play centres or a park?

„Reflexes and Focus: Grab It"

10 minutes

SKILLS DEVELOPED BY PARTICIPANTS

- reflexes and speed of reaction
- concentration and focus on instructions
- hand–eye coordination
- awareness of one's own body scheme
- the ability to respond to changing stimuli and instructions

SETUP

- Participants pair up freely (since frequent changes are planned, the make-up of the pairs does not matter).
- Each pair sits facing each other about 1 metre apart, together forming a circle.
- An object of any kind is placed between each pair.

INSTRUCTIONS (description of the game/activity)

Participants sit in pairs facing each other about 1 metre apart.

There is an object between them.

The coach names parts of the body (e.g. „head", „knee") which participants must point to or touch on each other.

On the command „GRAB IT!" they must grab the object in the middle as quickly as possible.

After three rounds, the people sitting on the outside of the circle move one place to the left.

TIPS FOR THE COACH

- Vary the pace and introduce fake-outs (e.g. „head... shoulders... head!").
- Change the participants' pairs regularly.
- Make sure the object is always placed between the participants.
- Make sure the participants do not hit one another.

VARIATIONS (how the game/activity can be modified)

- Changing the starting position – participants can start in different positions, e.g. standing, lying on their stomach facing the object, or in other variants.
- Instead of body parts you can call out directions, e.g. „right", „left", followed by the command „grab it".
- Instead of body parts you can also use movement commands, e.g. „jump", „bend", „squat", „turn", and finally „grab it".

„Teamwork: Capture the Flag – Banners"

20 minutes

EQUIPMENT NEEDED FOR THE GAME/ACTIVITY

Sashes to mark out the teams. Cones – markers to mark out the team bases.
Two objects, e.g. balls, rings, markers, etc., to place as the „banner" in the team bases.

SKILLS DEVELOPED BY PARTICIPANTS

- teamwork and communication between participants
- planning and adopting a group strategy
- spatial orientation and moving quickly around the playing field
- following the rules of the game and fair competition („fair play")
- responsibility for the team (e.g. freeing „frozen" players)
- self-control and managing emotions in a competitive situation
- building trust and cooperation in the group (especially when freeing other participants)

SETUP

- Divide the participants into two teams – you can, for example, use the earlier activity and group them by month of birth, then combine them into two teams, which lets you check whether they remembered the information from the first task.
- Divide the playing field into two halves. At the end of each half, use cones to mark out the „bases" and placethe „banner" in them.
- The teams line up on their own sides of the field, but may not stay inside the „bases".

INSTRUCTIONS (description of the game/activity)

The team's goal is to get into the opponent's territory, take the flag, and return with it to their own half. Teams defend their zone by tagging opponents who are in their half. A tagged person is „frozen" and cannot move. They can be freed by a member of their own team through a touch – then both people must return to their own side of the field. A point is scored by the team that manages to carry the banner to their own half.

TIPS FOR THE COACH

- Remind them of the „fair play" rules, including admitting when tagged and the ban on pushing.
- If the competition becomes too intense, move on early to the next activity, „Minefield", which places greater emphasis on cooperation and trust.

VARIATIONS (how the game/activity can be modified)

- From the opponent's „base" one pass or throw may be made. If the ball falls to the ground, it goes back to the „base". This exercise develops throwing and catching skills.
- Designate attacking and defending players, changing roles regularly so that all participants are actively involved and no one stays solely on defence.

ACTIVITY 4 – Cooperative variant – calming down before a longer game

„Minefield”

5 minutes

SKILLS DEVELOPED BY PARTICIPANTS

- building trust in a partner and cooperation in a pair
- precise verbal communication (giving and interpreting instructions)
- motor coordination and balance control after disorientation
- reacting to changing conditions and unexpected situations (e.g. a „mine”)
- self-control and body control after losing orientation
- developing responsibility for the other person in the pair

SETUP

- Ask the participants to pair up with the people standing closest to them.
- The coach also scatters cones („markers”) randomly across the area.

INSTRUCTIONS (description of the game/activity)

- One person closes their eyes and the other turns them around five times on the spot. Then the task of the person with their eyes closed is to reach one of the „bases”, guided solely by their partner’s verbal instructions. Once the task is done, the roles are swapped.
- Pairs must watch out for other participants and the scattered cones („mines”).

TIPS FOR THE COACH

- Make sure the people with their eyes closed are properly supported before the task begins (turning on the spot).
- Ensure the participants’ safety – remind them to avoid other pairs and the cones.
- If they have trouble orienting themselves, offer a variant with additional touch support.

VARIATIONS (how the game/activity can be modified)

- If they step on a „mine”, the person with their eyes closed does a turn on the spot.
- If guiding by words alone proves too difficult, you can introduce additional touch cues – a light touch on the shoulders (left shoulder – turn left, right shoulder – turn right).

ACTIVITY 5 - Team game

„Flag Football”

40 minutes

SKILLS DEVELOPED BY PARTICIPANTS

- planning and decision-making under limited time and a limited number of attempts
- spatial orientation and moving within the designated playing field
- motor coordination (running, catching, passing, avoiding opponents)
- developing precision of passes and catches
- understanding and applying the rules of a team game
- emotional control and following fair-play rules (including no holding flags and no pushing hands away)

SETUP

- Divide the participants into two teams – they can stay the same as in the previous activities, though it is recommended to change them or balance them based on earlier results.
- Divide the playing field into two halves and, at the end of each, mark out a scoring-zone line.
- Each participant receives two sashes, which they tuck into their shorts on the right and left sides of the hips.

INSTRUCTIONS (description of the game/activity)

- The aim of the game is to score as many points as possible by carrying the ball into the opponent’s scoring area (end zone).
- The game starts from the restart line in the middle of the field. Choose or draw lots to decide which team starts as attackers and which as defenders.
- The attacking team has 4 attempts to score a point and cross the opponent’s scoring zone. If they fail, the opponent takes over the ball.
- Each play begins with a pass, which must be caught. The pass may go forwards or sideways. The player who caught the ball then begins a running play. The passing player – the one starting the play – may not run with the ball across the scoring line.
- Points are scored by carrying the ball into the opponent’s scoring area – 6 points.
- To stop an opponent, you must pull one of the flags off the player holding the ball. Play is also stopped when the player with the ball runs out of the playing field, the ball is dropped from the hands, or it falls to the ground after a pass.

TIPS FOR THE COACH

- Watch carefully whether flags are pulled correctly and whether players are not holding them with their hands or pushing away the opponent’s hands.
- Once the participants have mastered the rules, you can add an extra element, e.g. a bonus – kicking the ball from the ground to a designated target (e.g. a goal made from two cones) from a set spot, for which an extra 1 point is awarded.

Adaptation tips (S.T.E.P.S. Model)

S **(Space):**

In „Silent Calendar" adjust the length of the line to the size of the group. In „Capture the Flag" enlarge the field if the group is very active, or shrink it to intensify contact between the teams.

T **(Task):**

In „Silent Calendar" you can change the line-up criterion — e.g. by the number of languages participants speak, or the length of their stay in the current country.

E **(Equipment):**

If you do not have cones, use jackets, water bottles, or rolled-up sashes as markers and obstacles.

P **(People):**

In smaller groups (8–10 people) everyone can play „Capture the Flag" together; in larger ones (15–20) divide participants into four smaller teams playing in parallel.

S **(Speed):**

In the „Grab It!" energizer, speed up the pace of the body parts you call out. In „Capture the Flag" introduce short rounds (3 minutes) to raise the intensity.

SUMMARY AT THE END OF THE SESSION

Questions for participants after the session, or areas for participants to reflect on:

- Think about the moments when it was easiest for you to cooperate with others, and when difficulties appeared.
- Think about what helped you trust your partner or the group, and what made that trust harder.
- Try to identify what new things you learned about the other participants (e.g. their way of acting, communicating, their culture).
- Consider which tasks were the most engaging for you and why.
- Notice how you coped in situations of time pressure or competition.

TIPS FOR THE COACH AFTER THE SESSION

- Sum up the session, focusing on the process of cooperation, not just the results of the games.
- Ask reflective questions about communication, trust, and teamwork.
- Note whether natural roles emerged in the group (leaders, supporters, observers).
- Discuss difficult or conflict situations in a neutral way, presenting them as part of learning to cooperate.
- Emphasise the value of cultural diversity as a resource, not a barrier.
- Encourage participants to transfer their experiences from the session to everyday group situations.

Scenario 2: Discovering Similarities

Main theme: Integration, breaking down barriers, getting to know one another and discovering shared experiences in a culturally diverse group

Duration: 90 minutes

Target group: Culturally diverse group, 8–20 people

Location: Open space (park, sports field) or indoor space (gym, large workshop room)

Materials:
Cards for „Human Bingo" and pens (one per person)
Light balls (e.g. volleyballs, foam balls, training tennis balls)
4 markers to mark out the bases (cones, water bottles, sashes)

Objectives and assumptions:
MAIN OBJECTIVE: Integrating the group through the active discovery of non-obvious similarities and shared experiences, including an exchange of cultural elements in a playful atmosphere.
SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES:

- The participant breaks down the first barriers when meeting strangers
- Discovers shared interests, experiences, and traits with other members of the group
- Shares an element of their own culture (e.g. through movement) in a natural and creative way
- Experiences effective teamwork in a task that requires coordination and strategy

Cultural integration element:
„Human Bingo" contains questions about languages, travel, culinary traditions, and knowledge of cultures. „Cultural Sequence" encourages sharing dance steps or gestures characteristic of a given culture.

Introduction – opening (5 minutes)

WELCOME

- The coach opens the session by warmly welcoming all participants, taking care to create an atmosphere of openness, kindness, and safety. They briefly present the aim of the session, emphasising its integrative character.
- The coach then explains the rules that apply during the session. They highlight the importance of mutual respect, listening attentively to others, openness to diversity, and kind communication. They also remind everyone of the safety rules during physical activities, and that what matters most is having fun, cooperation, and mutual support — not competition.

TIPS FOR THE COACH

- Make sure to create an atmosphere of openness, ease, and curiosity about the other participant.
- During the welcome, react if someone shows reluctance right from the start or behaves inappropriately. Try to involve such people early on with questions like: „Do you think you have something in common with at least five people here?"

ACTIVITY 1 - Icebreaker

„Human Bingo”

10 minutes

SKILLS DEVELOPED BY PARTICIPANTS

- making connections and building openness in the group
- verbal communication and asking questions
- the ability to hold a short conversation and maintain contact
- empathy and respect for diversity
- independence and organising one’s actions within a set time
- building a sense of belonging and acceptance in the group

SETUP

- Participants spread out randomly across the area.
- The coach hands out bingo cards to the participants with various statements (e.g. „Speaks 3 languages”, „Can cook a traditional dish”, „Likes spicy food”).
- The coach then explains the rules of the activity.

INSTRUCTIONS (description of the game/activity)

The participants’ task is to find people who match a statement and ask them for a signature. Under each description they must collect a signature from one participant. One person may sign a given card only ONCE.
The person with a line of signatures shouts „BINGO!”.

Those who finish their task wait for the others until the set time is up. During this time, those who have finished must learn something about each other based on the empty fields, e.g. Do you like tea? No — then which drink do you like best?

Cultural integration element:

Cultural task: In an intercultural group, the conversation among people during bingo can involve finding out how the topics included in the game look in their country.

TIPS FOR THE COACH

- Make sure the people who finish the task faster do not remain passive. Encourage them to keep talking with other participants until the end of the set time, using the empty fields as an opportunity to get to know one another better and ask additional questions.
- Make sure every participant has space to speak and the chance to take an active part in the exercise, as this is key to building a sense of acceptance, safety, and belonging in the group.
- Pay particular attention to more withdrawn people or those whom others approach less often. If needed, help them join in — you can start a conversation yourself, encourage others to make contact, or gently support them in making a first interaction.

VARIATIONS (how the game/activity can be modified)

- The person who was first to get „Bingo!” tells the group what they learned about the other participants and what interesting facts they managed to discover during the conversations.
- At the end, the coach reads out all the statements on the card, and participants raise their hand if a given statement applies to them. This lets the group see how many people are connected by shared experiences, interests, or habits.

Session Scenarios

Ready-to-use lesson plans for team-building activities

2

ACTIVITY 2 - energizer

„Cultural Sequence”

10 minutes

SKILLS DEVELOPED BY PARTICIPANTS

- concentration and focus on the actions of other participants
- memory and remembering names and sequences of movements
- hand–eye coordination and awareness of one’s own body scheme
- reflexes and speed of reaction
- overcoming shyness and the first barriers in the group
- creativity and spontaneity in creating one’s own gestures or sounds

SETUP

- Participants stand in a circle.
- The coach starts the task with an example, to make it easier for the following people to do the exercise.

INSTRUCTIONS (description of the game/activity)

The coach starts the task by introducing themselves and saying their name, then shows a simple movement they have made up or makes a characteristic sound, e.g. a gesture, a dance step, an animal sound, or another element that is easy to remember.

The next person repeats the coach’s name and movement, then adds their own name and their own gesture or sound.

Each subsequent participant reproduces the whole sequence of names and movements so far in the correct order, and at the end adds their own name and a new element. In this way a shared „chain” of movements and sounds gradually forms, engaging the whole group and making it easier to remember names.

TIPS FOR THE COACH

- Ensure a relaxed and joyful atmosphere, as the exercise is primarily meant to help participants break the ice and remember one another’s names better. React to negative gestures.
- At the start, show by your own example that you do not have to be „perfect” or very creative — a simple movement and a bit of openness are enough. You can deliberately choose an easy, humorous gesture to loosen the atmosphere and reduce participants’ stress.
- Pay attention to more shy or withdrawn people. Give them more time to think and support them gently if they have trouble coming up with their own movement. If needed, you can suggest a few simple examples to make it easier for them to take part.

VARIATIONS (how the game/activity can be modified)

- With a large group you can split the exercise into smaller sequences, e.g. every 5–6 people a new round starts from the beginning, to make remembering easier and keep the pace up.
- If the group has trouble coming up with movements or is not very creative, the coach can offer hints and inspire the participants. You can suggest simple solutions such as animal sounds or movements, or vehicle noises.

ACTIVITY 3 - Main game

„Scatterball”

20 minutes

SKILLS DEVELOPED BY PARTICIPANTS

- teamwork and effective communication between participants
- planning a strategy and dividing roles in the group
- fast decision-making in a dynamic situation
- spatial orientation and moving efficiently around the playing field
- speed of reaction and reflexes

SETUP

- Divide the participants into two teams.
- Mark out two playing areas: a smaller one in the centre and a larger one surrounding it. In the smaller area place 10–20 small balls or balls.
- One team stands in the smaller area, while the other takes its place in the larger area around it.

INSTRUCTIONS (description of the game/activity)

On the coach’s signal, the team in the small area throws the balls out in various directions.
The other team’s task is to collect the balls as quickly as possible and put them back into the small area.

The game lasts for a set time, after which it is stopped. The teams then swap roles and the exercise is repeated.
The whole thing can be run several times to give participants the chance to experience both roles.

TIPS FOR THE COACH

- Ensure the participants’ safety — make sure the balls are thrown in a controlled way, without aiming at people and without risky throws. Remind them of the rule of being mindful of other participants while moving around the area.
- Keep an eye on the pace of the game and the length of the rounds. If needed, shorten or lengthen the time, adjusting it to the group’s pace and the participants’ level of engagement.
- After each round, clearly communicate the change of roles and make sure both teams understand the new task.

VARIATIONS (how the game/activity can be modified)

- Throwing the balls should follow a previously agreed rule, e.g. only with the left hand (or another one indicated by the coach).
- If, when the time is up, there are balls left in the large area that were not delivered to the small area, the collecting team performs an additional task. It consists of giving a piece of information about the participants who were throwing — the number of pieces of information should match the number of remaining balls. The information may refer to the earlier activity (e.g. from „bingo”), which encourages careful observation and getting to know one another better in the group.

