



***“Sport has the power to change the world. It has the power to inspire,
it has the power to unite people in a way that little else does.”***

Nelson Mandela

HANDBOOK

Green skills and Peace through Sport



Co-funded by the
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Green Skills and Peace through Sport



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1. ABOUT THE PROJECT

The main objective of the project "Green skills and Peace through Sports" [GPS] is to promote education in and through sport with a special focus on the development of EU values, green mindset and skills of the future among youth, by elaborating a Handbook with an innovative methodology.

The **specific GPS project objectives** are as follows:

1. Realizing a **transnational partnership between organisations with a mutually complementing expertise for multilateral exchange of good practices and ideas**, with a view to elaborating **innovative methodology applicable in formal & non formal education and based on Education Through Sport [ETS] approach** where physical activity and sport are tools for educational purposes: development of green mindset, sustainable competences and skills for the future among youth.
2. Elaborating and disseminating a **Handbook with innovative methodology "Green skills and Peace through Sport – GPS for the future"**, having digital version and a printed short leaflet edition, which will include the project's innovative methodology, practical examples and guidelines to assist teachers, trainers and coaches in building green skills and skills for the future through sport in youth.
3. Creating a **GPS online platform (in English)** for sharing and promotion of the project's innovative methodology, project activities and results, demonstrating the new methodology. The online platform will be an Open Educational Resource with a free and easy access for anyone interested across the EU and Western Balkans.
4. Involvement of young people in **ETS activities**, allowing them to **develop green mindset and key competences in sustainability**.
5. **Matching the skills of the future**, identified by World Economic Forum and **key competences in sustainability**, presented in the European Commission JRC report on "Sustainability competences 2020".



6. Realizing people-to-people connectivity between youth from 2 EU Member States (BG, EL) and a country from Western Balkans with a strong European perspective (RNM), with a special emphasis on **sport as a powerful tool for promotion of European values of peace and solidarity, integration and social inclusion** of young people, especially of those at risk of falling into the so-called “NEETs”.
7. Participating in **European Week of Sport 2023 & 2024** – in Bulgaria and Greece respectively, and carrying out sport competitions and events with broad participation of the general public aimed at promoting EU values, green mindset and skill formation through sport among young people.
8. Increasing the capacity of the project organisations to operate at transnational level.

Green skills and Peace through Sport

2. WHAT IS EDUCATION THROUGH SPORT (ETS)?

Education Through Sport (ETS) is an innovative methodology that uses sport and physical activity as tools for education and personal development. Unlike traditional sports training, ETS does not focus solely on athletic performance but integrates educational elements that foster personal growth, social inclusion, and life skills development. By using structured and goal-oriented sporting activities, ETS aims to teach values such as teamwork, leadership, communication, resilience, and sustainability.



History and evolution of Education Through Sport

The concept of Education Through Sport has its roots in ancient civilizations where sport was used to instill discipline and moral values. In the 19th and 20th centuries, educational theorists like John Dewey and Jean Piaget emphasized the role of experiential learning, which paved the way for using sport as an educational tool. Over the past decades, the European Union, UNESCO, and the United Nations have promoted sport as a means of education, peace-building, and youth development.

Key principles of Education Through Sport

The Education Through Sport methodology is based on several key principles:

- **Active Learning:** Participants learn by doing, engaging in real-life scenarios through sport.
- **Inclusion & Diversity:** ETS encourages participation from all backgrounds, including marginalized communities.
- **Skill Development:** Beyond physical fitness, ETS builds cognitive, emotional, and social skills.
- **Experiential Learning:** Participants reflect on their experiences to gain deeper insights.
- **Fair Play & Ethics:** ETS promotes respect, integrity, and responsibility both on and off the field.
- **Sustainability & Social Responsibility:** Activities are designed to promote environmental consciousness and community engagement.

Why is Education Through Sport effective in building life skills?

ETS is particularly effective in teaching life skills because it provides a dynamic and interactive learning environment. Through sport, young people experience teamwork, develop leadership skills, and learn how to cope with challenges. Unlike traditional classroom settings, ETS fosters engagement, motivation, and a hands-on approach to learning. It also bridges educational gaps by offering an alternative means of learning essential skills needed for both personal and professional life.



Education Through Sport in practice- examples of Application

Education Through Sport can be applied in various settings, including schools, community centers, and youth programs. Some examples of how ETS is used include:

- Sports-based leadership programs where young people take turns coaching their peers.
- Environmental awareness initiatives, such as 'Green Sports Days,' where sustainability concepts are integrated into games.
- Conflict resolution through team sports, helping youth learn negotiation and mediation skills.
- Skill-building workshops that combine sport with career readiness training.

Education Through Sport (ETS) is a powerful approach to fostering life skills, promoting inclusion, and advancing sustainability. By integrating educational values into sports, ETS offers a holistic learning experience that benefits individuals and communities. With the increasing recognition of sport as a transformative tool, ETS continues to be a driving force in shaping future generations towards a more sustainable and socially responsible world.

2.1. Skills for the future in relation to green competences

By using the Education Through Sport (ETS) approach, the project provides participants with a "GPS" for the dynamic and challenging labour market of 21st century and the spirit of reconciliation, trust and cooperation. Based on the Education Through Sport (ETS) approach, the innovative methodology matches the identified skills of the future in the *"Future of Jobs Report 2020"* of the *World Economic forum* with the green key competences in sustainability, pointed out in the European Commission JRC report on *"Sustainability competences 2020"*.

