

## SPIN WOMEN: Breaking down barriers for women in sport

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### SPIN Women: Breaking down barriers for Women in Sport

The new European SPIN Women project aims at increasing participation of migrant and minority women in and through sport. Mahatma Gandhi Human Rights Organization is a project partner and participated at the kicked-off meeting in Budapest.

Looking at society at large, migrant and ethnic minority women and girls are belonging to the most excluded and vulnerable groups. Across Europe women athletes and players with a migrant or minority background are underrepresented in organised sport and their contribution to sport is often invisible.

Against this backdrop the SPIN network developed the project "Sport Inclusion of Migrant and Minority Women" (SPIN Women), which was selected as one of the successful ERASMUS+

Collaborative Partnership projects. SPIN Women aims to encourage social inclusion and equal opportunities of women and girls with an immigrant or ethnic minority background through increased participation in sports.

### Ethnic Minority Women in Sport

The seven partner organisations met on 15 & 16 February in Budapest to kick-off the new initiative. The meeting at the Budapest Sport Union Auditorium was hosted by the Hungarian partner Mahatma Gandhi Human Rights Organisation (MGHRO).

An inspiring input was provided by Balog Gyongyi, a PE teacher and activist with Roma background. She gave a presentation about the current plight of Roma in Hungary. A low education level, lack of job opportunities, low social status and no proper access to health would result in a vicious circle for poverty and segregation. For Balog education and sport are ways to break out from this. To involve Roma girls in sport would be easy at a primary level, but increasingly difficult when they grow older, since teenager would have to perform adult roles in the community.

### Barriers to proceed

Another focus of discussions was around understanding of the barriers that newly-arrived migrants such as asylum seekers and refugees face when they try to access sport. David Lenane, the FAI National Coordinator Women's Football presented the results of a survey in Ireland on the barriers for female coaches to proceed to the next levels of the coach education in Ireland. "The most common reason given was the lack of time to complete the coaching education, so we need more online elements. And there is a lack of role models, we have only two female pro license coaches, so there is hardly anyone to inspire!"

A key aim of SPIN Women is to capacity-build, empower and increase qualification of female sport actors and multipliers (coaches, administrators, referees &hellip;) with migrant or minority background.

### SPIN Women: Partners, Methods and Activities

The Erasmus+ project "Sport Inclusion of Migrant and Minority Women: Promoting sports participation and leadership capacities (SPIN Women)" is coordinated by the fairplay initiative at the Vienna Institute for International Dialogue and Cooperation VIDC. Partners are the Football Association of Ireland (FAI), the Portuguese Professional Players Union (SJPF), Camino (Germany), Unione Italiana Sport per Tutti (UISP), Liikkukaa – Sport for all (Finland) and MGHRO (Hungary).

The SPIN Women project is designed to address the needs of by enhancing the participation of migrant and minority women and girls in sport and recreational physical activities. It aims to show the different perspectives of migrant and ethnic minority women and to develop strategies to increase their involvement in sports. This includes capacity-building and empowerment components which increases the qualification and skills of female sport actors and multipliers. Furthermore, the project is conceived to raise awareness and to advocate for policy change within public authorities and sport governing bodies.

The SPIN Women project employs a critical empowerment approach and pays attention to the intersectionality of migrant and minority women. The project is the first pan-European systematic sport initiative to focus entirely on fostering the inclusion of female refugees and asylum seekers as well as women with an ethnic minority background (such as Roma) in and through sport.

Over a period of two years a range of activities and measures will be implemented. The work streams are as following: 1. Research on successful strategies and empowerment: Creating an empirical base, 2. European training and connecting sport stakeholders, 3. Transnational Networking and advocating for policy change, 4. Education and Raising public awareness, and 5. Communication, Dissemination and Evaluation.

Deliverables of the project include a study report on successful inclusion strategies, action researches, Sport Inclusion toolkit, connecting online tool, animated educational video and the (In)Visible exhibition.

## Next activities

The next activity of the project will be focus group interviews with sport educators, coaches, volunteers who work with migrant and /or ethnic minority women and girls. These group interviews will be conducted in all seven partner countries with the intent to identify successful inclusion strategies.

For more information:

Download  
the SPIN Women project flyer:

[https://sportinclusion.net/fileadmin/mediapool/pdf/spin/2018-12\\_SPIN-Women\\_folderA6.pdf](https://sportinclusion.net/fileadmin/mediapool/pdf/spin/2018-12_SPIN-Women_folderA6.pdf)

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