ACTIVITY 4 - Cooperative variant - calming down before a longer game

„Scatterball – cooperation”

5 minutes

SKILLS DEVELOPED BY PARTICIPANTS

- cooperation in pairs and building mutual trust
- precise verbal and non-verbal communication
- motor coordination and control of one’s own body
- keeping balance and adjusting the pace to a partner
- responsibility for a partner and completing the task together
- patience and the ability to adapt to another person
- spatial orientation and moving safely around the playing field
- strengthening relationships and a sense of shared responsibility in the group

SETUP

- Divide the participants into two teams.
- Mark out two playing areas: a smaller one in the centre and a larger one surrounding it. In the smaller area place 10–20 small balls or balls.
- One team stands in the smaller area, while the other takes its place in the larger area around it.
- The coach keeps time.

INSTRUCTIONS (description of the game/activity)

The team in the small area throws the balls out in various directions. The other team’s task is to collect them as quickly as possible and put them back in the designated area.

Putting the balls back is done through cooperation in pairs. Carrying the balls must be done without using the hands to hold them directly — participants may only hold the ball together between them (e.g. between their bodies or in another agreed way), so as to transport it safely to the area. Once the task is done, the teams swap.

TIPS FOR THE COACH

- Pay particular attention to safety during the cooperation in pairs — remind them to move calmly, avoid sudden movements, and take care of the other person’s comfort. If needed, suggest a simple and safe carrying method, e.g. holding the ball between the forearms or shoulders.
- Observe the dynamics of the teams’ work and, if needed, stop the game to clarify the rules or correct how the task is being done.
- Emphasise the importance of cooperation, communication, and mutually adjusting the pace in pairs.
- Encourage participants to act calmly and mindfully — the aim of the exercise is not speed but coordination and cooperation. Reinforce positive behaviours such as helping a partner, patience, and good non-verbal communication.

VARIATIONS (how the game/activity can be modified)

- To increase the difficulty, you can introduce an additional rule: if a ball is dropped, the participants must return with it to the starting point and begin the transport again from the beginning.
- You can reduce the number of balls that must be delivered to the small area if the task is taking too long.

ACTIVITY 5 - Team game

„Rounders”

40 minutes

SKILLS DEVELOPED BY PARTICIPANTS

- **teamwork and effective communication between participants**
- **spatial orientation and moving efficiently around the pitch**
- **motor coordination while running, hitting, and catching the ball**
- **developing accuracy and precision of hits and passes**
- **reflexes and speed of reaction in a changing game situation**
- **emotional control and coping with the pressure of competition**

SETUP

- **Divide the participants into two teams – they can stay the same as in the previous activities, though it is recommended to change them or balance them based on earlier results.**
- **On the playing field, set out 4 cones as bases to be captured.**
- **Mark out the starting point of the game.**
- **One team lines up between the bases in a designated square. The other lines up at the starting point, forming a queue.**

INSTRUCTIONS (description of the game/activity)

The teams take their places in their zones marked out on the pitch, with the bases and the hitting spot. A player from the attacking team hits a tossed ball with a tennis racket, sending it in a designated direction.

After a successful hit, the player runs to the nearest base, or to further ones if time allows. Each player has two attempts. If the hit fails, they go back to the end of the queue.

The defending team catches the ball and delivers it to the hitting spot as quickly as possible. When they do, the player running between bases must stop and return to the last base they reached. Then the next player enters the game and performs the same task.

Players score a point if they manage to run through all the bases. When the set time is up, the roles between the teams are swapped.

TIPS FOR THE COACH

- Ensure safety on the pitch — pay attention to an appropriate distance between players, controlled hits of the ball, and avoiding sudden running in the hitting zone.
- Make sure the rules on attempts and returning to the end of the queue are followed. If needed, remind participants of the order of actions and of keeping the game calm.
- Observe the dynamics of the competition and, if needed, regulate the pace of the game to ensure equal participation for everyone. Watch for disputed situations and settle them on the spot, clearly and calmly.

VARIATIONS (how the game/activity can be modified)

To increase the difficulty, you can introduce an additional „Kamp” rule: catching the ball directly from the air by the defending team (often rewarded with an extra point or a change of teams).

Adaptation tips (S.T.E.P.S. Model)

S **(Space):**

): In „Scatterball” shrink the area for a more dynamic game. In „Cultural Sequence” tighten the circle so participants can see each movement better.

T **(Task):**

In „Human Bingo” add a task that, after finding 3 people, they must change their strategy — look only for people who speak a different language than their own or who previously lived in another country.

E **(Equipment):**

Instead of balls for „Scatterball” use rolled-up socks or beanbags. The bingo cards can be replaced with a note on the participants' phones.

P **(People):**

With small groups (up to 10 people) play „Scatterball” as one team competing against the clock. With larger ones (over 20) divide the group into 3–4 smaller teams and rotate the roles.

S **(Speed):**

Set a precise time limit for „Bingo” (e.g. 7 minutes) to raise the pace. In „Cultural Sequence” speed up the repetition to keep the energy and focus up.

SUMMARY AT THE END OF THE SESSION

Questions for participants after the session, or areas for participants to reflect on:

- What was the biggest surprise for you during „Human Bingo”?
- What similarities between participants did you manage to discover?
- How did you cope when someone did not understand the rules or the group's pace?
- How did you feel at the start of the session, and how at the end?
- At what moment did you feel most like „part of the group”?

TIPS FOR THE COACH AFTER THE SESSION

- Sum up the session, focusing on the process of cooperation, not just the results of the games.
- Make sure everyone has the chance to speak, but do not force anyone to talk.
- React to dominant individuals — gently balance the conversation.
- Be mindful of differences in language level — allow time for answers.
- If needed, paraphrase what people say so that everyone understands the meaning.
- Encourage sharing, but do not require anyone to „represent their whole culture”.
- Sum up the group's main conclusions in 2–3 sentences (e.g. similarities, cooperation, communication).

Scenario 3: Building Trust and Getting to Know One Another

Main theme: Trust, attentive listening, cooperation, and breaking down anonymity in the group

Duration: 90 minutes

Target group: Culturally diverse group, 8–20 people

Location: Open space (park, sports field) or indoor space (gym, large workshop room)

Materials: Small cards and pens (one per person), 1–4 soft balls (e.g. foam, volleyball, fitness ball) , markers (e.g. sashes, scarves) for the „taggers", markers to mark out the playing field, e.g. cones, poles

Objectives and assumptions:

MAIN OBJECTIVE: Building the foundations of trust and mutual understanding in the group through exercises that engage communication, intuition, and cooperation.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES:

- Experiences building trust through tasks based on listening and sensing the group
- Actively seeks to get to know others, discovering their unique traits and stories
- Shares information about themselves (including cultural elements) in a safe and controlled environment
- Practises the ability to cooperate in a dynamically changing team

Cultural integration element: In the game „Guess Who" participants share favourite proverbs, memories of their home town, or traditions. The game „21" can be run in the various languages present in the group.

Introduction – opening (5 minutes)

WELCOME

- The coach begins the session by welcoming all participants. They briefly present the topic and aim of the session, saying: „Today we will explore how we can build trust in one another, sometimes even without using words, and how, through cooperation and mutual support, we can function better as a group."
- They emphasise that the session has an integrative character and is based above all on cooperation, communication, and mutual respect, not on competition.
- The coach also reminds everyone of the safety rules during physical activities — moving carefully, responding to others' needs, and avoiding behaviour that could cause discomfort or danger. They encourage participants to take an active part, support one another, and treat the session as a chance to get to know themselves and others in the group better.

TIPS FOR THE COACH

- Create an atmosphere of focus, calm, and mutual trust right from the start of the session.
- You can use a short introductory metaphor, e.g.: „Trust is like a foundation — you often cannot see it, but it is what makes
- it possible to build something lasting and stable". Such a message helps participants better understand the point of the
- exercises and their educational and integrative purpose.
- Make sure every participant feels accepted and safe in the group. Pay attention to more withdrawn, shy, or less engaged people — gently encourage them to take part without applying pressure.

ACTIVITY 1 - Icebreaker

„Guess Who: Chain of Connections"

10 minutes

SKILLS DEVELOPED BY PARTICIPANTS

- **breaking down the first barriers in contact with other participants**
- **making connections and building openness in the group**
- **discovering shared interests, experiences, and traits**
- **the ability to hold a short conversation and maintain contact**
- **empathy and respect for diversity**

SETUP

- **Participants spread out randomly across the area.**
- **The coach hands out cards and pens to the participants.**
- **The coach then explains the rules of the activity.**

INSTRUCTIONS (description of the game/activity)

Participants receive cards and anonymously write down at least three facts about themselves. These can be pieces of information about interests, experiences, favourite things, characteristic traits, or curiosities from everyday life. The facts can be either detailed or more puzzling, so that the game is more interesting and requires greater engagement in conversation.

The coach gives participants a few minutes to write the information down calmly, then collects all the cards, shuffles them thoroughly, and hands them out again in such a way that no one receives their own card.

The participants' task is to find the owner of the card they received solely on the basis of the questions they ask and conversations with other people in the group. Participants move around freely, making contact and trying to work out whom the written information belongs to.

After finding the author of a card, both people link arms and continue searching together for further card owners. In this way a „human chain" gradually forms, symbolising the building of relationships, trust, and mutual connections in the group. When the chain joins into a single whole, let us ask the participants to form a circle.

CULTURAL INTEGRATION ELEMENT

Cultural task: In an intercultural group it is worth asking that at least one of the written facts relate to the participant's country of origin, e.g. a traditional dish, a favourite family place, a characteristic custom, a well-known proverb, or an important element of the culture. This way the exercise additionally supports intercultural exchange and helps the group get to know one another better.

Example questions for the game „Guess Who":

- *What is your favourite proverb in your native language?*
- *Which dish from your childhood always cheers you up?*
- *Which word in your language is the hardest to translate?*
- *Which tradition is the most important in your family?*
- *Which place in your country should everyone visit?*

TIPS FOR THE COACH

- Encourage participants to make the facts they write interesting but also comfortable to reveal. Remind them that they do not have to share anything too personal.
- In an intercultural group, make sure questions about the country of origin are asked with curiosity and respect, without judgement or a stereotyped approach. Emphasise that each participant shares only what they want to share.
- Observe the group dynamics and react if someone stays withdrawn or has trouble starting a conversation. Gently support such people, helping them begin a first interaction or directing other participants towards them.
- At the end, highlight the symbolism of the „human chain" as an image of the mutual relationships, cooperation, and trust that gradually build up in the group.

VARIATIONS (how the game/activity can be modified)

- If we see that the group is creative and has a sense of humour, we can suggest that one of the given facts be untrue.
- We can also introduce specific categories of facts, e.g. a fact from childhood, a fact from the present, and a fact about the future.

ACTIVITY 2 - energizer

„Silence and Rhythm: The Counting Game”

10 minutes

SKILLS DEVELOPED BY PARTICIPANTS

- cooperation in the group to achieve a common goal
- concentration and attentiveness to the actions of other participants
- developing listening and observation skills
- coordinating actions in a dynamically changing situation
- non-verbal communication and sensing the group’s rhythm

SETUP

- Participants stand in a circle.
- The coach starts the task.

INSTRUCTIONS (description of the game/activity)

The group’s task is to count together up to a number set by the coach. Participants say the successive numbers one at a time, at any moment, with no set order.

If two people say a number at the same time, the group starts again from 1. The exercise is repeated several times.

TIPS FOR THE COACH

- If a number is said simultaneously, let the group react on its own and return to the beginning. This is part of the process of learning to cooperate.
- The exercise often triggers laughter, frustration, or excitement. That is normal — you can discuss it afterwards as an element of teamwork.
- Vary the target number. If the exercise seems easy for the group, increase it; if it is hard, decrease it.

VARIATIONS (how the game/activity can be modified)

- To make the exercise more engaging, you can ask participants to close their eyes.
- If the group is more physically active, you can additionally add an element of physical activity with each count, e.g. a squat, a jump, a clap above the head, or another simple movement exercise.

ACTIVITY 3 - Main game

„Team Tag with a Ball”

20 minutes

SKILLS DEVELOPED BY PARTICIPANTS

- developing a strategy and planning movements within the group
- the ability to pass on and receive information while moving
- perceptiveness and spatial orientation
- the ability to cooperate in changing roles (taggers / runners)
- developing the ability to act under time pressure and in competitive conditions
- integrating participants through intense physical activity

SETUP

- Mark out a playing field appropriate to the number of participants. Make it smaller if there are fewer of them.
- Designate two teams. One team is the taggers. The other is the runners.

INSTRUCTIONS (description of the game/activity)

The taggers’ task is to catch people from the runners’ team. A catch is made by touching them with the ball — throwing is not allowed.

The person holding the ball may not move with it. The active players are the taggers without the ball, who must pass it among themselves in order to corner the runners effectively
.
A person who is caught joins the taggers’ team (puts on a marker) and helps them catch the remaining participants.
It is good to play several rounds so that different people have the chance to be both taggers and runners.

TIPS FOR THE COACH

- Before you start, it is worth doing a short demonstration – especially of what a „catch with the ball” looks like and that throwing is forbidden.
- Pay attention to whether the person with the ball really does not move and whether the ball is passed efficiently between the taggers.
- Encourage the taggers to communicate and plan their movements — the game works best when they start acting as a team rather than individually.

VARIATIONS (how the game/activity can be modified)

- If the game becomes too easy, you can introduce restrictions on the way of moving, e.g. a side-step (step-together) movement.
- To check participants’ individual skills, you can designate one runner and place the rest in the role of taggers. The runner’s goal is to avoid being caught for a set time. The exercise can be repeated for all willing participants.
- Increase the number of balls used for catching.

ACTIVITY 4 - Cooperative variant - calming down before a longer game

„Ball Chases Ball”

5 minutes

SKILLS DEVELOPED BY PARTICIPANTS

- coordinating actions and keeping the group’s working rhythm
-]non-verbal communication and observing the pace of other participants’ actions
- concentration and maintaining attention under competitive conditions
- precision and control of movement while passing the ball
- organising teamwork in a circle formation

SETUP

- Divide the participants into two teams.
- The teams stand in one circle, alternating.
- Each team receives a ball.

INSTRUCTIONS (description of the game/activity)

On the coach’s command, participants pass the ball among the members of their team, sending it around the circumference of the circle.

The winning team is the one whose ball is the first to complete five full laps.

TIPS FOR THE COACH

- Make sure all teams have a similar number of people and enough room in the circle to pass the ball freely.
- Pay attention to how the teams communicate and organise themselves – the exercise clearly reveals roles and dynamics within the team.

VARIATIONS (how the game/activity can be modified)

- To increase the difficulty, you can introduce an additional ball in each team.
- To make the task more engaging, you can specify a way of passing and catching the ball, e.g. we pass with a bounce and catch with the right hand.

ACTIVITY 5 - Team game

„Four Fires – Four Cardinal Directions”

40 minutes

SKILLS DEVELOPED BY PARTICIPANTS

- cooperation and communication in the team under competitive conditions
- fast decision-making in a dynamically changing situation
- perceptiveness and spatial orientation (using the division of the field into cardinal directions)
- reflexes and quick reaction to the opponent’s actions
- precision of the throw and control of the ball’s force and direction
- ntegrating the group through intense physical activity and joint tactical action

SETUP

- Divide the pitch into two fields.
- Behind each field, on the sides, mark out the „mothers” zones.
- Mark the fields as the cardinal directions: East, West, North, South.

INSTRUCTIONS (description of the game/activity)

The teams throw the ball at players of the opposing team while trying to avoid being hit.

A player who is hit leaves the pitch and moves to the zone designated by the coach (e.g. on the opposite side of the field – another cardinal direction), from where they can also take part in eliminating opponents.

If a player catches the ball, the team rescues one of the previously eliminated people, who returns to the main playing field.

The winning team is the one that is first to eliminate all its opponents.

TIPS FOR THE COACH

- Emphasise that the ball is thrown with controlled force, preferably below head height. Avoid throws that are too hard.
- Pay attention to whether the teams plan their throws and react together to the situation on the pitch – this is an important tactical element of the game.
- Try to settle disputed situations quickly to keep up the pace and the participants’ engagement.

VARIATIONS (how the game/activity can be modified)

- To increase the difficulty, you can introduce further balls.
- To make the game more engaging, you can vary the balls, e.g. a fitness ball.