The **World Economic Forum's "Future of Jobs Report 2020"** and the **European Commission JRC report on "Sustainability Competences 2020"** both highlight the transformation of the labor market and the skills necessary to navigate future challenges. The skills identified in both reports are closely aligned, especially in terms of the competencies required for a sustainable future. Both reports emphasize the need for



adaptability, problem-solving, leadership, and collaborative skills, but with a particular focus on integrating sustainability into every aspect of professional life. As the world shifts towards a more sustainable future, these skills and competencies will be vital for driving positive environmental and societal outcomes.

The **skills of the future** outlined in the WEF report can be matched with the **green competencies** in sustainability from the European Commission's JRC report in the following way:

Analytical thinking and Innovation

- **Match with sustainability competence**

- **Systems thinking:** The ability to analyze and understand the complex interconnections within ecological, economic, and social systems aligns with the sustainability competence of systems thinking. It involves understanding the long-term impact of actions and how innovations can promote sustainability.
- **Innovation and technological solutions:** The emphasis on innovation in both reports reflects the need to innovate for sustainability. This can involve developing green technologies and sustainable processes to address environmental challenges.

Active learning and learning strategies

- **Match with sustainability competence**

- **Learning to learn:** The JRC report highlights that individuals must be equipped with the competence to continuously learn, adapt, and respond to sustainability challenges. This is similar to the future skill of active learning and strategies that emphasize the need for lifelong learning, especially in sustainable practices.

Complex problem solving

- **Match with sustainability competence**



- **Sustainable development problem-solving:** The ability to solve complex environmental and social problems is crucial in sustainability. This matches with the complex problem-solving skills noted in the WEF report, where professionals must be able to devise solutions to the pressing challenges of climate change, resource depletion, and social inequalities.

Critical thinking and analysis

- **Match with sustainability competence**
- **Critical thinking and reflection:** The ability to think critically and assess the impact of various actions on the environment and society is a core element in sustainability. This mirrors the importance of critical thinking and analysis in the WEF report, where professionals must be able to evaluate situations, understand risks, and propose solutions that are in line with sustainability principles.

Creativity, originality and initiative

- **Match with sustainability competence**
- **Creativity and innovation in sustainability:** Creativity is key to developing sustainable solutions that address challenges like climate change and resource management. The WEF's emphasis on creativity and originality matches with the need for innovative approaches to sustainability, such as sustainable product design and green entrepreneurship.

Leadership and social influence

- **Match with sustainability competence**
- **Leadership in sustainability:** Strong leadership in sustainability is crucial to drive societal change, influence policy, and lead sustainability initiatives. The WEF report emphasizes the importance of leadership, which aligns with the JRC's focus on the ability to lead and inspire others towards sustainable practices, whether at the organizational or societal level.

Technology use, monitoring and control



- **Match with sustainability competence**

- **Technological proficiency for sustainability:** As digital tools and technologies will be fundamental in creating sustainable solutions (e.g., renewable energy systems, climate modeling), the skills in technology use, monitoring, and control directly correlate with the competence to use technology for sustainability. This includes skills in data analysis, AI for sustainable solutions, and resource management tools.

Emotional Intelligence (EQ)

- **Match with sustainability competence**

- **Interpersonal communication and collaboration:** Emotional intelligence and interpersonal skills are essential for creating shared visions of sustainability and collaborating on long-term environmental goals. The ability to work across disciplines, understand diverse perspectives, and manage conflicts is fundamental in the context of sustainability.

Negotiation and persuasion

- **Match with sustainability competence:**

- **Negotiation and consensus building:** The ability to persuade stakeholders and negotiate solutions that balance environmental, social, and economic needs is central to sustainability. This competence is necessary to advocate for policy changes, build partnerships, and engage various sectors (government, business, civil society) in sustainability efforts.

Cognitive flexibility

- **Match with sustainability competence**

- **Adaptability and flexibility in sustainability:** Cognitive flexibility, the ability to adapt to changing conditions, is essential for responding to environmental crises and the evolving nature of sustainability challenges. Sustainability requires professionals to remain flexible and open to new ideas, as climate, social, and technological landscapes shift rapidly.

Technology design and programming

- **Match with sustainability competence:**



- **Green technology design:** The ability to design and implement sustainable technologies aligns with the green competence in designing technologies that reduce environmental impact. This includes developing clean energy solutions, efficient production systems, and technologies that minimize waste.

Resilience, stress tolerance and flexibility

- **Match with sustainability competence**
- **Resilience and sustainability in adverse conditions:** Resilience, particularly in the face of climate change and ecological degradation, is a crucial competence. The ability to cope with stress, adapt to unforeseen circumstances, and maintain focus on sustainability goals is highly relevant for future professionals.

3.0. SPORT AS A TOOL FOR DEVELOPMENT OF SKILLS FOR THE FUTURE AND GREEN COMPETENCES

Building the competencies identified in the **World Economic Forum's "Future of Jobs Report 2020"** and the **European Commission's JRC "Sustainability Competences 2020"** through **physical activity and sport** is a powerful and effective strategy. Sport offers a dynamic environment for developing a wide range of competencies. These competencies are essential for success in a rapidly changing world, and sports provide the perfect environment for individuals to develop resilience, leadership, problem-solving, and emotional intelligence, while also fostering a deep understanding of sustainability, teamwork, and creative problem-solving. By participating in sport, individuals can cultivate the skills necessary to thrive in the green and digital economies of the future.

Below is described how each competence can be cultivated through physical activity and sport. The provided examples included sports like football, tennis, basketball, chess, and gymnastics, which require more specialized training, advanced tactics, and hours with coaches to master the technical and strategic aspects of the game. These sports often involve complex team dynamics, high-level coordination, and deep skill development. However, High-Intensity Interval Training (HIIT) is more accessible



because it focuses on functional movements that can be performed by individuals at various fitness levels, requires minimal equipment, and can be done in a shorter amount of time. This makes it an ideal option for people looking to improve general fitness, resilience, and health without the need for extensive coaching or specialized facilities. In addition to team sports and HIIT, another form of physical activity that can support the development of green skills and sustainable practices are outdoor activities.

Outdoor activities are different types of physical activities and sports that take place outside in any outdoor space such as close parks, green zones in the cities, woods, mountains, rivers, lakes, snow areas, etc. They can vary from simple and easily accessible for everyone such as walking, hiking, running, cycling, and swimming to more complex and adventurous ones such as rollerblading, mountain biking, skiing, snowboarding, surfing, alpine climbing etc. Considering the setting where these activities are performed, they are ideal for developing a green and sustainability-aware mindset, different sets of green skills and eco-awareness. In addition to these benefits, outdoor activities are also proven to have positive benefits on physical and mental health and overall well – being.

Analytical thinking and innovation

- **How sport builds this competence:**

- In sports, especially team sports, players are constantly analyzing the situation around them. They need to assess opponents' strategies, adjust their tactics, and make split-second decisions. Sports such as football, basketball, or tennis require constant evaluation of the game and innovative responses to changing dynamics.
- Additionally, athletes often face problems such as adapting to new strategies or adjusting techniques, fostering creativity and innovation.
- Example: In a soccer match, a player must read the opposing team's formation and make real-time decisions to counteract their strategy.

- **How HIIT builds this competence:**



- HIIT requires athletes to think on their feet, adapt, and make quick decisions about how to push their bodies during short, intense bursts of activity. Each interval forces participants to analyze their own performance, assess their limits, and innovate on how to maximize the effectiveness of each set.
- Example: During a HIIT workout, an athlete may notice their heart rate is reaching a threshold in the middle of an interval. They may need to adjust their form or breathing technique to maintain intensity, essentially innovating strategies to optimize their output within the constraints of the workout.
- **How outdoor activities this competence:**
 - Outdoor settings present unpredictable challenges, requiring individuals to analyze situations, assess variables (e.g., weather, terrain, group dynamics), and adapt their strategies. Exposure to real-world problems fosters creativity and the application of theoretical knowledge in practical ways.
 - Example: Activities like orienteering, rock climbing, or mountain biking push participants to interpret maps, assess risks, and develop innovative solution.

Active learning and learning strategies

- **How sport builds this competence:**
 - Athletes engage in continuous learning as they refine their skills and adapt to new training techniques, technologies, and strategies. In training, they actively learn new moves, analyze performance, and develop new approaches to overcome weaknesses.
 - Sports also foster metacognitive skills, where athletes learn how to reflect on their own learning, adapt strategies, and integrate feedback into their performance.
 - Example: A runner continually learns how to improve time through various drills and adapts training based on performance feedback.
- **How HIIT builds this competence:**
 - HIIT requires athletes to constantly learn from their body's feedback. This includes adjusting intensity, form, and timing based on what works best for



them. HIIT also encourages individuals to reflect on their performance between rounds and adjust strategies for the next set.

- Example: After a few rounds of HIIT, an individual might realize that reducing rest time between intervals improves stamina. This self-assessment and adaptation process is key to developing active learning strategies.

- **How outdoor activities build this competence:**

- Learning in an outdoor environment is experiential, meaning individuals must continuously adapt, reflect, and apply what they learn. The physical and immersive nature of outdoor activities enhances memory retention and engagement, reinforcing lifelong learning habits.
- Example: Activities such as team-building exercises, survival skills training, or nature-based inquiry projects encourage learners to test different approaches and refine their strategies.

Complex problem solving

- **How sport builds this competence:**

- Sports present complex, dynamic challenges. For example, athletes must navigate changing conditions (weather, fatigue, game flow) while interacting with opponents and teammates. This requires strategic thinking, adaptability, and problem-solving skills.
- Example: A basketball coach must devise a game plan that anticipates the opponent's moves, balances individual performance with team strategy, and adapts mid-game as situations evolve.

- **How HIIT builds this competence:**

- HIIT training often presents complex challenges, especially as participants try to maintain peak performance across various exercises (e.g., jumping jacks, burpees, sprints). Each interval may require a different approach to maximize efficiency, which is similar to solving multi-faceted problems.