Adaptation tips (S.T.E.P.S. Model)

S **(Space):**
In „Tag" shrink the playing field if the taggers have trouble catching the runners, or enlarge it if the runners are too fast.

T **(Task):**
In the game „Silence and Rhythm: The Counting Game" you can add a difficulty — e.g. you may not say a number to the person standing directly next to someone who has just spoken.

E **(Equipment):**
If the group is afraid of the ball, use a soft plush toy or rolled-up markers.

P **(People):**
If the group is very large, start with 3–4 taggers instead of two, to make the game more dynamic.

S **(Speed):**
In the game „Guess Who" you can introduce a time limit for finding the first person, to set the pace of the icebreaker.

SUMMARY AT THE END OF THE SESSION

Questions for participants after the session, or areas for participants to reflect on:

- When during the session did you feel the greatest trust in others?
- Which exercise required the most attentiveness to others from you?
- In which task did cooperation in the group work best? Why?
- Did you discover anything surprising in the group or in other participants?
- Where in everyday life is the ability to trust and cooperate useful?

TIPS FOR THE COACH AFTER THE SESSION

- Provide a calm, short summary of the whole session – move from experiences to conclusions.
- Emphasise that the goal was not competition but building relationships, trust, and cooperation.
- Sum up the group's main conclusions in 2–3 sentences (e.g. similarities, cooperation, communication).
- Point out specific moments of good cooperation („you could really see a team here").
- Reinforce the attitudes you observed: helping, communication, openness, engagement.
- Note who was more withdrawn – in the following sessions it is worth gradually involving them.

Scenario 4: Exchanging Views and Quick Reactions

Main theme: Spontaniczna komunikacja, adaptacja do zmian, odkrywanie podobieństw i różnic kulturowych w dynamiczny sposób

Duration: 90 minutes

Target group: Culturally diverse group, 8–20 people

Location: Open space (park, sports field) or indoor space (gym, large workshop room with chairs)

Materials: Chairs (one fewer than the number of participants) or markers to mark out the spots. A few soft balls. Optionally: a net or a line to mark out the court

Objectives and assumptions:
MAIN OBJECTIVE: Integrating the group through dynamic and engaging exercises that require quick thinking, adaptation, and spontaneous sharing of experiences.
SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES:
• Shares information about themselves and their habits in a playful form
• Discovers non-obvious cultural similarities and differences in the group
• Practises reflexes, concentration, and the ability to react quickly
• Experiences the need to adapt to constantly changing conditions in a team game

Cultural integration element: The game „Hot Chairs" is based on questions about customs, traditions, and habits from different cultures. The end of the session encourages reflection on these differences and similarities in the context of team building.

Introduction – opening (5 minutes)

WELCOME

- The coach welcomes the group and introduces the topic of the session, e.g.: „Today we are going to get to know one another through movement. A lot of fun awaits us that requires reflexes, attentiveness, and openness to other participants."
- The coach reminds everyone of the need to be careful during all physical activities, especially when changing places and in dynamic games. They emphasise being mindful of other participants, avoiding sudden collisions, and responding to the coach's signals. They also stress that what matters most is the safety and comfort of everyone in the group, not competition.

TIPS FOR THE COACH

- Ensure an energetic, positive atmosphere from the very start — your attitude will directly affect the group.
- You can start the session with a short „spark" – passing a handshake around the circle against the clock. This is a simple way to loosen up the group and build a first contact.
- Maintain eye contact with participants and smile often — it helps to build a sense of safety and openness.
- Speak clearly and with energy, but do not rush the introduction stage — it is important that the group understands the rules well.

ACTIVITY 1 - Icebreaker

„Hot Chairs”

10 minutes

SKILLS DEVELOPED BY PARTICIPANTS

- integrating participants and building a sense of safety in the group
- breaking down the first barriers in contact with other participants
- listening attentively and understanding instructions
- discovering shared interests, experiences, and traits
- empathy and respect for diversity
- developing intercultural openness and curiosity about other cultures

SETUP

- The group sets out chairs or markers in a circle – one fewer than the number of participants.
- One designated person stands in the middle of the circle; at the start this role can be played by the coach.

INSTRUCTIONS (description of the game/activity)

The person in the middle says: „Let everyone stand up and change places who…” and gives a chosen trait (e.g. „…like chocolate”, „…take their shoes off at home”).

The people the statement applies to stand up and change places as quickly as possible.

CULTURAL INTEGRATION ELEMENT

If the group is coping well with simple questions and is engaged in the game, you can encourage the introduction of questions related to the participants’ culture or country of origin. For example: „Who wears regional dress during the holidays?”

Example questions for „Hot Chairs” (cultural)

…drink tea with sugar / milk?
…use hand gestures during an intense conversation?
…had more than 3 foreign languages at school?
…know a traditional legend of their country?
…can name the capitals of at least 10 countries?
…like to eat „sweet” breakfasts?

TIPS FOR THE COACH

- Start with simple, neutral prompts so that participants quickly understand the rules and feel confident in the game.
- Run the game at a dynamic pace, but ensure safety when changing places – remind everyone to move carefully.
- Keep the group’s energy up by reacting enthusiastically to participants’ ideas and encouraging more examples.
- Support creativity – the more varied and fun the traits, the greater the group’s engagement.
- Introduce cultural elements gradually, only once the group has mastered the basic version of the game well.

VARIATIONS (how the game/activity can be modified)

- If we see that the group is creative and has a sense of humour, we can suggest that while changing places they perform movements, e.g. a dance, animal movements, etc.
- You can come up with categories of questions for each participant.

ACTIVITY 2 - energizer

„Reflexes: Buzz!”

10 minutes

SKILLS DEVELOPED BY PARTICIPANTS

- integrating participants and building trust in the group
- breaking down barriers in physical and emotional contact
- developing reflexes and speed of reaction to a signal
- hand–eye coordination and control of one’s own movements
- accepting failure and coping with a brief „elimination” from a round

SETUP

- The group stands in a tight circle. Each participant takes the following position: right hand – index finger pointing down, left hand – open palm.
- Each participant places their right index finger on the open left palm of the person standing to their right.

INSTRUCTIONS (description of the game/activity)

The coach says various words at any pace, building tension and keeping the participants’ attention.

On an agreed cue, e.g. „Buzz”, each participant simultaneously tries to catch the finger of the person next to them with their left hand, while pulling their own right finger away as quickly as possible to avoid being caught.

The person whose finger is caught performs a previously agreed task, e.g. 5 star jumps, 3 squats, a turn on the spot, or another short movement exercise.

The game is repeated several times, so that participants practise reflexes, concentration, and quick reaction to a signal.

TIPS FOR THE COACH

- At the start, show participants exactly the correct hand position and the way of catching, to avoid misunderstandings during the game.
- Start at a slower pace and with simple commands, so the group can get used to the rules and the mechanics of the game.
- Gradually increase the pace of the words you say, to raise the participants’ level of concentration and engagement.
- Ensure safety – remind everyone that the catch should be gentle and not cause discomfort.
- Choose short and fun movement tasks for those who are caught, so as to keep a good atmosphere and energy in the group.
- Emphasise that the aim of the game is reflexes, concentration, and having fun, not competition at all costs.

VARIATIONS (how the game/activity can be modified)

Each participant in turn says any words. These can also be similar-sounding words, so-called decoy words, meant to make concentration harder and increase the element of surprise. Only on the agreed cue, e.g. „Buzz”, does everyone simultaneously try to catch the finger of the person next to them.

ACTIVITY 3 - Main game

„Throw-Over”

20 minutes

SKILLS DEVELOPED BY PARTICIPANTS

- integrating participants and building trust in the group
- breaking down barriers in physical and emotional contact
- hand–eye coordination and control of one’s own movements
- the ability to anticipate and react to a changing situation
- motivation to act and engagement in the game
- cooperation and shared responsibility for how the game unfolds in the group

SETUP

- Mark out a playing area and hang up a net or a rope separating the two fields. You can use a volleyball court or create a playing space, e.g. between trees outdoors.
- Then divide the participants into two teams, which line up on opposite sides of the net.

INSTRUCTIONS (description of the game/activity)

The task of the participants in both teams is to catch the ball and throw it back over to the other side of the net.

After making a throw, the player runs across to the other side and lines up at the back of their team’s row.

The aim of both teams is not competition but working together and making as many passes as possible so that the ball does not fall to the ground.

In subsequent rounds you can introduce different ways of throwing and catching, e.g. one-handed, with a bounce, from behind

TIPS FOR THE COACH

- Before you start, demonstrate the correct way of throwing and running across to the other side of the net after a throw.
- Pay attention to the smoothness of movement and the continuity of the chain of passes – make sure participants do not stop unnecessarily after a throw.
- Encourage participants to communicate and signal to one another their readiness to catch — the game flows best when both sides act rhythmically and attentively.

VARIATIONS (how the game/activity can be modified)

- After each throw, the player says a short word in their language (e.g. „good morning”, „thank you”, „birthday”) and, while running across, briefly gives its meaning or translation.
- After each throw, the participant performs a simple movement task, e.g. 3 jumps, 2 star jumps, a turn on the spot, or another short activating exercise.

Session Scenarios

4

Ready-to-use lesson plans for team-building activities

ACTIVITY 4 - Cooperative variant - calming down before a longer game

„Blanket Ball”

15 minutes

SKILLS DEVELOPED BY PARTICIPANTS

- cooperation and coordinating actions in a pair and in the whole team
- fast decision-making under team-game conditions
- motor coordination and control of the ball while throwing and catching
- responsibility for the team’s shared result
- following the rules of fair play and fair competition
- flexibility and readiness to change partners in the team

SETUP

- Divide the participants into two teams and place them on the two sides of the net.
- The teams pair up.
- Each team receives a blanket or towel.

INSTRUCTIONS (description of the game/activity)

The first pair holding the blanket has to throw the ball over to the other side of the net, then pass the blanket to the next pair.

The pair on the other side of the net must catch the ball, then throw it back and pass the blanket to the next pair in their row.

A point is scored by the team after whose throw the opposing team fails to catch the ball.

Every few points we change the pairs.

TIPS FOR THE COACH

- Make sure every pair understands the sequence: throw catch throw back pass the blanket.
- Make sure the pair changes happen smoothly and without chaos – it is best to set a fixed rotation.
- Encourage communication within pairs (e.g. the cue „one, two, three” at the throw).
- Observe whether all teams have equal chances and, if needed, adjust the arrangement or the pace of the game.
- Motivate participants and emphasise cooperation more than the result itself.

VARIATIONS (how the game/activity can be modified)

- With a skilled group you can modify the game by changing the balls or, on hot days, even by using water balloons.
- If the competition is enjoyed and is run in a playful way without malice, you can mark out additional scoring zones where the ball may land.

ACTIVITY 5 - Team game

„Volleyball – Catch-and-Throw Volleyball”

30 minutes

SKILLS DEVELOPED BY PARTICIPANTS

- **cooperation and communication in the team during a dynamic game**
- **coordinating group actions and dividing roles during a play**
- **reflexes and anticipating the ball’s flight path**
- **hand–eye coordination when catching and throwing the ball**
- **resilience to mistakes and quickly returning to the game after a failed play**

SETUP

- **Divide the participants into two teams and place them on the two sides of the net.**
- **The teams spread out in the fields marked out by the coach.**

INSTRUCTIONS (description of the game/activity)

The teams’ task is to throw the ball over the net so that it lands on the opponent’s court, while at the same time defending their own field. The ball must be caught with both hands, usually above the head (the „basket”). You may not run with it, and the throw must be made quickly – usually within 3 seconds.

Each team is allowed a maximum of three contacts with the ball (two passes) before throwing it over to the other side of the net. To involve all participants, the same player may not catch the ball twice in a row.

After each point, the game is restarted with a so-called serve. It is made from behind the end line of the court, usually as a throw from above the head or from in front of the chest.

If a team commits one of the following faults, the point and the right to serve go to the opposing team:

• the ball lands on their own court,

• after a throw the ball hits the net or goes out of the court,

• the ball is held too long (playing against the clock),

• a player touches the net.

TIPS FOR THE COACH

- Before starting, explain the rules thoroughly and show the correct way of catching the ball (the „basket”) and making a serve.
- Check whether participants understand the limit of 3 contacts with the ball and the rule that the same person may not catch twice in a row.
- Keep the game flowing – if needed, remind everyone of the 3-second limit for making a throw.
- Encourage teamwork and quick communication between players.
- If there are a lot of faults, you can simplify the rules (e.g. extend the time for a throw or increase the number of contacts).
- Rotate the servers so that everyone has the chance to start the game.

VARIATIONS (how the game/activity can be modified)

- If the throwing-and-catching game becomes too easy, you can introduce an extra element – tapping the ball with the fingers after catching and tossing it up.
- Ask the teams to count the passes among themselves and to the opponent in the various languages used by the participants.
- Assign people from different countries to keep the score in different languages, which will additionally make the game more engaging and varied.

Adaptation tips (S.T.E.P.S. Model)

S **(Space):**

In „Hot Chairs” make sure there is enough room between the chairs and the centre of the circle to avoid collisions. In „Throw-Over” enlarge the playing area if the group needs more movement.

T **(Task):**

In „Buzz!” you can add a rule that people who are „caught” must perform a fun task (e.g. say „good morning” in another language, do a squat, etc.).

E **(Equipment):**

If you do not have chairs, use markers (cones/cards) on the ground that participants have to stand on.

P **(People):**

With a smaller group in „Throw-Over” introduce a second ball and two rows on each side, to increase the dynamics and the need for concentration.

S **(Speed):**

In „Hot Chairs” the coach can speed up the pace of giving prompts, to increase the level of adrenaline and spontaneity.

SUMMARY AT THE END OF THE SESSION

Questions for participants after the session, or areas for participants to reflect on:

- What was easiest and what was hardest for you during today’s activities?
- Did you notice that over time it became easier for you to cooperate with other people?
- What helped you communicate better with the other participants?
- How did you react to mistakes or failed plays – what helped you then?
- Did you notice differences in the way participants from different cultures act?
- In your opinion, what most affected the team’s success?

TIPS FOR THE COACH AFTER THE SESSION

- Note whether the group achieved greater ease in communication compared with the start of the session.
- Write down which elements of cultural integration were taken up naturally by the group, and which required your initiative.
- Pay attention to the group dynamics: whether leaders or withdrawn people emerged, and whether roles changed.
- Assess how the adaptation element (S.T.E.P.S.) worked – whether modifications were needed and how they affected the session.
- Note conflict situations or difficulties in cooperation and how they were resolved.

Scenario 5: Identity and Expression: A Shared Rhythm

Main theme: Synchronizacja, mowa ciała, wyrażanie siebie i odkrywanie wspólnego tempa grupy

Duration: 90 minutes

Target group: Culturally diverse group, 8–20 people

Location: Gym, large workshop room, or flat ground outdoors

Materials: Speaker and music (various genres and tempos), 3–4 soft balls, sashes or tape to mark out a line/course, cones. hula hoops (various sizes).

Objectives and assumptions:
MAIN OBJECTIVE: Strengthening group cohesion through exercises in collective coordination and movement expression that allow a better understanding of a partner's non-verbal signals.
SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES:

- Practises attentiveness to others' movements and adjusts their own pace to the group
- Experiences expressing emotions and identity through movement and gestures
- Builds self-confidence in public actions (in front of the group) in a safe atmosphere
- Recognises the diversity of non-verbal communication styles in the group

Cultural integration element: : The session allows a discussion about body language and „personal space", which differ from culture to culture. The „Mirrors" exercise lets participants introduce elements of traditional dances or gestures characteristic of their countries of origin.

Introduction – opening (5 minutes)

WELCOME

- The coach welcomes the group and introduces the topic of the session: „Today we will check whether we can act like a single organism — attentively, together, and reacting to one another". They then briefly explain that the aim will be to practise cooperation, concentration, and quick reaction to signals, without unnecessary words or prior planning.
- The coach checks how the group manages simple synchronisation, to show what today's tasks are about. Participants stand freely in front of the coach so they can see them well. The participants' task is to clap simultaneously on the coach's visual signal (e.g. raising a hand, a look, a gesture), without any counting out loud or spoken announcements. The exercise is repeated several times, and the coach can vary the pace, the length of the pause, and the type of signal, to increase the group's level of concentration and attentiveness. After each attempt you can briefly stop and check whether the group was closer to full synchronisation.