- Example: A person doing a HIIT routine of alternating burpees and high knees might need to think on the spot about how to pace themselves to avoid burnout, all while maintaining the required intensity and form. This problem-solving is crucial when the workout involves complex sequencing and energy management.
- **How outdoor activities build this competence:**
 - Outdoor activities often involve multi-layered challenges that require integrating knowledge from various domains (e.g., physics in rope climbing, skiing, mountain biking; biology and physiology in diving, alpine climbing etc). Participants develop systems thinking, learning to evaluate the situation, anticipate the risks and consequences, and adapt to dynamic conditions. These require a complex problem-solving skill. In addition, knowing that in most cases, these are individual activities or activities done in small groups, many times very distance from the other people and help if needed, nature can put participants in many situations where they need to rely on themselves and their problem-solving skills.
 - Example: Expedition-based learning (e.g., wilderness survival, navigation, or rescue simulations) demands strategic planning, resource management, and collaborative decision-making. On the other hand, activities such as alpine climbing, off-road skiing, or wild river canoeing can also put to test problem-solving and decision-making skills of the participants.

Critical thinking and analysis

- **How Sport Builds This Competence:**
 - In sports, critical thinking is essential for analyzing tactics, making decisions, and adjusting plans. Athletes must constantly assess their performance, their opponents, and how the game is progressing.
 - Example: A chess player (or any sport involving strategy, such as rugby or American football) must critically analyze both their own moves and those of the opponent to adjust strategies mid-game.



- **How HIIT builds this competence:**

- Critical thinking is used in HIIT when athletes analyze how their body is responding to the intensity and whether they need to modify their effort or strategy. It's about quickly determining the right balance between pushing oneself and maintaining proper form to avoid injury.
- Example: During a high-intensity interval of squats and mountain climbers, athletes may need to quickly assess their energy levels, adjust form to avoid fatigue, and decide whether to modify intensity for the remaining sets.

- **How outdoor activities build this competence:**

- Outdoor settings present unpredictable challenges, requiring individuals to analyze situations, assess variables (e.g., weather, terrain, group dynamics), and adapt their strategies. Exposure to real-world problems (e.g., environmental conservation projects, global warming, river pollution, etc) fosters creativity and the application of theoretical knowledge in practical ways.
- Example: activities like orienteering, rock climbing, or mountain biking push participants to interpret maps, assess risks, and develop innovative solutions. Through this process, is essential to be actively involved by anticipating all conditions and factors from the outdoor surroundings, thinking critically and based on facts from the moment, and taking innovative solutions that many times are unique and according to the actual context.

Creativity, originality and initiative

- **How sport builds this competence:**

- Creativity is key in sports, especially in moments of unpredictability, like executing a unique trick in skateboarding, creating new moves in gymnastics, or devising unconventional strategies in team sports.
- Sports foster initiative, as athletes often need to innovate in response to situations where the usual solutions don't work.



- Example: A gymnast may innovate with a combination of moves that has never been done before, or a soccer player might invent a new style of passing to outmaneuver defenders.
- **How HIIT builds this competence:**
 - HIIT challenges individuals to think creatively, especially when modifying exercises to increase their effectiveness or adapt to changing physical conditions. Creativity in HIIT can also come in the form of designing personalized workouts that push the body in new ways or combining unique movements for increased efficiency.
 - Example: An individual creating their own HIIT routine to target specific muscle groups (e.g., combining squat jumps, lunges, and sprints) demonstrates originality in developing a personalized approach to fitness that challenges traditional methods.
- **How outdoor activities build this competence:**
 - Unstructured environments in nature push individuals to think outside the box and develop innovative solutions to challenges (e.g., building a shelter with limited resources).
 - Example: adventure activities like wilderness survival, and building outdoor camps are creative problem-solving challenges and encourage originality and initiative. During camps of scout's activities, using role-playing scenarios (e.g., outdoor escape rooms, environmental storytelling) stimulates imaginative thinking and creative risk-taking.

Leadership and social influence

- **How sport builds this competence:**
 - In team sports, leadership is critical. Athletes often step into leadership roles, guiding their teammates, motivating them through tough times, and organizing team efforts to reach common goals.



- Leadership through sports extends beyond just on-field behavior; it also involves inspiring others, leading by example, and cultivating a positive team culture.
- Example: A captain of a soccer team leading the team with motivation, strategy talks, and encouragement, even when the team is losing.
- **How HIIT builds this competence:**
 - HIIT can be done in group settings, where participants must motivate each other and create a supportive, high-energy environment. Leading a HIIT class or being part of a group workout involves guiding others, demonstrating techniques, and maintaining morale even when the workout gets tough.
 - Example: A person leading a HIIT session helps others push through challenging intervals, offering motivation, correcting form, and ensuring participants stay engaged, showcasing leadership and the ability to influence others positively.
- **How outdoor activities build this competence:**
 - Outdoor settings provide opportunities to lead in high-stakes situations where decisions impact group success. Mentorship in outdoor education (e.g., older students guiding younger ones in a challenge) develops coaching skills and influence.
 - Example: activities like hiking expeditions, canoeing, leading rafting teams or team navigation challenges and orienteering help participants practice leadership by assigning roles, managing risks, and motivating teams. It provides an opportunity to experience the leadership role but also to be in a position to follow when someone else is more competent or experiences in certain situation. On the other hand, being a leader in some outdoor activities and challenges is often related to being a role model and impacting the participants by motivating them with a positive example.

Technology use, monitoring and control

- **How sport builds this competence:**



- Sports are increasingly integrated with technology. Athletes use wearable devices (like fitness trackers), video analysis, and apps to monitor performance, assess improvements, and fine-tune techniques.
- This helps athletes understand the role of technology in achieving peak performance and how to use technology for sustainability (e.g., energy-efficient sports equipment, green stadiums).
- Example: An athlete uses heart rate monitors and GPS tracking to analyze their performance and adjust training plans accordingly.
- **How HIIT Builds This Competence:**
 - Many athletes use technology (e.g., fitness trackers, apps, heart rate monitors) during HIIT to track performance, monitor recovery time, and adjust workouts accordingly. These tools help individuals understand how their body responds to different levels of intensity, providing data to improve training.
 - Example: A HIIT participant uses a fitness tracker to monitor their heart rate during the workout. Based on real-time data, they adjust the intensity or rest periods, learning how to control their body's response to maximize performance.
- **How outdoor activities build this competence:**
 - Outdoor learning increasingly integrates GPS navigation, drones, environmental sensors, and wearable fitness tech for data collection and monitoring. Virtual reality (VR) outdoor learning apps enhance engagement and bridge digital skills with nature-based experiences.
 - Example: Activities like weather tracking, or drone-assisted mapping improve technological literacy and the ability to monitor environmental or personal performance data. The use of GPS navigation and locators is important in situations of movement in distant places in mountains or woods. Another example of use is by athletes wearing smart devices to track their performance, oxygen supply or other important physical parameters to adjust the effort accordingly.

Emotional Intelligence (EQ)



- **How sport builds this competence:**

- Sports help develop emotional intelligence by requiring athletes to regulate their emotions, deal with stress, maintain focus under pressure, and empathize with teammates and opponents.
- Athletes also learn how to handle failure, stay positive, and manage setbacks—skills that are central to sustainability and leadership.
- Example: A tennis player learning to control anger after a mistake and focusing on their next serve or match point.

- **How HIIT builds this competence:**

- HIIT forces individuals to manage emotional responses to physical stress. Whether it's pushing through the mental barrier during the most intense intervals or helping others stay motivated, emotional intelligence is developed as athletes learn to control frustration, stay positive, and support teammates.
- Example: During a particularly tough HIIT interval (e.g., burpees or sprinting), an athlete may experience frustration or exhaustion. However, through emotional regulation, they can push past these emotions and complete the interval, strengthening resilience and focus.

- **How outdoor activities build this competence:**

- Outdoor challenges require self-awareness, resilience, and emotional regulation, particularly in physically and mentally demanding situations (e.g., rock climbing, survival tasks). Many outdoor activities are individual and are mainly a fight against self. These require a lot of reflection and self-reflection (e.g., nature journaling, and guided discussions) to enhance emotional control and emotional stability.
- Example: Team-building activities in nature (e.g., trust falls, cooperative problem-solving) foster empathy and social awareness by helping individuals understand team dynamics. Individual activities such as alpine climbing, and long-distance cycling require a lot of self-awareness, and resilience that can be achieved through self – reflection practices.



Negotiation and persuasion

- **How sport builds this competence:**

- Negotiation skills are fostered in sports during team discussions, managing conflicts, and resolving differences between teammates or coaches. Persuasion is key when leading teams or advocating for resources.
- Coaches and players often need to persuade sponsors, convince teammates to follow a strategy, or negotiate with officials.
- Example: A football team captain persuades the coach to make a tactical substitution based on the dynamics of the game.

- **How HIIT builds this competence:**

- Persuading oneself or others to continue during difficult moments of a HIIT workout requires negotiation skills. Athletes may negotiate with their own body to push through the pain or persuade a teammate to keep going during a group workout.
- Example: During a tough round of HIIT, a participant encourages a teammate to finish the last few reps, negotiating a way to push through discomfort while maintaining form and achieving the goal.

- **How outdoor activities build this competence:**

- Many outdoor activities involve group decision-making, where participants must negotiate roles, resources, and strategies (e.g., determining the best route in a multi-day hike). Conflict resolution exercises in outdoor settings (e.g., scenario-based role-playing) help participants practice listening, bargaining, and reaching compromises.
- Example: Survival simulations or adventure races require teams to persuade others to adopt a certain course of action. Hiking is usually a team activity that requires negotiation between group members about the route (shorter, easier route, more challenging path for adventure). Participants must compromise by weighing risks and benefits. In such a situation, the leader might convince the group to take the selected route based on previous analyses of all factors and



- suggest for example taking the riskier but more scenic route by emphasizing the reward of better views and a sense of accomplishment.

Cognitive flexibility

- **How sport builds this competence:**

- Cognitive flexibility is critical in sport as athletes must adapt to changing game conditions, unexpected challenges, and new strategies. This is an essential competence for working in dynamic, high-pressure environments.
- Example: A soccer player switching between defensive and offensive roles depending on the needs of the team in real-time.

- **How HIIT builds this competence:**

- Cognitive flexibility is essential in HIIT training. Athletes must quickly shift between different types of exercises, adjust their pace, and mentally adapt to the changing nature of the workout. This constant switching of tasks and focus during intervals mirrors the need for flexibility in other areas of life.
- Example: A HIIT workout might alternate between sprints, push-ups, and jumping jacks. An athlete must quickly adapt to each new movement, adjusting their mental and physical focus on the fly to complete the session effectively.