TIPS FOR THE COACH

- Ensure a calm but clear start – your posture and the pace of your speech will immediately set the group's level of concentration.
- Make sure all participants can see you well – arranging them in a semicircle or loose circle makes it much easier to pick up the signals.
- Vary the type of signal (hand, eye contact, gesture) to keep attention and force the group into constant observation.
- Avoid commenting on individual mistakes – focus on the work of the whole group as a single organism.
- Take care of the atmosphere – the exercise should be calm but at the same time engaging and building tension in a positive sense.

ACTIVITY 1 - Icebreaker

„Rhythmic Welcome"

10 minutes

SKILLS DEVELOPED BY PARTICIPANTS

- **integrating participants and building a sense of safety in the group**
- **breaking down the first barriers in contact with other participants**
- **remembering names and building relationships in the group**
- **developing concentration and attentive listening**

SETUP

The group stands in a circle.

INSTRUCTIONS (description of the game/activity)

PThe first person introduces themselves, saying their name, then performs a simple movement they have made up (e.g. a jump, a bow, a turn, a clap, or a hand gesture). The movement should be short, clear, and easy for the whole group to repeat.

The other participants repeat that person's name together in chorus and precisely reproduce the movement performed. The goal is the greatest possible agreement and synchronisation of the whole group.

The next person in order introduces themselves, adding their name and a new movement. The group repeats both the name and the movement of the previous person, then adds the next sequence. In this way a chain of names and movements is created, which gradually gets longer, engaging the memory, concentration, and cooperation of all participants.

CULTURAL INTEGRATION ELEMENT

If a participant gives their name in a version translated into the language of the country where the session takes place, ask them to also give how their name sounds in its original form in their country of origin.

TIPS FOR THE COACH

- Ensure a calm but clear start – participants must fully understand the rule of „name + movement + repetition by the group".
- At the start, do the first example yourself, to loosen up the group and show the expected level of energy and the simplicity of the movement.
- Encourage participants to be creative, but if needed gently simplify movements that are too complicated.
- Support the group in repeating – if mistakes appear, repeat the sequence calmly together with the participants, without judging.
- Pay attention to more shy people – you can encourage them, but do not force them into overly expressive movements.
- Emphasise the integration element – getting to know names and building relationships is more important than perfectly reproducing the movements.

VARIATIONS (how the game/activity can be modified)

- You can add another element to the name and movement, e.g. a sound.
- The participant who introduced themselves can point to the next person, who must then perform the task.

ACTIVITY 2 - energizer

„Mirrors and Shadows”

10 minutes

SKILLS DEVELOPED BY PARTICIPANTS

- integrating participants and building trust in pair work
- breaking down barriers in physical and emotional contact
- developing attentive observation and concentration on the other person
- developing empathy through experiencing the roles of „leader” and „follower”
- developing patience and attentiveness in contact with another person
- openness to cultural diversity and ways of expressing movement

SETUP

- Participants pair up and stand facing each other.
- All pairs spread out so that they have free space to exercise.

INSTRUCTIONS (description of the game/activity)

One person (A) plays the role of the „actor” and performs slow, smooth movements with the whole body or selected parts of it. The other person (B) is the „mirror” and their task is to reflect those movements as precisely as possible at the same time, keeping the smoothness, pace, and direction of the movement. We encourage the movements to be dance elements from the country they come from, or an element of a national sport.

After 2–3 minutes the roles are swapped – the „actor” becomes the „mirror”, and the „mirror” takes over the role of the „actor”. This way both people have the chance to experience both leading and following, which strengthens empathy, cooperation, and mutual attunement in movement.

TIPS FOR THE COACH

- Show a short example together with one participant, to clearly illustrate the difference between the role of the „actor” and the „mirror”.
- Make sure the „actor’s” movements are slow and clear – if needed, remind them about pace and smoothness.
- Encourage participants to maintain eye contact, but without pressure – if someone feels uncomfortable, they can focus on the movement.
- If the group has trouble, reduce the range of movement (e.g. only the hands or the torso) before moving on to the whole body.
- At the end you can briefly ask which role was easier and why, to introduce an element of reflection.

VARIATIONS (how the game/activity can be modified)

Group variant: one person in the middle of the circle leads the movements of the whole group.

ACTIVITY 3 - Main game

„Synchronised Chain”

20 minutes

SKILLS DEVELOPED BY PARTICIPANTS

- building trust between participants through working in a chain
- developing concentration and maintaining attention in a dynamic situation
- patience and perseverance in pursuing the goal despite setbacks
- planning and co-creating solutions (especially when setting up the obstacle course)

SETUP

- Divide the group into 2–4 teams.
- Each team lines up in a row. The person at the back places their hands on the shoulders of the person in front.
- The coach sets up obstacle courses. The same one for each group.
- You can ask one of the groups to set up the obstacle course themselves. After each exercise we ask a different group to set up the courses.

INSTRUCTIONS (description of the game/activity)

Each group’s task is to complete the obstacle course without breaking the chain. If the chain is broken, the group returns to the starting line and begins the attempt again.

TIPS FOR THE COACH

- Ensure safety – check the obstacle route and remove potentially dangerous elements, especially if participants have their eyes closed.
- Match the difficulty of the course to the age and abilities of the group – it is better to start easier and gradually raise the level of challenge.
- Emphasise that cooperation is key, not speed – the group is to act together, not individually.
- If the group often breaks the chain, stop the exercise and briefly discuss what can be improved in communication and cooperation.
- Pay attention to the people at the back of the chain – they are the ones steering the group, so their communication is crucial.

VARIATIONS (how the game/activity can be modified)

- Everyone except the last person in the row has their eyes closed. The last person steers the group using words alone, helping participants to move safely through the space. If the task turns out to be too easy, you can make it harder by introducing an additional form of non-verbal communication – e.g. gently steering the person directly in front of you through movements of the hands or shoulders.
- You can also prepare one more demanding obstacle course and ask the whole combined group to complete it together. In this variant, cooperation, trust, and precise communication in the team become key.

ACTIVITY 4 - Cooperative variant - calming down before a longer game

„Hula-Hoop Chain”

10 minutes

SKILLS DEVELOPED BY PARTICIPANTS

- cooperation and coordinating the actions of the whole group
- concentration and attentively observing the actions of other participants
- spatial orientation and precision of movement
- the ability to work under time pressure and jointly assess the group’s capabilities

SETUP

- Line the participants up in a row and ask them to join hands.
- Hand the hula hoop to the first person.

INSTRUCTIONS (description of the game/activity)

The group’s task is to transport the hula hoop from the first to the last participant without breaking the chain.

To make the task more engaging, before starting, each participant gives the time in which they think the group will manage to complete this task.

TIPS FOR THE COACH

- Emphasise that keeping the chain unbroken is key, not the speed of completing the task.
- Encourage the group to communicate – participants should help one another and keep each other informed about the next steps.
- If the group has trouble, suggest a brief pause and a short strategy discussion without interrupting the exercise.
- At the end you can ask what most helped the group maintain smoothness and cooperation.

VARIATIONS (how the game/activity can be modified)

You can introduce a little competition by dividing the group in half. The winning team is the one that completes the task faster.

ACTIVITY 5 - Team game

„Living Basket”

40 minutes

SKILLS DEVELOPED BY PARTICIPANTS

- cooperation and communication in the team during a task-based game
- planning actions and creating a strategy for scoring points
- responsibility for the team’s shared result and the role of the „living basket”
- the ability to move without the ball and use the space
- following the rules and fair competition (fair play)

SETUP

- Divide the participants into two teams.
- For each team, mark out a scoring area – this can be a mat or an area marked with cones.
- One person from each team enters the scoring area and holds a hula hoop.

INSTRUCTIONS (description of the game/activity)

The teams’ task is, through passes, to get the ball thrown into their own „living basket”.
The person holding the hula hoop (playing the role of the „living basket”) may move only within the designated area.
The person holding the ball may not run – teams move and gain space solely through passes.
The ball is taken over by intercepting a pass or quickly picking the ball up off the ground after it falls.
The game is played for a time set by the coach.
Every few minutes the person playing the role of the „living basket” is changed.

TIPS FOR THE COACH

- Before starting, explain the role of the „living basket” thoroughly – participants must know that this person is not passive but crucial for scoring points.
- Observe the dynamics of the game and react if one team dominates – you can then introduce modifications (e.g. changing the size of the basket or the number of passes).
- Pay attention to communication within the teams – encourage participants to call one another by name and signal passes.
- Rotate the „living basket” regularly, so that everyone has the chance to experience this role and its responsibility.
- Support an atmosphere of cooperation, even in competitive conditions – emphasise good organisation, not just the result.

VARIATIONS (how the game/activity can be modified)

- To make scoring harder, you can use smaller hoops.
- The person playing the role of the „living basket” counts the passes in their language.

Adaptation tips (S.T.E.P.S. Model)

S **(Space):**

In „Chain", in a small room, limit the course to straight lines. In a large space add „dead ends" to increase the need for precise steering.

T **(Task):**

In „Mirrors" introduce a rule that you may not lift your feet off the ground — this forces greater expression of the upper body and face.

E **(Equipment):**

UUse music from different parts of the world. Ask participants whether they recognise the rhythms from their regions.

P **(People):**

If someone is not comfortable with touch (shoulders), participants in „Chain" can hold on to the ends of a shared sash or skipping rope.

S **(Speed):**

In „Rhythmic Welcome" speed up the pace with each successive person, to turn it into a dynamic coordination challenge.

SUMMARY AT THE END OF THE SESSION

Questions for participants after the session, or areas for participants to reflect on:

- When was it hard for you to adjust to the pace of others, and why?
- What was easier for you: leading (deciding) or following others?
- What was most demanding for you: concentration, movement, communication, or teamwork?
- What from today's exercises can you use in everyday cooperation with other people?

TIPS FOR THE COACH AFTER THE SESSION

- Assess at which moment of the session the group reached the highest level of synchronisation and what led to it (pace, music, type of task).
- Analyse whether participants moved freely between roles: leader–imitator, active–reactive.
- Pay attention to less active people – whether they found their role in the group and in which exercise.
- Assess whether cultural elements (movement, dance, gestures) appeared naturally in the participants' work.
- Analyse how the music affected the group's pace and energy – which genres supported synchronisation.

Scenario 6: Empathy and Concentration

Main theme: Developing empathy, building trust, concentration on a partner and the group

Duration: 90 minutes

Target group: Culturally diverse group, 8–20 people, a group that has met before.

Location: Gym, large workshop room, or flat ground outdoors

Materials: Sheets of paper and pens (one per person), scarves or eye masks (one per pair), 1 soft ball, 4 markers for bases (cones, bottles)

Objectives and assumptions:

MAIN OBJECTIVE: Strengthening bonds in the group through exercises that develop empathy, trust, and the ability to concentrate on another person and on a shared goal.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES:

- Experiences the perspective of a person who has to trust others, and of a person responsible for a partner's safety
- Practises the ability to notice and express positive traits in others
- Understands the importance of communication and cooperation in achieving a shared goal
- Improves their ability to concentrate and be attentive (mindfulness) in action

Cultural integration element: „Balls of Positivity" are an opportunity to appreciate traits arising from diversity (e.g. hospitality, openness). The summary of the „Trust Walk" allows reflection on how trust is shown in different cultural circles.

Introduction – opening (5 minutes)

WELCOME

- The coach welcomes the group and shares information about the two superpowers we will get to know today: empathy and concentration. It is precisely these that let us understand others better, listen attentively, and build authentic relationships. We will look at how they affect trust and how we can develop them in everyday situations".
- This is followed by an emphasis on the importance of mutual care and a sense of safety in the group. The coach points out that openness, respect, and attentiveness towards one another create a space in which everyone can speak freely and be heard. They also indicate that caring for other participants' comfort is the foundation of effective cooperation and helps build trust.

TIPS FOR THE COACH

- Ensure a calm atmosphere conducive to focus right from the start of the session. Speak in a gentle tone, give participants a moment to „enter" the space of the meeting and feel comfortable.
- Start with a short introductory question, e.g.: „When did you last feel that someone was really listening to you?". Let participants think for a moment, and let those who wish share a reflection. This will help open up the topic of empathy and attentiveness in a natural way.
- Listen actively to participants' answers – set an example of what you are talking about. Maintain eye contact, do not interrupt, show interest.
- Emphasise that the meeting is about shared experience and exploration, not competition or judgement. Point out that every perspective is valuable.

ACTIVITY 1 - Icebreaker

Balls of Positivity" (snowball fight)

10 minutes

SKILLS DEVELOPED BY PARTICIPANTS

- noticing positive traits in other participants
- strengthening integration and an atmosphere of trust and acceptance
- breaking down barriers in expressing opinions about others

SETUP

- The group spreads out randomly across the area.
- The coach hands everyone a sheet and a pen.

INSTRUCTIONS (description of the game/activity)

Each participant writes on the sheet one positive trait they have noticed in any person in the group. It is important that this be a sincere observation – it can concern behaviour, way of speaking, attitude, or engagement. The sheets stay anonymous, which encourages ease and authenticity.

After writing down the trait, participants crumple their sheets into small „balls", creating symbolic „snowballs".

Then the coach explains and starts a safe „snowball fight", during which participants throw the paper balls and mix them up among themselves. The exercise lasts a moment and is meant to distribute the sheets randomly around the group.

When it is over, each participant picks up one „ball", unrolls it, and reads out the written trait aloud. The coach can encourage a short reflection: how we feel hearing positive messages, and what role noticing the good in others plays in building trust and relationships in the group.

CULTURAL INTEGRATION ELEMENT

If we have people of other nationalities, we ask them to write down their observations in two languages. Each person who unrolls such a sheet reads the message in two languages.

TIPS FOR THE COACH

- Emphasise that the aim is to strengthen a positive atmosphere, notice others' strengths, and build trust in the group.
- Ask participants to make the traits they write as specific as possible (e.g. „listens attentively to others", „shares ideas") rather than general („is nice"). This way the messages will be more valuable.
- Clearly point out that we throw gently, do not aim at the face, and take care of all participants' comfort. If the group is calmer, you can shorten this element or give it a gentler form.
- Keep the energy up during the „fight", but do not prolong it – the reflective part after the exercise is key.

VARIATIONS (how the game/activity can be modified)

- After a trait is read out, the group tries to guess whom it describes. At the end (if they wish) the person can reveal themselves. This introduces an element of fun and attentiveness to others.
- Instead of throwing, participants walk around the room to music and pass the balls from hand to hand.
- When the music stops – everyone is left with one sheet. A good option for calmer groups.

Session Scenarios

6

Ready-to-use lesson plans for team-building activities

ACTIVITY 2 - energizer

„Trust Walk"

10 minutes

SKILLS DEVELOPED BY PARTICIPANTS

- building trust in the relationship with another participant
- developing responsibility for a partner's safety
- improving clear and precise verbal communication
- developing attentive listening and concentration

SETUP

- All participants set up an obstacle course.
- Participants pair up, or the coach chooses the pairs.

INSTRUCTIONS (description of the game/activity)

Participants pair up. In each pair, one person takes the role of the „Guided one" – with their eyes covered (e.g. with a mask or scarf); the other plays the role of the „Guide", who is responsible for their safety and comfort during the exercise.

The „Guide" leads their partner through the designated space – the obstacle course. They do this using calm, clear voice messages.

After about 5 minutes the roles are swapped, so that each person can experience both being guided and guiding.

After the exercise, participants stay in pairs and share a reflection for a few minutes. They can answer the questions: „How did you feel in the role of the guided person?", „What was helpful for you as a Guide?", „What built your sense of trust, and what made it harder?".

TIPS FOR THE COACH

- Remove potentially dangerous objects, make sure the route is suited to the group's abilities.
- Emphasise that the „Guided one" has the right to stop at any moment or ask for a break.
- Ask participants whether they accept physical contact. If not – suggest an alternative based solely on verbal communication.
- React if someone feels uncomfortable or if a risk arises (e.g. too fast a pace, lack of communication).
- Avoid judging, reinforce positive behaviours (e.g. good communication, care for a partner).