- **How outdoor activities build this competence:**

- Unpredictable environments (e.g., weather changes, and terrain variations) require participants to adapt their plans and strategies in real-time and adapt to a new challenging situation. Multi-tasking and decision-making in outdoor scenarios (e.g., navigating while managing team dynamics) strengthen flexible thinking.
- Example: during orienteering a constant adjustment of navigation routes is needed based on the new information (e.g., terrain challenges, lost



teammates). In different outdoor camps and survival challenges is necessary to adapt to limited resources by finding alternative solutions (e.g., using natural materials for shelter). During some outdoor sports such as running or outdoor training is important to adjust the training plan on changed situation in the group and sometimes to unexpected group behaviors and making quick adjustments to plans.

Technology design and programming

- **How sport builds this competence:**

- While this skill might seem more aligned with tech-focused fields, sports technology development (e.g., designing motion sensors, performance tracking software) offers a pathway for athletes or sports scientists to contribute to sustainability through technological innovation.
- Example: Engineers working with athletes to design more sustainable sports equipment or technologies that reduce the environmental impact of training and competition.

- **How HIIT Builds This Competence:**

- HIIT can incorporate innovative fitness technologies, such as apps or devices that create customized training programs, track progress, and even assess performance in real-time. Understanding how these technologies work and how to leverage them for training improvements aligns with the competence of technology design.
- Example: A fitness app designs a personalized HIIT program based on the user's goals, tracking their progress, and suggesting adjustments. A fitness coach might program custom HIIT workouts for clients using smart technology.

- **How outdoor activities build this competence:**



- Technology design is seen as an ability to develop, apply, and integrate technology solutions into real-world problems. In this regard, the use of GPS, drones, and sensors in outdoor activities and outdoor education helps participants to understand how technology interacts with natural environments but also facilitates outdoor movement and performance in outdoor sports.
- Example: using drones to map terrain, monitor wildlife, or conduct search-and-rescue simulations; creating environmental sensors to track air quality, temperature, or water purity in nature reserves; learning to use mapping software and GPS coordinates to navigate.

Resilience, stress tolerance and flexibility

- **How sport builds this competence:**

- Physical activity and sport provide natural opportunities to build resilience by pushing athletes to overcome challenges, whether that's recovering from injury or maintaining performance under pressure.
- Sports teach stress management, and athletes regularly train to deal with both physical and mental stress.
- Example: A marathon runner learns mental resilience through long training hours and coping with physical exhaustion during the race.

- **How HIIT builds this competence:**

- HIIT inherently builds resilience and stress tolerance because it challenges both the body and mind. The constant shifts between high-intensity efforts and short recovery periods force participants to stay focused under stress and push through fatigue, which is essential for developing physical and mental resilience.
- Example: A HIIT workout that includes high-intensity sprints followed by bodyweight exercises (e.g., burpees) teaches an individual to maintain composure and continue performing under physical stress, strengthening their ability to deal with challenges in real life

- **How outdoor activities build this competence:**

- Outdoor activities often expose individuals to physical and psychological stress (e.g., fatigue, changing conditions, uncertainty), teaching them to manage emotions and



persist through challenges. Problem-solving in high-pressure situations (e.g., survival scenarios, endurance events) strengthens coping mechanisms.

- Example: participation in different outdoor endurance events (trail runs, cycling, and running marathons) resilience can be developed by pushing through exhaustion and discomfort. Different outdoor sports and activities put participants in situations of fear, stress, fast decision-making, etc. This supports developing resilience, better management of fear and stress, and adrenaline while staying focused on the goal. Dealing with situations of handling high-pressure decision-making, such as finding food/water and dealing with injuries can also improve resilience and stress tolerance. This also requires great mental preparedness.

4.0. GREEN SKILLS AND PEACE THROUGH SPORT - EXAMPLES FROM PRACTICE

„Green Skills and Peace through Sports“ project is a powerful combination that holds immense potential for positive change. By integrating environmental sustainability into sports activities, we can promote a green mindset and develop skills for a sustainable future. Sports can bring people from diverse backgrounds together, fostering social inclusion and breaking down barriers. A green mindset in sports plays a crucial role in promoting sustainability by fostering environmentally conscious behaviors and practices within the sports industry. In addition, in an era of increasing environmental challenges, it is crucial to cultivate a green mindset and develop the skills necessary for sustainability. Sports can catalyze promoting environmental awareness and responsibility. By incorporating eco-friendly practices in sports events and facilities, we can minimize our ecological footprint. Furthermore, individuals involved in sports can act as ambassadors for environmental conservation, spreading awareness and inspiring others to adopt sustainable practices.

Based on the GPS project methodology it was suggested a series of activities combine physical activity and green mindset development. Following we present selected examples of best practices that show how different types of sports activities and different settings can be used to develop green skills and sustainable mindsets.



4.1. A green walk in Komotini

The goal of the suggested activity “**A green walk in Komotini**” (explained in Table 1) is to elaborate a map of the city, highlighting the main points of interest with a numbered red pin, however, without providing the toponym (place name) on the map. The primary objective is to discover the city on foot or by running depending on the team's physical activity level based on this city map. Additionally, the aim is to gather accurate information and provide correct answers about those points of interest the participants had to discover.

For example:

- It was built in the 1800s and constitutes an example of (ecclesiastical) church architecture of the Ottoman era occupation.....
- In Komotini, Greece, they are manually processing tin, even today. Here we have what we call:.....

To ensure that the project aligns with its objectives, the participants should be required to seek assistance from the locals to find the correct answers whenever necessary. Secondly, while on the walking tour, they should be required to observe and record the components of the activity that were considered as “green” as “active” and European or not, based on to the project guidelines. To ensure they have been visited all numbered/pinned spots, the team should send a group photo in front of each sight via Viber. Finally, the participants should be required to submit their observations and provide suggestions for future improvements through the web.

Table 1. Implementation plan template for “Green walk in Komotini”

GPS A Green Walk in Komotini “The Hidden Treasure”		
Implementation plan template		
GOALS	<i>Identify the planned goals of the project overall.</i>	Objectives: The main aim of the project is to promote education in and through sports with a special focus on the development of EU values, green mindset, and skills of the future among



& OBJECTIVES		youth. To achieve this goal, the team at Democritus University made, according to the project, a walking tour around the city of Komotini which they called the “Hidden Treasure”.
SCOPE	Participants <i>Identify the participants.</i>	Target Groups: The project targets young people aged 16-24, 50% who have fewer opportunities, due to socio-economic reasons, in the transition from education to the labour market. The project also targets physical educators and coaches, teachers and trainers, and educational and sports institutions. To achieve this goal, apart from the academics, 30 participants from two main sources were recruited: first-year students and a youth volunteering organisation called Hexagon. The participants were, aged 16 to 25 years, with 70% of them working while studying (including 20% Erasmus students currently residing in Greece), 10% working while attending night school and 20% having some type of disability. For the aim of the project, the participants were divided randomly into four groups based on the color of the card they were asked to select in the very beginning of the tour (blue, red, green and yellow).
	Geographical Coverage <i>Identify geographical coverage.</i>	The city of Komotini, Thrace, Greece
	Timeframe <i>Describe the action's timeframe.</i>	• Prior to the festival, two workshops were organized to raise awareness about the importance of sports in promoting inclusion, diversity and wellbeing through sport and we received positive feedback. • The Game “The Hidden Treasure” lasted almost three hours.



RESOURCES	Personnel <i>Specify personnel required for the surveillance of the action.</i>	Three (3) academics and five (5) students were used to conduct surveillance on the action.
	Equipment <i>Specify required equipment required for the surveillance.</i>	A city map of Komotini, highlighting the main points of interest with a numbered red pin. However, the toponym (place name) was not visible.
	Facilities <i>Specify the activities required.</i>	No facilities
ACTION PLAN	Main tasks <i>Provide a chart of the main tasks/stops with estimated start dates and timeframe (duration of each task/stop).</i>	1. The project team conducted a needs assessment to identify the specific needs of the target groups and developed a detailed project plan. 2. The team also identified and recruited a diverse group of young people, passionate about sports and eager to learn new skills, , who have been providing training and resources to develop sporting abilities, and teamwork soft skills. 3. Prior to the festival, workshops were organized to raise awareness about the importance of sports in promoting inclusion, diversity and wellbeing through sport and received positive feedback. 4. A city map of Komotini was created highlighting the main points of interest with a numbered red pin. However, the toponym (place name) was not visible. 5. The primary objective was to discover the city on foot or by running, depending on the team's physical activity level, using this city map.



		6. The participants were required to gather accurate information, seek assistance from the locals and provide correct answers about the points of interest. To ensure they visited all numbered points, the participants had to send a group photo in front of each sight via Viber. 7. While on the walking tour, participants were required to observe and record the components of the activity that were considered as “green”, based on the project guidelines. 8. Finally, the participants were required to submit their observations and provide suggestions for future improvements through the web.
COMMUNICATION STRATEGY DURING THE ACTION	<i>Specify methods for involving the community in the action.</i>	Some of the participants were from the Youth volunteering organization that cooperated directly with the municipality of Komotini.
REPORTING UPON COMPLETION OF THE ACTION	<i>Describe to whom and how the results will be reported.</i>	Preparation of a comprehensive report or presentation summarizing the project's objectives, deliverables, and outcomes. Share the action with relevant stakeholders, such as management representatives or educational institutions, team members as well as any relevant organisation.
BUDGET	<i>Provide a detailed budget of the funds required to implement the action.</i>	300 Euros
FUTURE ACTIONS	<i>Suggest plans for the future actions/replication implemented by the partners.</i>	Presentations Workshops or training sessions Webinars and online events Publications Collaborations and networking



Existing “green” points that were identified in the town

- **Pedestrian and bike-friendly infrastructure** with pedestrian-friendly sidewalks, bike lanes, and pedestrian-only streets, accessible to people with disabilities.
- **Community gardens** where residents can grow their own produce to promote sustainability.
- **Bike lanes and bike-sharing stations** accessible to people of all abilities and backgrounds, promoting both environmental sustainability and inclusivity.
- **Pedestrian zones**, and car-free pedestrian zones in the downtown area for outdoor events to foster a sense of community.