VARIATIONS (how the game/activity can be modified)

- The Guide may not use their voice, only touch, e.g. a tap on the shoulder
- The Guide stands in a spot designated by the coach and may not move. This way the guided person's focus on their hearing must be even more attentive.
-

ACTIVITY 3 - Main game

„Cooperation Base”

20 minutes

SKILLS DEVELOPED BY PARTICIPANTS

- improving teamwork and communication between participants in the group
- developing motor coordination (running, kicking, catching, and passing the ball)
- building the ability to think strategically and plan actions depending on the situation on the pitch
- developing endurance and general physical fitness through intense physical activity

SETUP

- Divide the group into 2 teams. The Collectors and the Runners.
- On the field, set out cones in the shape of a diamond (square).
- The Runners line up by the cones, the Collectors position themselves freely across the playing field.

INSTRUCTIONS (description of the game/activity)

The game begins with one of the Runners kicking the ball. After the kick, the participant runs to the first base, and all the other Runners already on bases move one base forward. The Runners' goal is to safely complete a full lap (all the bases) and score points by returning to the starting spot.

The Collectors' task is to quickly find the ball, pass it efficiently among themselves, and deliver it as fast as possible to the designated „finish” (e.g. to the coach or a specific spot on the pitch).

The Runners try to complete as many laps as possible, and the Collectors – to stop the play as quickly as possible by delivering the ball to the finish.

TIPS FOR THE COACH

- Before starting the game, explain the rules thoroughly – especially the Runners moving between bases and the Collectors' role.
- Keep the game flowing – start each round with a clear signal and react if the pace drops or chaos appears.
- Pay attention to cooperation within the Collectors' team – quick passing of the ball and communication are key.
- Remind everyone that there is no elimination – all participants take part in the game the whole time, regardless of the situation on the pitch.
- Announce role changes in advance – give the teams a moment to prepare for their new function.
- Emphasise the importance of cooperation rather than individual competition – the aim is to play together and engage both teams.

VARIATIONS (how the game/activity can be modified)

- If the collectors bring the ball back quickly, add more balls to the game.
- Change the delivery spot for the ball, e.g. show on your fingers a number assigned to a designated spot.

ACTIVITY 4 - Cooperative variant – calming down before a longer game

„Three-Legged“

10 minutes

SKILLS DEVELOPED BY PARTICIPANTS

- building cooperation and trust in a small group through moving together
- developing non-verbal and verbal communication in a situation of limited freedom of movement
- shaping motor coordination and synchronisation of actions between participants
- strengthening the ability to plan together and make decisions in the group

SETUP

- Group the participants into teams of three.
- Tie each trio's legs together so that a triangle is formed from each group.
- We use the arrangement of cones from the previous task.

INSTRUCTIONS (description of the game/activity)

Each group's goal is to carry the ball through all the bases without using their hands.

In this task, what counts is not time but accuracy and cooperation. The task is won by the team with the fewest drops of the ball.

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TIPS FOR THE COACH

- Emphasise that keeping balance and control of the ball is key, not the speed of completing the task.
- Note that cooperation within the trio is most important – participants must adjust their pace and movements to the others.
- Encourage the group to communicate constantly (e.g. agreeing on the direction of movement and the pace) to avoid dropping the ball and disorganisation.

VARIATIONS (how the game/activity can be modified)

- Instead of a simple square, you can mark out an obstacle course, e.g. with elements of going over or under something
- You can introduce a little competition. When a team catches up with other teams and touches one participant with one hand, those teams must do 3 squats.

ACTIVITY 5 - Team game

„Storming the Fortress“

40 minutes

SKILLS DEVELOPED BY PARTICIPANTS

- **developing teamwork and dividing roles in the group**
- **shaping the ability to communicate and make quick decisions in a dynamic situation**
- **developing perceptiveness and reflexes while defending the target against balls**
- **developing spatial orientation and the ability to move in a confined space**

SETUP

- **Divide the participants into two teams.**
- **Using cones (markers), mark out a square with sides of 5–8 metres — adjust its size to the available space and to the participants' skill and throwing strength.**
- **In the middle of the square, set up a large target, e.g. several poles, a portable goal, or a gymnastics box.**
- **The defending team takes its place inside the square, while the attacking team lines up outside its boundaries.**

INSTRUCTIONS (description of the game/activity)

The game „Storming the Fortress” involves a contest between two teams: the attacking one and the defending one. The attacking team's task is to hit the designated target, the „fortress”, with balls, while the defending team tries to prevent this by knocking away or intercepting the balls.

The attacking team throws from outside the designated field, behind the line marked with cones. Participants may pass the balls to one another, look for a good position, and cooperate to increase the effectiveness of their throws. The defending team stays inside the square and may block the balls with their whole body, catch them, and throw them back as far as possible from the playing field as quickly as they can, to make further attacks harder. Kicking the balls away is forbidden.
A point for the attacking team is awarded every time a ball directly touches an element of the „fortress” (e.g. a pole, goal, or box). You can introduce an additional rule that particularly difficult hits are worth more points.

The game is played in four rounds of 8 minutes each. After each round the teams swap roles, which lets every participant try both tasks. In the end, the winning team is the one that scores more points in total.

TIPS FOR THE COACH

- Make sure participants understand when a point is scored and what actions are allowed.
- Pay attention to safety – remind everyone that kicking the balls is forbidden and control the intensity of the defence to avoid excessive contact.
- Encourage communication and cooperation within the teams – emphasise the importance of passes, positioning, and a shared strategy rather than individual actions.
- Support a positive atmosphere – appreciate good plays, cooperation, and engagement, not just the points scored.

VARIATIONS (how the game/activity can be modified)

- One of the defenders holds an element of the „fortress” and may move slowly with it within a designated area.
- This makes aiming harder and increases the dynamics of the game.
- Mark out scoring zones on the fortress. Teams must decide whether to aim for the easier ones or risk the harder hits.
- Introduce more balls. More balls require better team organisation.
- Add an extra task after a hit on the fortress. E.g. after a throw, the participant must run around a designated point before returning to the game. This adds an endurance element.

Session Scenarios

6

Ready-to-use lesson plans for team-building activities

Adaptation tips (S.T.E.P.S. Model)

S **(Space):**

In the „Trust Walk” vary the terrain depending on the group's level.
In the „Cooperation Base” adjust the distances between bases to the participants' fitness.

T **(Task):**

In „Balls of Positivity” you can add a requirement to write 2 traits or a short justification.
In the „Trust Walk” add small tasks (go around an obstacle, step up some steps).

E **(Equipment):**

If you do not have masks, closed eyes are enough too, but participants must hold hands for safety.
Instead of a ball, use a soft beanbag.

P **(People):**

With an odd number of people in the „Trust Walk”, one pair can turn into a trio: two Guides and one Guided one, which strengthens the sense of safety.

S **(Speed):**

Shorten the „Walk” phase to 3 minutes each way, to increase the intensity of the exercise.
In the „Cooperation Base” set a time limit for the team's whole lap.

SUMMARY AT THE END OF THE SESSION

Questions for participants after the session, or areas for participants to reflect on:

- How did your sense of safety change when someone was leading you or when you were leading others?
- What emotions came up when you had to rely on someone else without control of the situation?
- What helped you cooperate better with the group – communication, observation, or something else?
- How did you react to positive information about yourself from other participants? Did anything surprise you?

TIPS FOR THE COACH AFTER THE SESSION

- Observe whether the group showed greater openness and ease of communication compared with the start of the session. This is an important indicator of building trust.
- Notice which parts of the session engaged people most emotionally (e.g. the „Trust Walk” vs. the team game) – this shows where the group experiences empathy most intensely.
- Pay attention to whether signs of greater attentiveness to others appeared in the group (e.g. waiting, listening, calmer communication).
- If difficulties arose during the session (lack of trust, chaos, competition), treat them as material to discuss in the next sessions – not as a problem to be „fixed”.

Scenario 7: Agility and Strategy

Main theme: Strategic thinking, quick adaptation to changing conditions, non-verbal communication, and teamwork

Duration: 90 minutes

Target group: Culturally diverse group, 12–25 people

Location: Bezpieczna, otwarta przestrzeń: boisko, park lub hala sportowa

Materials: Sheets of paper and pens, sashes or scarves („tails") for each participant, 2–3 soft balls (e.g. volleyballs, foam balls), markers for participants

Objectives and assumptions:

MAIN OBJECTIVE: Developing agility — both physical and mental — through games that require strategic planning, quick adaptation, and effective communication in the team.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES:

- Creates and tests strategies in a small team
- Experiences the importance of non-verbal communication in dynamic tasks
- Adapts their actions to changing rules and conditions of the game
- Practises the ability to quickly assess a situation and make decisions under time pressure

Cultural integration element: Before the main game, teams create their own system of non-verbal signs. This allows a discussion about different communication styles that may stem from different cultural backgrounds, and shows how the group's diversity influences creative solutions.

Introduction – opening (5 minutes)

WELCOME

- The coach welcomes the group and introduces the participants to the topic of the session: „Today we will develop both physical and mental agility — the ability to react quickly, adjust to changing situations, and jointly create effective strategies. During the games and tasks, what matters will be not only pace and fitness but also cooperation, communication, and carefully observing what is happening around us".
- The coach reminds everyone of the fair-play and safety rules that apply throughout the session. They emphasise the importance of mutual respect, responsibility for oneself and others, and reacting in a calm and safe way, even in situations of competition and strong emotions. They point out that the aim of the session is playing together, cooperation, and developing skills, not just winning.

TIPS FOR THE COACH

- Observe the group's level of concentration and energy.
- Encourage participants to create strategies on their own and to look for their own ways of solving problems instead of giving ready answers.
- Ensure a smooth running of the session — prepare the equipment in advance and clearly communicate the moments of changing tasks and dividing into groups.

ACTIVITY 1 - Icebreaker

„Greeting with Movement"

10 minutes

SKILLS DEVELOPED BY PARTICIPANTS

- **developing creativity by creating one's own gestures and ways of expression**
- **improving non-verbal communication and the ability to read others' gestures**
- **strengthening cooperation and attentiveness in group work**
- **overcoming shyness and building ease in social contact**

SETUP

The group stands in a circle.

INSTRUCTIONS (description of the game/activity)

Each participant in turn thinks up and presents to the group their own unique greeting gesture. It can be any movement or a short sequence of movements – e.g. a clap, a stamp, a turn, a jump, a wave of the hand, a bow, or a funny pose.

After one person presents their gesture, the whole group repeats it together, trying to reproduce the movement, pace, and energy of the performance as precisely as possible.

The game continues until every participant has shown their gesture and it has been repeated by the group.

At the end, the coach suggests a quick „greeting circle". Each person turns to the neighbour on their left and greets them with the gesture that person presented to the group earlier.

CULTURAL INTEGRATION ELEMENT

The coach encourages participants to present a greeting gesture characteristic of their culture, country, or the environment they come from. It can be a traditional way of greeting, a characteristic movement, a bow, or another symbolic gesture. This way the exercise becomes an opportunity to learn about cultural diversity, build curiosity about others, and strengthen mutual respect in the group.poznawania różnorodności kulturowej, budowania ciekawości wobec innych oraz wzmacniania

TIPS FOR THE COACH

- Start with your own example — show a simple and energetic gesture to embolden participants and give the game a relaxed character.
- Emphasise that there are no „good" or „bad" ideas. Every gesture is valuable if the participant feels comfortable with it.
- React positively to participants' creativity and sense of humour, reinforcing an atmosphere of safety and acceptance.
- If someone feels unsure, suggest a very simple movement or the option of performing the gesture together with another person.

VARIATIONS (how the game/activity can be modified)

- Participants perform their gestures together with a short greeting phrase. The group repeats both the movement and the spoken word.
- After all the gestures have been presented, the coach randomly points to a participant whose gesture the whole group must quickly reproduce from memory.
- After all participants have been introduced, we check how many greetings they have remembered. Participants move freely around the room to music. When the music stops, they greet the nearest person with that person's own gesture.

ACTIVITY 2 - energizer

„Tails Tag”

10 minutes

SKILLS DEVELOPED BY PARTICIPANTS

- developing reflexes and speed of reaction to a changing situation in the space
- improving perceptiveness and the ability to observe the surroundings
- developing the ability to make decisions under time pressure
- strengthening perseverance and engagement despite momentary setbacks

SETUP

- Each participant receives a sash, which they tuck in at the back behind the waistband of their shorts or clothing in such a way that it is visible and can be pulled out by other participants.
- Once ready, all participants spread out freely across the designated playing area, keeping safe distances between one another.

INSTRUCTIONS (description of the game/activity)

Each participant plays two roles at once — they try to protect their own sash (the „tail”), and at the same time try to grab the tails of other participants. This way everyone stays active the whole time and must simultaneously observe the surroundings, react to others’ movements, and plan their own actions.

The participants’ task is to collect as many sashes as possible by pulling them off other participants, while protecting their own „tail”. Participants hold the sashes they win in their hand.

The winner is the person who, by the end of the round, has gathered the most tails.

A participant who loses their tail does not drop out of the game. They keep playing, trying to win a new sash from others and return to full play.

TIPS FOR THE COACH

- Mark out clear boundaries for the playing field and remind participants to move only within the designated space.
- Before the game begins, show how to pull the sashes out correctly — gently and without tugging at clothing or making contact with the other person’s body.
- React to overly impulsive behaviour and remind everyone of the safety rules, especially when the game is very dynamic.

VARIATIONS (how the game/activity can be modified)

- Participants may move only in a specified way, e.g. sideways, in jumps, with a side-step, or on one leg.
- After winning a tail, the participant must perform a short task (e.g. 3 squats or a turn) before returning to play.
- We introduce „safe zones” in which, for a few seconds, no one’s tail can be taken.
- The game is played in pairs — participants hold hands and try together to win the tails of other teams.
- You can lay out obstacles or mark out narrower passages on the field, which will make moving harder and increase the need to plan movements.

ACTIVITY 3 - Main game

„Strategic Tag”

20 minutes

SKILLS DEVELOPED BY PARTICIPANTS

- developing teamwork skills by jointly planning a strategy
- shaping communication competences, including clearly conveying information and agreements in the group
- developing motor coordination, reflexes, and speed of reaction in dynamic situations
- building responsibility for the team’s shared result and mutual support within the team

SETUP

- Divide the group into two teams: the taggers and the runners.
- Mark out a playing field appropriate to the number of participants. Make it smaller if there are fewer people.
- Participants spread out freely across the playing field, and the designated taggers take up positions among them.

INSTRUCTIONS (description of the game/activity)

The people playing the role of taggers step aside and jointly work out a plan of action. Among other things, they agree on how to divide the space, the directions of movement, ways of „herding” the runners into particular zones, and the signals for communicating and changing tactics during the game. The aim of this phase is to develop cooperation, planning, and decision-making in the group.

On a clear signal from the coach, the taggers start the chase and try to touch all the running participants. A person who is caught stops on the spot and stands with arms spread, signalling being „immobilised”. They can be freed by any participant from the runners’ group by a touch of the hand or shoulder. This keeps the game dynamic and requires constant cooperation from both sides.

The taggers’ task is to immobilise all participants at the same time. Catching individual people is not enough, because the runners can free one another. To succeed, the taggers must cooperate effectively, communicate, and react flexibly to the situation on the pitch. A shared strategy and an appropriate division of roles in the team are key.

The game lasts about 5 minutes or until the taggers manage to immobilise all participants at the same time. Then the roles are swapped — a new group of taggers gets time to prepare their own strategy and discuss their approach before the next round begins.

TIPS FOR THE COACH

- Encourage the taggers to plan a strategy together, but do not give ready solutions — let the group test different approaches on their own.
- Emphasise the importance of communication within the taggers’ team. Point out that effectiveness depends more on cooperation than on the speed of individual people.
- Observe whether all participants are engaged in the game — react if someone is being left out or withdraws from the activity.
- Ensure safety during the chase — remind everyone to control their running pace, avoid pushing, and be careful when changing direction.

VARIATIONS (how the game/activity can be modified)

- With a large number of participants, designate taggers in pairs.
- If the group is open with one another, you can think up other tasks for a rescue, e.g. a hug.
- With an active group, add an extra task, e.g. a joint exercise to rescue someone.

ACTIVITY 4 - Cooperative variant – calming down before a longer game

„Wave Tag”

10 minutes

SKILLS DEVELOPED BY PARTICIPANTS

- developing cooperation and coordinating actions in a large group of participants
- improving non-verbal communication and mutually adjusting to the group’s pace
- improving reflexes and quick reaction to changes in the game situation
- building a sense of community and interdependence in teamwork

SETUP

- We designate one person as the first tagger.
- We adjust the playing field to the number of participants; the more participants, the larger the field should be.

INSTRUCTIONS (description of the game/activity)

The first tagger’s task is to touch one of the running people and add them to the chasing team.

After catching a participant, both people join hands and from that moment move around the playing field together, trying to catch the next person. Each newly caught participant joins the forming chain.

As the game goes on, an increasing number of participants form a shared „wave”, which moves together and cooperates to surround and catch the remaining runners.

An important rule is to keep the „wave” unbroken — if participants let go of hands and the chain is broken, the group may not catch further people until they join up again.

A key element of the game is the cooperation of the whole „wave” through communicating, jointly planning the direction of movement, and adjusting the pace to all the participants forming the chain.

TIPS FOR THE COACH

- Emphasise that cooperation and keeping a shared movement are most important, not the individual speed of single people.
- Encourage participants to communicate constantly — jointly agreeing on the running direction, the pace, and the way of surrounding the runners.
- Pay attention to safety when moving in a larger chain. Remind everyone to change direction carefully and avoid sudden tugging of hands.

VARIATIONS (how the game/activity can be modified)

- The runners can free caught people by touching the end of the „wave”, which requires the chasers to protect their chain better.
- We introduce two separate waves starting from different sides of the pitch, which compete to catch all the participants.

ACTIVITY 5 - Team game

„Strategic Dodgeball”

40 minutes

SKILLS DEVELOPED BY PARTICIPANTS

- developing teamwork skills by planning a shared strategy of attack and defence
- improving communication in the group, including quickly conveying information and tactical decisions
- shaping strategic thinking and decision-making under competitive conditions
- developing reflexes, speed of reaction, and motor coordination during a dynamic game

SETUP

- The participants are divided into four equal teams.
- The designated playing field, in the shape of a square or rectangle, is divided into four equal parts. Each team occupies one designated field and stays within its boundaries throughout the round.
- Two selected teams each receive one soft ball, which will be used during the game according to the rules set by the coach.

INSTRUCTIONS (description of the game/activity)

The task of all teams is to play a dynamic game of dodgeball, in which participants try to eliminate members of the opposing teams by hitting them with a soft ball according to the agreed safety rules. Before the round begins, teams have a moment to discuss their strategy. Participants jointly decide which team they want to attack first, how to divide roles within the team, and how to cooperate during defence and attack.If all the people from a given team are hit, the team loses its field. The winning team takes over the abandoned area, so its playing space grows, which can give greater opportunities for movement and attack.

People who are hit no longer take an active part in throwing and dodging, but they stay involved in the game. They can observe the situation on the pitch, support their team with strategic suggestions, and help plan the team’s further actions. The team has the chance to rescue hit participants. If a participant catches a flying ball directly in their hands, one chosen person from their team can return to the game.

The game continues until one team takes over all the fields on the board and remains the only team controlling the whole pitch.

TIPS FOR THE COACH

- Before the game begins, explain thoroughly the rules of hitting, taking over fields, and the option of rescuing participants by catching the ball.
- Ensure the participants’ safety — remind everyone that throws should be made with controlled force and that you may not aim at others’ heads.
- Encourage teams to plan a short strategy before the round begins, but make sure the agreement phase is dynamic and does not prolong the game.
- Support positive communication between participants — appreciate cooperation, planning, and joint decision-making, not just the effectiveness of throws.

VARIATIONS (how the game/activity can be modified)

- After taking over a field, the team must assign some participants to its „defence”, so that participants have to divide the team’s forces strategically.
- If a team dominates, we can introduce a limit on the number of steps with the ball — a participant may take, for example, only three steps before a pass or a throw.
- Every few minutes the coach announces a change of rules, e.g. throws only with the weaker hand, an obligation to make a pass before a hit, or a ban on attacking the same team twice in a row.
- it develops negotiation and planning of actions.
- In the cooperative version, the aim is not to eliminate the other teams but to keep as many active participants on the pitch as possible for a set time.

Adaptation tips (S.T.E.P.S. Model)

S **(Space):**

In „Tails Tag" shrink the playing field towards the end of the time, to intensify interactions and force participants to pay more attention.

T **(Task):**

In the main game, introduce a rule that a freed person must do 5 star jumps before returning to the game.

E **(Equipment):**

Use different-coloured sashes to identify the teams more easily.

P **(People):**

Jeśli w zespole są osoby o różnym stopniu sprawności, wprowadź „bezpieczne strefy", gdzie można odpocząć przez 10 sekund.

S **(Speed):**

If there are people of differing fitness levels in the team, introduce „safe zones" where you can rest for 10 seconds.

SUMMARY AT THE END OF THE SESSION

Questions for participants after the session, or areas for participants to reflect on:

- What helped you cooperate effectively in the teams?
- Which forms of communication worked best – words, gestures, or actions?
- Which role did you most often take in the teams (leader, observer, executor, strategist)?
- How did you cope with mistakes or defeat in the game?
- Did you notice differences in the ways of communicating in the group?
- How did your own systems of non-verbal signs work?

TIPS FOR THE COACH AFTER THE SESSION

- Note whether participants were able to switch between different modes of action (individual, in pairs, team, and cooperative) and how they reacted to a change of rules.
- Observe whether the group is starting to use strategies and non-verbal communication on its own without additional prompts.
- Note which teams coped better with planning and which acted more impulsively – this may point to different styles of how the group functions.
- Pay attention to the level of engagement of all participants, especially the less active ones – whether during the session they gradually joined in the group's activities.

Scenario 8: Speed and Planning

Main theme: Managing time and resources, strategic thinking, cooperation, and mutual support in situations that require quick decisions

Duration: 90 minutes

Target group: Culturally diverse group, 12–30 people

Location: A large, varied space: an extensive park (ideally), a large hall with various nooks

Materials: Cards with the task list for the „Scavenger Hunt" and pens, 10–15 small objects (e.g. plastic cups, cones, small balls), bags or baskets for collecting objects, mats, boards, or cardboard acting as „rafts", markers/cones to mark out the line, poles and ring quoits

Objectives and assumptions:

MAIN OBJECTIVE: Developing the skills of strategic planning and effective teamwork under conditions of time pressure and limited resources.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES:

- Creates and implements a strategy for dividing tasks within the team
- Experiences the dilemma between achieving the goal (speed) and ensuring the quality of execution
- Practises fast decision-making and communication in a dynamically changing situation
- Shares personal and cultural perspectives on „survival" and „cooperation

Cultural integration element: The „Treasure Hunt" contains abstract tasks (e.g. „something that symbolises hospitality"), which allows a cultural interpretation of concepts. The summary makes it possible to discuss how different cultures approach planning and time management.

Introduction – opening (5 minutes)

WELCOME

- The coach welcomes the group with the words: „Today a lot of movement, excitement, and tasks await us that will require quick thinking and good cooperation. What matters most will not be who is fastest or strongest, but how you can act together as a team. Together we will plan, make decisions, and support one another, because it is cooperation that will be the key to success today".
- The coach then goes over the rules of safety and fair play. Participants are informed of the need to be careful while performing the events, to follow the coach's instructions, and to respect other participants. The importance of fair competition, mutual encouragement, a positive atmosphere, and playing together is emphasised.

TIPS FOR THE COACH

- From the very start, build an atmosphere of adventure and a mission to be accomplished. Speak energetically and engage participants in imagining that they are a team preparing for an exceptional expedition full of challenges.
- Encourage participants to cooperate and make decisions together. Emphasise that in today's tasks the most important things will be communication, resourcefulness, and mutual support.
- Remind everyone that cleverness and a good strategy are more important than speed itself. Appreciate the teams that can communicate, plan, and act together.

ACTIVITY 1 - Icebreaker

„Treasure Hunt: Team Expedition”

20 minutes

SKILLS DEVELOPED BY PARTICIPANTS

- **developing cooperation and communication skills in the group**
- **improving planning and dividing roles within the team**
- **building relationships based on trust and cooperation**
- **developing logical thinking and problem-solving skills**

SETUP

- **Create teams of 3–5 people.**
- **Hand each group a list of objects to find.**

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INSTRUCTIONS (description of the game/activity)

Each team receives a list of things and tasks to complete within a set time. The list includes both specific objects, e.g. 2 leaves, 5 stones, or 2 shoes of a certain size, and more creative challenges that require cooperation and resourcefulness, e.g. finding „something associated with hospitality”, „something soft”, „an object the colour of the sun”, or „a thing associated with sport”. The list is adapted to the place where the activity is held.

The team’s task is to jointly plan their actions, divide roles, and gather all the items from the list. Participants must act together and return to the starting line as a whole team — what counts is not only pace but also cooperation and good organisation.

When the set time is up, the coach checks the completeness of the collected objects and whether the abstract tasks were done correctly.
The winning team is the one that is first to return with a complete collection and completes all the tasks according to the rules.

CULTURAL INTEGRATION ELEMENT

In an intercultural group, make sure the tasks to complete or the things to collect are phrased as cultural questions, e.g. What do you associate with a family dinner? What is used during the national sport in your country?

Examples of abstract tasks for the „Scavenger Hunt”

- Bring something that reminds you of home
- Find an object that could serve as a survival tool
- Take a photo in which the whole team forms one shared „machine”
- Find something that symbolises peace

TIPS FOR THE COACH

- Introduce participants to the mood of a mission or a field expedition. You can say: „You are teams of explorers and you have an important task to complete. Success depends on how well you cooperate”.
- Before starting, remind everyone of the safety rules — participants may not run in dangerous places, push, or take objects belonging to other people without permission.
- Encourage teams to divide roles. Suggest that one person can keep an eye on the list, others can look for specific objects, and someone else can be responsible for gathering the group before returning to the start.
- Emphasise that good communication and a strategy are more important than speed. Praise the teams that can organise themselves calmly and support one another.
- With the abstract tasks, encourage participants to think creatively. Do not judge by „one correct answer” only — what matters is the justification of the choice and the team’s resourcefulness.
- After the activity, do a short summary. Ask participants what helped them act best as a team and which task was the hardest.
  This way participants will notice the importance of cooperation and communication.

VARIATIONS (how the game/activity can be modified)

- Teams may communicate only with gestures or whispers. This variant develops attentiveness and creative ways of communicating.
- Instead of a ready-made list, teams get riddles or hints leading to the objects, e.g. „Find something that gives shade” or „Bring something that makes a sound”.
- Each team must move together, e.g. holding one rope, a ball, or joined hands. This way participants learn a shared pace of action.
- Instead of bringing objects, teams take photos with a phone depicting given prompts, emotions, or situations, e.g. „joy”, „team strength”, „rest after training”.

ACTIVITY 2 - energizer

„Cooperation Under Pressure”

10 minutes

SKILLS DEVELOPED BY PARTICIPANTS

- **developing cooperation and teamwork skills**
- **improving communication and planning a shared strategy**
- **developing fast decision-making under time pressure**
- **strengthening concentration and accuracy while performing the task**
- **developing physical fitness and motor coordination**

SETUP

Division into 4–5 teams of 4–6 people

INSTRUCTIONS (description of the game/activity)

Each team’s task is to move as many small objects as possible from point A to point B within a set time. These can be, for example, small balls, beanbags, cups, blocks, or other light items prepared by the coach.

The game requires good organisation, cooperation, and quick planning of actions. Teams must jointly agree on a transport strategy and divide roles so as to make the best use of the time.

Only one object may be carried at a time, the transported object may not touch the ground during carrying, every team member must actively take part in the task, and if an object falls, the team returns with it to the starting point

Teams have 3 minutes to complete the task. When the time is up, the coach counts the number of correctly transported objects. The winning team is the one that carries the most of them according to the rules of the game.

TIPS FOR THE COACH

- Give the game a dynamic and exciting character. You can present the task as a rescue mission or the transport of important „cargo” that must safely reach its destination.
- Before starting, show participants the route in detail and explain the rules on carrying objects. Make sure everyone understands when an object is considered correctly delivered.
- Encourage teams to briefly plan a strategy before the start.
- Watch over the rules of fair play and safety. React if participants start running too chaotically or pushing between teams.
- If the group is younger, you can shorten the distance or use larger objects. For older participants it is worth making the task harder, e.g. by adding obstacles or limiting the way of transport.

VARIATIONS (how the game/activity can be modified)

- Objects can be carried without using the hands. Participants come up with another way.
- The team completes the task without talking. Participants may communicate only with gestures and facial expressions.
- Each object must be carried by all the people at the same time. This variant strengthens communication and synchronisation of movements.

ACTIVITY 3 - Main game

„Evacuation: Rescue Crossing”

20 minutes

SKILLS DEVELOPED BY PARTICIPANTS

- developing cooperation and teamwork skills
- improving communication and planning a shared strategy
- shaping responsibility for completing a group task
- strengthening concentration and accuracy while performing the task

SETUP

Divide the group into 2–3 teams.

INSTRUCTIONS (description of the game/activity)

The participants are divided into teams whose task is to safely „evacuate” all their members from one side of the designated field to the other. The terrain between the points symbolises a river or a dangerous area that may not be touched. To cross to the other bank, teams are given a limited number of „rafts”, e.g. mats, cardboard, boards, hoops, or other safe elements prepared by the coach.

The team must jointly work out a strategy for moving and agree on a way of cooperating that will let all participants reach the goal without touching the ground. The rafts may serve only as places to stand on or move across — if any of them is left without contact with a participant, it „floats away”, and the coach removes it from the game.

No participant may touch the ground outside the rafts, the rafts must be in constant use by the team, the whole group must reach the other side of the field, participants themselves come up with the way of moving and passing the rafts, and what counts is cooperation, communication, and joint planning of actions.

The winning team is the one that is first to safely transport all its members to the other bank according to the rules of the game.

TIPS FOR THE COACH

- Before starting, show the boundaries of the playing field in detail and explain what „touching the river” means and when a raft is removed.
- Encourage teams to plan briefly before the start. Emphasise that calmly agreeing on a strategy often gives a better result than chaotic action.
- Observe communication within the teams. Appreciate the teams that talk to one another, help weaker participants, and make decisions together.
- If the group has trouble, give subtle hints instead of ready solutions. Let participants arrive at a strategy on their own.

VARIATIONS (how the game/activity can be modified)

- Teams may not talk while performing the task. Participants communicate only with gestures and facial expressions, which develops attentiveness and non-verbal cooperation.
- The coach gradually reduces the number of available rafts, forcing teams to plan and cooperate even better.
- Each raft has different rules, e.g.: a maximum of 2 people may stand on one, another may be moved only by one person, and yet another works only when everyone is touching it.

ACTIVITY 4 - Cooperative variant – calming down before a longer game

„Injured Passenger”

10 minutes

SKILLS DEVELOPED BY PARTICIPANTS

- developing cooperation and mutual support skills in the group
- shaping responsibility for the safety of other participants
- improving communication and cooperation while performing the task
- building trust between participants

SETUP

- Group the participants into teams of 3–4 people.
- Each group receives a blanket or towel.

INSTRUCTIONS (description of the game/activity)

Each group's task is to transport one person on the blanket from point A to point B.

The task must be done carefully and precisely, without rushing.

TIPS FOR THE COACH

- Before the activity begins, prepare a safe and even area to work in. Remove obstacles, slippery elements, and objects that participants could trip over.
- Present the activity as a mission requiring cooperation and responsibility for a team member. You can say: „Your task is to safely transport a friend so that the whole team acts together and takes care of the comfort of the person being carried”.
- Pay particular attention to safety during lifting.
- Emphasise that accuracy and cooperation are more important than speed. Encourage teams to plan their movements and jointly set the pace of transport.
- For the participants' greater comfort, remind the person sitting or lying on the blanket to inform the team if they feel unsure or uncomfortable.

VARIATIONS (how the game/activity can be modified)

- Cones, hoops, or mats are set up along the route, which the team must carefully guide the „transport” through.
- The person being carried holds a ball, beanbag, or other object that must not fall during transport. If it falls — the team returns to the start.
- After each trip, the person being transported changes, so that every participant can try both roles.

ACTIVITY 5 - Team game

„The Torch”

40 minutes

SKILLS DEVELOPED BY PARTICIPANTS

- **developing cooperation and communication skills in the team**
- **improving accuracy and motor coordination**
- **shaping fast decision-making during the game**
- **developing the ability to plan team actions**
- **developing spatial orientation and the ability to move around the playing field**
- **shaping cooperation and mutual support among participants**

SETUP

- **Divide the participants into two teams.**
- **On opposite sides of the playing field, mark out two scoring areas – they can be marked with mats or cones.**
- **Each team receives a pole or stick to use during the game.**

INSTRUCTIONS (description of the game/activity)

The game involves teams passing a ring quoit among participants and placing it on a pole (the „torch”) held by the team captain. The aim of the game is to score as many points as possible through an accurate throw of the ring onto the torch.

Players pass the ring quoit to one another with one hand. The person holding the ring may not move with it – only the participants without the ring move.

The captains of each team are in the designated zones and hold a pole or stick acting as the torch. A point is scored the moment the ring quoit is thrown and lands on the torch held by the captain.

Every few minutes, the participants playing the role of captains in the scoring zone are changed.

The winning team is the one that scores the most points in the set game time.

TIPS FOR THE COACH

- Pay attention to safety during passes and throws.
- Encourage participants to cooperate and communicate within the team.
- Change captains regularly so that every participant has the chance to play this role.
- Watch over fair play and a positive atmosphere during the game.

VARIATIONS (how the game/activity can be modified)

- A point can be scored only after a set number of passes has been made in the team, e.g. a minimum of 5.
- Instead of a pole, the captain holds a hoop or hula hoop through which the ring must be thrown.
- You can add „bonus zones” from which a hit gives 2 points.

Adaptation tips (S.T.E.P.S. Model)

S **(Space):**

In the main game, change the width of the „river” depending on the number of rafts — a wider river = a greater challenge

T **(Task):**

In the „Scavenger Hunt” add a task of learning one word in the native language of each team member that means „cooperation”.

E **(Equipment):**

Use rafts of various sizes — some will fit 3 people, others only 1.

P **(People):**

In the main game, if the teams are very large, require each raft to be operated by a minimum of 2 people.

S **(Speed):**

In the energizer, shorten the time to 2 minutes in the second round to increase the pressure.

SUMMARY AT THE END OF THE SESSION

Questions for participants after the session, or areas for participants to reflect on:

- What most helped your team cooperate well?
- During the tasks, was speed or good organisation more important? Why?
- Which activity best showed the importance of communication and cooperation?
- Did you notice that different people had different ideas for solving the same task?

TIPS FOR THE COACH AFTER THE SESSION

- After the session, create a calm atmosphere for conversation and summarising the participants’ experiences.
- Encourage participants to share their feelings and reflections about cooperation in the group.
- Appreciate not only the winning teams but above all engagement, communication, and mutual support.
- Pay attention to participants’ positive behaviours — helping others, patience, creativity, or responsibility.
- Observe the relationships between participants — who naturally took on the role of leader, who needed encouragement to act, and who best supported others.
- After the session, analyse the organisation of the space, the difficulty level of the tasks, and the duration of the events, in order to better match the next sessions to the group’s abilities.

Scenario 9: Creativity and Problem-Solving

Main theme: Creative thinking and problem-solving in a team using basic sports equipment

Duration: 90 minutes

Target group: Culturally diverse group, 12–30 people

Location: Gym, sports field, or large workshop room

Materials: 10–15 cones, sashes or scarves — one per person plus a reserve of 6–8 pieces,
3–5 balls of various types (e.g. foam, volleyball, tennis/rubber), 2 skipping ropes
Optionally: 2–3 rackets (badminton or table tennis) and 2 eye masks

Objectives and assumptions:
MAIN OBJECTIVE: Developing creative thinking and problem-solving skills through jointly designing and testing movement solutions using standard sports equipment.
SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES:

- Generates original ideas for using familiar equipment in new contexts
- Cooperates in the creative process, listening to others' ideas and building on them
- Tests and refines the team's solutions based on feedback
- Presents the results of the team's work with conviction and engagement

Cultural integration element: Different cultures know different games and sports from childhood. The exercises encourage sharing familiar games and creatively combining ideas from different cultures into one team solution.

Introduction – opening (5 minutes)

WELCOME

- At the start of the session, the coach welcomes participants and introduces them to the topic of the meeting. They explain that during today's activities the most important things will be creativity, cooperation, and openness to others' ideas.
- The coach emphasises that there are no bad ideas, and that every initiative and every effort is valuable. The aim of the session is to develop movement imagination, cooperation in the group, and to draw joy from shared activity.

TIPS FOR THE COACH

- Encourage participants to share ideas freely and appreciate every initiative.
- Do not judge participants' ideas — instead, show how they can be developed and combined with other suggestions.
- Take care of an atmosphere of safety and cooperation, reminding everyone that what counts is playing together and creativity.

ACTIVITY 1 - Icebreaker

„Unexpected Use of Equipment"

10 minutes

SKILLS DEVELOPED BY PARTICIPANTS

- **developing creativity and movement imagination**
- **the ability to think in an unconventional and creative way**
- **spontaneous reaction and movement improvisation**
- **non-verbal communication through gesture, movement, and facial expression**

SETUP

- **Participants stand in a circle**
- **In the middle of the circle the coach sets out four objects: a cone, a ball, a sash, and a skipping rope**

INSTRUCTIONS (description of the game/activity)

Participants stand in a circle, and all the items are placed in the middle.

Each person in turn chooses one object and, using movement and gestures, shows a new, unusual use for it. Words and sounds are not allowed.

The other participants' task is to guess what the person is depicting and what, in their view, the chosen object is for.

The ideas should be creative and unexpected, e.g. a cone can become a megaphone or a hat, a sash a cape or a fishing rod, and a skipping rope a lasso.

One rule applies: you may not repeat ideas that have already appeared during the game.

The game continues until every participant has presented their idea at least once.

TIPS FOR THE COACH

- Build a relaxed and humorous atmosphere — encourage participants to think up the most unusual and funny uses for the objects.
- Emphasise that in this game creativity and having fun are what count, so there are no bad or „weird" ideas.
- If someone has trouble coming up with an idea, let them use a short, few-second hint from the person standing next to them.
- Remember that the aim of the exercise is to develop imagination, spontaneity, and group integration through movement and playing together.

VARIATIONS (how the game/activity can be modified)

- Participants work in small groups. Each team jointly comes up with one new use for an object and presents it to the rest of the group.
- After the idea is guessed, the group tries to reproduce the same movement or scene at the same time in their own way.
- In addition to movement, participants can add funny noises or sound effects that help in guessing the idea.

ACTIVITY 2 - energizer

„Storm of Gestures”

10 minutes

SKILLS DEVELOPED BY PARTICIPANTS

- developing spontaneity and quick reaction to stimuli
- expressing emotions through movement, gesture, and facial expression
- developing movement expression and awareness of one’s own body
- creativity and movement imagination
- the ability to communicate non-verbally
- courage and self-confidence in presenting oneself in front of the group
- openness to various ways of expressing emotions

SETUP

- Participants stand in a circle and take a straddle position
- The coach stands in the middle of the circle.

INSTRUCTIONS (description of the game/activity)

Participants stand in a circle so that everyone has some space around them for free movement. The coach explains that during the game the most important things will be spontaneity, imagination, and quick reaction to the prompts given

The coach gives successive emotions or states, e.g. „joy”, „tiredness”, „excitement”, „pride”, „fear”, or „surprise”. The participants’ task is to immediately show their interpretation of a given feeling through movement, gesture, facial expression, or body pose. It is important not to think too long — what counts is the first natural reaction and one’s own way of expressing the emotion.

On hearing the prompt, everyone freezes at the same time in the pose they have thought up. The coach asks the group to hold the pose for about 3 seconds, so that participants can see the various interpretations of the same emotion. The coach then gives the next prompt, and the game starts again.

TIPS FOR THE COACH

- Encourage participants to react spontaneously — remind them that there is no time to analyse and no „good” or „bad” answers.
- Emphasise that everyone may express emotions differently and that all interpretations are valuable.
- Take an active part in the exercise yourself, showing your own poses and gestures. This way the group will open up more

VARIATIONS (how the game/activity can be modified)

- Instead of emotions, the coach gives sports situations, e.g. „a goal scored”, „a lost match”, „the start of a competition”, „a team’s victory”.
- The participants’ task is to show the emotion as a chosen animal might express it, e.g. a happy cat or a tired bear.
- One person shows their interpretation of an emotion, and the rest of the group tries to reproduce it exactly.

ACTIVITY 3 - Main game

„Creative Obstacle Cours”

20 minutes

SKILLS DEVELOPED BY PARTICIPANTS

- developing creativity and movement imagination
- planning and organising team actions
- cooperation and communication in the group
- the ability to make decisions together
- responsibility for one’s own safety and that of other participants
- motor coordination and physical fitness

SETUP

- Divide the participants into 2–3 teams of 4–6 people.
- Each team receives an identical set: 3–4 cones, 2–3 sashes, 1 ball, 1 skipping rope.

INSTRUCTIONS (description of the game/activity)

Each group is given the task of designing its own short obstacle course using the available sports equipment. DESIGN phase (approx. 7 minutes)

Teams jointly create an obstacle course about 5–10 metres long. The course should include at least three different movement challenges: a slalom element, an aiming or throwing element, and a „movement surprise” element, e.g. three turns, walking backwards, a two-footed jump, crawling, or another creative movement.

Participants themselves decide on the layout of the course, the order of the tasks, and the way of completing it. An important condition is that completing the whole course should take about 30–60 seconds and be safe and doable by every person in the group.

Each team presents its course to the other participants, briefly explaining the rules and showing how to perform the individual elements. Then the other groups take turns trying to complete the prepared course. Each team has two attempts at the task.

TIPS FOR THE COACH

- Encourage teams to think creatively and experiment with different movement solutions.
- Emphasise that the course does not have to be difficult — resourcefulness, cooperation, and having fun are more important.
- Remind everyone about safety when designing the courses: appropriate distances between obstacles, stable setup of the equipment, and adjusting the difficulty to the group’s abilities.
- During the presentations of the courses, support a positive atmosphere and motivate participants to cheer one another on.
- You can encourage participants to draw inspiration from sports, backyard games, or activities known from various cultures and countries.

VARIATIONS (how the game/activity can be modified)

- Selected elements of the course must be performed in pairs or by the whole team, e.g. carrying a ball together or moving along a set route holding hands.
- After testing the basic version, teams add an „expert” level with harder variants of the tasks for willing participants.

ACTIVITY 4 - Cooperative variant – calming down before a longer game

„Ball to the Target”

15 minutes

SKILLS DEVELOPED BY PARTICIPANTS

- cooperation and communication in the group
- responsibility for the team's joint action
- accuracy and precision in making passes
- concentration and focus while carrying out the task
- hand–eye coordination
- reflexes and speed of reaction
- spatial orientation and control of movement

SETUP

- The group lines up in two rows facing each other.
- At the end of the chain there is a target, e.g. a basket

INSTRUCTIONS (description of the game/activity)

The group's task is to transport the ball from the first to the last person in the team as quickly and accurately as possible through successive passes. Once the ball reaches the end of the row, the last participant makes a throw to a designated basket or target.

The exercise is done in various passing variants. The coach can change the way of passing, e.g.: a two-handed catch and throw, one-handed passes with the right hand, one-handed passes with the left hand.

TIPS FOR THE COACH

- Before the activity begins, prepare a safe and even area to work in. Remove obstacles, slippery elements, and objects that participants could trip over.
- Present the activity as a task that requires accuracy and good cooperation from the whole team. Emphasise that what counts is not only the speed of the passes but also their precision and the focus of all participants.
- Pay attention to passing technique — remind everyone about a firm grip on the ball and a controlled, calm throw to the target.
- Emphasise that accuracy and cooperation are more important than rushing itself. Encourage teams to set a rhythm of passing and to cheer one another on.
- Vary the way of passing the ball (two-handed, right or left hand), so that the task stays interesting and engages the participants' coordination.

VARIATIONS (how the game/activity can be modified)

- After making a pass, the participant must perform an additional movement task, e.g. a squat, a turn, or a jump.
- Passes are made according to the rules of a chosen sport, e.g. basketball, volleyball, handball, or rugby.
- During the game, participants may not talk — they must cooperate solely through gestures and observation.

Session Scenarios

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Ready-to-use lesson plans for team-building activities

ACTIVITY 5 - Team game

„A Game of the Participants' Own Design”

45 minutes

SKILLS DEVELOPED BY PARTICIPANTS

- creativity and creative thinking
- the ability to plan and organise team actions
- cooperation and communication in the group
- the ability to create and follow the rules of a game
- developing initiative and independence in action
- openness to the ideas of other participants
- the ability to solve problems and make decisions

SETUP

The participants are divided into two groups.

INSTRUCTIONS (description of the game/activity)

Each group's task is to create its own movement game or activity intended for two teams. The inspiration can be well-known sports, backyard games, or activities characteristic of the participants' cultures and countries of origin.

Groups may use elements of popular sports disciplines, but it is important that they add their own creative rules or unusual solutions. Participants are encouraged to introduce ideas, movement traditions, and ways of playing connected with their culture, experiences, or childhood.

After a few minutes set aside for inventing the game, the teams present the most important rules and the way of scoring and running the game to the other participants. A short round of play according to the prepared rules then takes place.

Halfway through the time, the coach stops the game, and the groups swap ideas — participants start playing according to the rules invented by the other team.

CULTURAL INTEGRATION ELEMENT

Teams, where possible, should draw on their own experiences, backyard games, national sports, or activities characteristic of various cultures.

TIPS FOR THE COACH

- Encourage participants to be creative and emphasise that what matters most is having fun and cooperation, not creating the „perfect” game.
- Remind the groups to keep the rules simple, clear, and quick to explain to the other participants.
- Encourage them to draw inspiration from their own experiences, backyard games, national sports, or activities characteristic of various cultures.
- If a group has trouble getting started, ask helper questions, e.g.: „How can you change the rules of a familiar game?”, „What could be the goal of the game?”, „How do you score points?”.
- In the summing-up part, it is worth talking about what was most interesting, most surprising, or inspired by the various cultures and experiences of the participants.

VARIATIONS (how the game/activity can be modified)

- The teams' task is to create a game that could be a sports discipline 100 years from now.
- Instead of competition, the teams create a game in which all participants must cooperate to achieve a common goal.

Adaptation tips (S.T.E.P.S. Model)

S **(Space):**

In the „Creative Obstacle Course" reduce the length of the course to 4–5 m in a small room, or extend it to 15 m outdoors. In „Ball to the Target" lengthen the distance to force the team into more advanced cooperation.

T **(Task):**

In the design phase, add a requirement that the course must use EVERY type of object from the set.
In „Ball to the Target" increase the challenge — the ball must pass through the hands of every participant before the last person makes the throw to the target.

E **(Equipment):**

If you have rackets on hand, add them to the sets — teams can use them as a slalom element or for throwing.
If you do not have a skipping rope, replace it with an extra sash spread out on the ground

P **(People):**

In small groups (under 10 people) teams jointly design one course, sharing responsibility for the individual stages. With large groups (over 20 people) each team prepares TWO shorter tasks instead of one long course.

S **(Speed):**

Shorten the course design phase to 4 minutes, to increase the pressure and the spontaneity of decisions. In „Ball to the Target" set a limit of 60 seconds to complete the whole series of passes and the throw.

SUMMARY AT THE END OF THE SESSION

Questions for participants after the session, or areas for participants to reflect on:

- At which moment of the session did you have to cooperate most as a team?
- Which creative ideas of other participants surprised or inspired you most?
- During the session, did you manage to use an idea or game known from your childhood or culture?
- What was easier for you: coming up with new ideas or carrying out other people's ideas?
- What helped you cooperate well while carrying out the tasks?

TIPS FOR THE COACH AFTER THE SESSION

- Sum up the session in a positive atmosphere, appreciating the engagement, creativity, and cooperation of all participants.
- Pay attention not only to the results of the actions but above all to the process of cooperation, communication, and mutual support.
- Try to appreciate the diversity of ideas and cultural inspirations that appear during the games.
- Observe which activities engaged the group most, and which required more support or a simplification of the rules.

Scenario 10: Rotational Leadership and Mutual Support

Main theme: Developing leadership skills through rotating leader roles, giving and receiving support, and flexibly adapting to different styles of leading a team

Duration: 90 minutes

Target group: Culturally diverse group, 12–30 people

Location: Gym, sports field, or large workshop room

Materials: Sashes or scarves — one per person plus 4 pieces to mark out the stations, 4–6 cones, 2–3 soft balls (foam, rubber, or volleyball), 1 skipping rope. Optionally: 2 eye masks

Objectives and assumptions:
MAIN OBJECTIVE: Strengthening leadership and supporting skills in the team through exercises that require rotating the leader role and consciously supporting other team members.
SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES:

- Experiences the role of a leader and a team member within the same activity
- Practises giving clear instructions and active listening
- Discovers different leadership styles in an intercultural context
- Learns to give and receive constructive peer support

Cultural integration element: During the icebreaker, participants share words meaning „leader" and „support" in their languages and briefly describe how good leadership is expressed in their cultures. The ending includes a reflection on different styles of leading a team.

Introduction – opening (5 minutes)

WELCOME

- At the start of the session, the coach welcomes participants and introduces them to the topic of the meeting. They explain that during today's activities everyone will have the chance to take on both the role of a leader and that of a person supporting the team.

- The coach then invites participants to a short conversation. They encourage the group to think about what traits the best leader they have met in their life had. Participants share their associations and examples of behaviours that helped build trust, good cooperation, and motivation in the group.

TIPS FOR THE COACH

- Build an atmosphere of safety and openness in which every participant will feel free to share their ideas and experiences.

- Emphasise that you can be a leader in many different ways — through supporting others, empathy, organisation, creativity, calmness, or courage.

- Encourage participants to discover their personal „superpowers", not necessarily connected with sport or competition.
-
- If someone has trouble identifying their strengths, suggest various categories, e.g. creativity, empathy, patience, strength, accuracy, responsibility, or the ability to cooperate.

ACTIVITY 1 - Icebreaker

„My Superpower and My Word”

10 minutes

SKILLS DEVELOPED BY PARTICIPANTS

- the ability to present oneself and speak in front of the group
- building self-worth and awareness of one’s own strengths
- interpersonal communication
- the ability to listen actively
- integration and building relationships in the group
- acceptance of cultural and linguistic diversity
- integrację i budowanie relacji w grupie
- akceptację różnorodności kulturowej i językowej

SETUP

Participants stand in a circle.

INSTRUCTIONS (description of the game/activity)

Each person in turn introduces themselves to the group by doing three short tasks: they say their name, name their „superpower” — a trait or skill that can be useful in teamwork, e.g. patience, a sense of humour, courage, creativity, perceptiveness, or the ability to support others — and give a word meaning „leader”, „support”, or another similar value in their native language.

After each statement, the whole group repeats together and out loud:
„This is [name] — the master of [superpower]!”
At the end, the coach invites the group to a short conversation and asks the question:
„Which word from another language intrigued you most, and why?”

TIPS FOR THE COACH

- Create a kind and safe atmosphere in which every participant will feel at ease when speaking in front of the group.
- Emphasise that every „superpower” is valuable — both traits connected with action and those concerning supporting others.
- Encourage participants to give personal and authentic strengths, not necessarily connected with sport or competition.
- If someone has trouble identifying their „superpower”, help them by giving examples or categories, e.g. creativity, patience, humour, courage, empathy, or good organisation.
- Make sure the group repeats the shared phrase after each statement with engagement and energy — it helps build a sense of acceptance and strengthens an atmosphere of support.

VARIATIONS (how the game/activity can be modified)

- In addition to saying their „superpower”, the participant shows it with a short gesture or movement, and the group repeats it together.
- Everyone comes up with a hero name inspired by their strength, e.g. „Captain Calm” or „Mistress of Ideas”.
- After each statement, instead of the phrase, the group performs a shared gesture of support, e.g. applause, a heart symbol, or a motivational cheer.

ACTIVITY 2 - energizer

„Captain for a Second”

10 minutes

SKILLS DEVELOPED BY PARTICIPANTS

- the ability to cooperate and act in a group
- leadership competences and taking on the leading role
- courage and self-confidence when performing in front of others
- non-verbal communication through movement and gesture
- concentration and quick reaction to signals
- motor coordination and general fitness

SETUP

- Mark out an area measuring 5x5 metres.
- Participants spread out randomly.

INSTRUCTIONS (description of the game/activity)

The coach explains that during the game everyone will have the chance to become the „captain” of the group and, for a moment, lead the others through a simple movement or exercise.

The game is started by the coach, who calls out the name of the first „captain”. The chosen person immediately shows any movement, e.g. a squat, a turn on the spot, a jump, a clap above the head, a bend, or another simple movement element. The whole group’s task is to imitate the captain’s movement as quickly and accurately as possible.

After about 10–15 seconds, the current captain loudly calls out the name of the next person from the group. The new person takes over the leader’s role and presents a different movement that has not appeared before. The game continues until many people have had the chance to lead the group.

If the captain has no idea for a movement or feels unsure, they can raise their thumb up. This is a signal that the person standing next to them can discreetly suggest a simple idea.

TIPS FOR THE COACH

- Start the game with very simple and easy movements, so that participants feel at ease and safe when playing the role of captain.
- Build an atmosphere of support and cooperation — remind the group that the participants’ task is to help one another, not to judge others’ ideas. Emphasise that every movement is good, and that engagement, spontaneity, and having fun are what matter most.
- Encourage participants to imitate the captain’s movements energetically and quickly, so that the leading person feels the support of the whole group.
- If someone takes a long time to think of a movement or feels unsure, help them overcome the stress with a shared countdown: „three, two, one, show!”.
- Remind everyone of the option to use a hint from the person standing next to them — this way participants learn to ask for help and to support others.

VARIATIONS (how the game/activity can be modified)

- All movements must relate to a chosen sports discipline, e.g. basketball, football, swimming, or tennis.
- Each successive captain adds a new movement to the previous one, creating a shared movement routine that the group must remember.
- Participants base their movements on traditional dances, gestures, or activities characteristic of various cultures.

ACTIVITY 3 - Main game

„Relay Course with Rotating Captains”

25 minutes

SKILLS DEVELOPED BY PARTICIPANTS

- **the ability to cooperate and work as a team**
- **interpersonal communication and conveying clear information**
- **leadership and organisational competences while playing the role of captain**
- **planning a strategy and making decisions in the group**
- **responsibility for oneself and the team**
- **the ability to motivate and support other participants**

SETUP

- **Divide the participants into 2–3 teams of 4–6 people. Each team receives sashes marking the team members.**
- **The coach marks out 4 stations in the room, 5–8 m apart.**

INSTRUCTIONS (description of the game/activity)

In the room or on the pitch, four task stations are set up that form a fitness-and-team course.
Each team’s task is to complete all the events in the best possible time, but communication and mutual support among participants are just as important as the result.
Station A – ball slalom: The participant completes a slalom between three cones set out in a line. The task can be done in two ways — dribbling the ball with the foot or holding it in the hands. What counts is accuracy, control of movement, and smoothness of performance.
Station B – „Spider’s Web”: Hung and arranged sashes create an obstacle resembling a spider’s web. The participant’s task is to pass under a sash hung at hip height and then jump over a second sash lying on the ground. The exercise develops agility, coordination, and spatial orientation.
Station C – accurate shot on goal: A small goal is set up from two cones. Each participant makes three attempts to throw or kick the ball at the target. The team scores a point for each hit. The task requires focus, precision, and composure.
Station D – skipping rope: The participant does five correct jumps over the skipping rope. The exercise develops movement rhythm, coordination, and concentration.
The game takes place in four rounds. In each round, one person from the team plays the role of captain. The captain does not then complete the obstacle course — their task is to lead the team. They decide the order in which the team members do the stations, observe how things are going, and support the team with motivating messages and short tips, e.g.: „Take it easy, you can do it!” „Remember to be accurate!” „You’re doing great!” „Breathe and go!”
The other participants perform the tasks one at a time, according to the strategy set by the captain. The team can decide for itself which station to start from and in what order it will tackle the successive challenges.
Each round lasts about 4–5 minutes. When it ends, the captain is changed. The outgoing leader gives the next person a short, roughly 30-second piece of feedback on the team’s work — they say what worked well and what could be improved in the next round. This way participants learn reflection, cooperation, and building positive communication.
In the last round, the teams try to beat their best time. The emotions and the team’s cheering make the final part of the game a dynamic summary of the whole activity.

TIPS FOR THE COACH

- At the start, show each station in detail and do a short demonstration with one participant, so that participants understand the rules of the game well.
- Emphasise that cooperation and mutual support are most important, not just the quick completion of the course.
- Encourage captains to use short, positive, motivating messages instead of judging participants’ mistakes.
- If the group has trouble organising their actions, remind captains that they can calmly agree on a strategy before the round begins.
- During the exercise, pay attention to safety in the slalom, the jumps, and the use of skipping ropes.
- Praise not only the winners but also: good communication, mutual help, captains’ creative ideas, and the engagement of the whole team.

VARIATIONS (how the game/activity can be modified)

- The captain may not speak — they communicate with the team only through gestures and facial expressions.
- The captain does the course together with the team, but before the start has 30 seconds to agree on the team’s strategy.
- One station stays hidden until the round begins. The team finds out about the task only during the game and must quickly change its strategy.

ACTIVITY 4 - Cooperative variant – calming down before a longer game

„Relay Course in Pairs”

10 minutes

SKILLS DEVELOPED BY PARTICIPANTS

- **the ability to cooperate in a pair**
- **interpersonal and non-verbal communication**
- **mutual trust and responsibility for a partner**
- **adjusting one’s own pace and movements to another person**
- **planning joint action and setting a strategy**
- **spatial orientation and control of movement**

SETUP

- **The group pairs up.**
- **The pairs should be mixed compared with the previous teams.**

INSTRUCTIONS (description of the game/activity)

Using the previous obstacle courses, each pair completes them in a specified way.
For the course to be completed correctly, cooperation is what counts.
The coach decides on the way of completing the courses, e.g. only on three legs.

TIPS FOR THE COACH

- Before the activity begins, ensure a quick mixing of the groups, so that participants work with different people than before. This way the exercise better develops cooperation and communication.
- Explain that in this task speed and competition are not the most important things, but joint action and mutually adjusting to a partner.
- Encourage participants to talk before the start: agreeing on a strategy, dividing roles, and the way of communicating while completing the course.
- Choose the ways of moving to suit the age and abilities of the group. Start with simpler variants and only later introduce harder challenges

VARIATIONS (how the game/activity can be modified)

- The pair completes the course without using words. Participants may communicate only with gestures and facial expressions.
- Partners have their legs tied together or are joined by a sash at the wrists. They must jointly adjust their pace and movements.
- The pair completes the course while keeping hold of a ball.

ACTIVITY 5 - Team game

„Sports Bases”

30 minutes

SKILLS DEVELOPED BY PARTICIPANTS

- **the ability to cooperate and work as a team**
- **communication and quickly conveying information in the group**
- **planning a strategy and making decisions during the game**
- **responsibility for one’s own role in the team the ability to act under time pressure**

SETUP

- **The participants are divided into two groups.**
- **On the pitch or in the room, mark out the ball-hitting spot and the defending team’s field.**
- **Leave or simplify the stations from the previous games – they must be arranged in a quadrilateral.**

INSTRUCTIONS (description of the game/activity)

The game combines elements of baseball, an obstacle course, and teamwork. One team plays the role of the attackers, and the other of the defenders.

The attacking team’s task is to hit the ball with a bat and immediately run to the first base (station). To capture the base, they must correctly perform the movement task at the station. After completing the task, the participant can run to the next base. Getting through all the bases means a point for the team.

The defending team’s task (after the ball is hit by the attacking team) is to find the ball as quickly as possible, pass it among themselves, and deliver it to the hitting spot.

If the ball returns to the starting spot before the participant finishes the task at the station — they stop at the last base they reached. If the participant does not perform the task correctly, skips a course element, or loses control of the task – they go back one base. The game is played against the clock, e.g. 4x8 minutes. Each time, we swap the attacking and defending teams.
The winning team is the one that scores more points.

TIPS FOR THE COACH

- Before the start, explain the rules of the game and the order of the bases in detail, and preferably show one round as an example, so that everyone understands how the game runs.
- Pay attention to safety when hitting the ball and running between bases — make sure participants keep a safe distance from the person hitting the ball
- Encourage the defending team to communicate efficiently and pass the ball quickly, and the attacking team — to choose the moment of running between bases thoughtfully.
- Adjust the difficulty level of the tasks at the stations to the group’s abilities — simpler tasks speed the game up, and harder ones increase its challenge.
- Take care of the rotation of roles — make sure both teams play both in attack and in defence, and appreciate cooperation and mutual support among participants.

VARIATIONS (how the game/activity can be modified)

- You can place harder movement tasks at the stations or add an extra base, which lengthens and varies the game.
- The defending team can score additional points for particularly efficient plays, e.g. delivering the ball to the hitting spot in a set number of passes.

Adaptation tips (S.T.E.P.S. Model)

S **(Space):**

In the „Relay Course with Rotating Captains” increase or decrease the distance between the stations (5–8 m) depending on the size of the room and the group’s abilities.

T **(Task):**

Adjust the tasks at the stations to the group’s level — in „Sports Bases” you can simplify or complicate the movement exercises required to capture the next base.

E **(Equipment):**

If there are not enough sashes, use cones or lines on the floor to mark out the stations and the „spider’s web”. Instead of volleyballs, you can use foam or rubber balls.

P **(People):**

With small groups, form two teams and shorten the rotation of captains; with large groups, add a third team or an extra station to avoid waiting in a queue.

S **(Speed):**

Shorten the round time in the „Relay Course with Rotating Captains” to 3 minutes to increase the dynamics, or extend it, giving teams more time to agree on a strategy.

SUMMARY AT THE END OF THE SESSION

Questions for participants after the session, or areas for participants to reflect on:

- In which game did you fit best into the role of a leader, and in which into the role of a person supporting the team?
- Which leaders’ behaviours helped the team act calmly and effectively?
- Was it easy for you to accept tips and help from others? Why?
- Which traits of a good leader did you notice in other participants?
- Did you discover a new „superpower” or skill in yourself during the session?
- What was more important during the session — quick completion of the task or good cooperation? Why?
- What emotions accompanied you while playing the role of captain?

TIPS FOR THE COACH AFTER THE SESSION

- Appreciate not only the active and self-confident people but also the participants who support others in a less visible way.
- Pay attention to how participants coped with the change of roles — from leader to team member and back.
- Observe which forms of communication best supported cooperation in the group.
- Analyse whether participants were able to give one another constructive support and feedback.
- Appreciate the cultural and linguistic diversity and the different styles of action that appear during the session.
- Note the activities that engaged participants most and evoked positive emotions — they may be valuable in the following meetings.
- After the session, consider whether the difficulty level of the tasks was appropriate to the age, abilities, and dynamics of the group.
- Assess whether participants had enough space to make decisions on their own and act creatively.
- Remember to gradually increase participants’ responsibility for organisation and cooperation in the group during the following sessions.

In preparing this document, the project team used generative AI tools solely to support language editing, proofreading, consistency checking, and text formatting. All substantive content, including data, findings, analysis, and conclusions, originates from the project team.

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