Further “green” suggestions

- **Urban parks and green spaces** in downtown areas, offering residents and visitors a place to relax and connect with nature, wheelchair-accessible.
- **Eco-friendly public transportation**, such as electric buses. Implement electric vehicle charging stations.
- **Solar charging stations** for electronic devices and electric vehicles in public spaces, designed to offer free or affordable charging.
- **Digital wayfinding and information kiosks** that will provide information available in multiple languages on nearby green spaces and cultural spots, ensuring that these kiosks are accessible to all, including people with disabilities.
- **Art installations** that focus on environmental themes, both as educational tools and artistic expressions, raising awareness about sustainability.
- **Wi-Fi green spaces** to encourage remote work, digital learning, and leisure activities in spaces equipped with renewable energy sources like solar panels to power Wi-Fi routers.
- **Local eco-friendly businesses** in the downtown area, such as organic cafes, and sustainable fashion boutiques.
- **Recycling and waste management stations** for easily accessible recycling and waste management stations with clear signage and digital information on what can be recycled and where to dispose of different types of waste.



- **Pocket parks** that can include native plants, benches, and digital information kiosks that provide information on local flora and fauna.
- **Solar-powered charging stations** for electric vehicles and mobile devices. These stations can promote the use of clean energy and for residents and tourists.
- **Wi-Fi accessibility** in green spaces and pedestrian zones, allowing people to stay connected and access digital resources while enjoying the outdoors.
- **Local artisan markets** featuring locally-made, sustainable products, and handicrafts to support local businesses and sustainable consumer choices.
- **Cultural diversity celebrations, such as** cultural festivals and events in public spaces that celebrate the city's diversity, highlighting different cuisines, music, dance, and traditions, fostering a sense of inclusion.
- **The name tags** of the participants could be made with **recycled paper**
- **At the end of the activity, we would give a large fabric bag** with the project's logo as a gift to be used for the students' shopping in order to avoid the use of plastic bags
- **Each group could have a big bag and at the points of interest we could collect trash.**
- **We could have some plants** that we would give to the participants and with our help we would also plant some in the points of the map
- **We could create some recycling bins**, for example, for paper and plastic at every station, we could also put this improvised bin.
- **Each group could collect trash from the street and whoever collected the most would win something symbolic and ecological like eco-friendly.**
- **If everyone took photos of as many plants, trees and flowers** they would see on the street and then make a collage with plants of the area.
- **There could be some specific questions about the flora and fauna of the city** and it could be turned into a Kahoot game which is very fun and easy using a mobile phone, individually or in groups.



4.2. GPS sports challenge game - developing green skills through sport

The "GPS sports challenge game" is an innovative, interactive experience designed to integrate physical activity, sustainability, teamwork and critical thinking. This game allows young people (ages 16-24) to actively engage in learning key competencies while reinforcing EU values and green skills through sport.

By participating in this challenge, students will not only enhance their physical abilities but also develop essential skills such as leadership, adaptability, environmental awareness, and problem-solving—all of which are crucial for navigating the transition to higher education and the labor market.

Objectives of the game

- Promote education through sport, fostering green skills and sustainability.
- Encourage teamwork, leadership, and communication through interactive challenges.
- Develop problem-solving and strategic thinking in real-time sports scenarios.
- Provide a fun, engaging, and inclusive learning environment.
- Raise awareness of environmental issues and eco-friendly practices.

The game is structured as a team-based challenge, where participants complete a series of sport-based activities designed to build key competencies while embracing sustainability and fair play.

How to play - game setup

- Team formation: Divide participants into teams of 4-6 players.
- Game duration: Recommended time: 60-90 minutes.
- Location: Can be conducted in a gym, park, sports field, or urban environment.
- Required materials: Stopwatch, cones, small recyclable items, quiz sheets, digital access (Kahoot or other quiz platforms), and a map (if applicable).
- Game format: Players rotate through different challenge stations, each designed to develop a specific skill.



Challenge stations & scoring criteria

The GPS Sports Challenge Game consists of four interactive challenge stations, each focusing on physical activity, sustainability and key skill development.

Table 2. GPS Sports challenge game template

Challenge name	Description	Skills developed	Scoring criteria
Green sprint challenge	Teams run a relay race while collecting recyclable materials (e.g., bottles, paper) along the way.	Sustainability awareness, speed, agility, teamwork.	25 points for teamwork, 25 points for sustainability awareness, 25 points for speed, 25 points for creativity.
Sports strategy puzzle	Teams solve a puzzle related to EU sustainability goals and explain how sports can promote green practices.	Critical thinking, communication, problem-solving.	25 points for problem-solving, 25 points for teamwork, 25 points for correct answers, 25 points for creativity.
Leadership & teamwork obstacle course	One team member is blindfolded and must be guided through an obstacle course using verbal instructions from teammates.	Leadership, trust, communication, adaptability.	25 points for communication, 25 points for teamwork, 25 points for speed, 25 points for successful completion.
Sustainability quiz & Kahoot challenge	Teams answer a set of sustainability-related questions via Kahoot.	Knowledge of sustainability, digital literacy, teamwork.	25 points for correct answers, 25 points for participation, 25 points for teamwork, 25 points for digital engagement.
Total possible points: 100 points per team  The team with the highest total score wins the challenge!			

Post-game reflection & discussion

At the end of the game, facilitators should lead a group discussion to reflect on:

- What did you learn about teamwork and leadership?
- How did sustainability play a role in this game?
- What were some challenges you faced, and how did you overcome them?



- How can sports be used as a tool for promoting environmental awareness?

Encouraging reflection will enhance the learning experience, allowing participants to connect the game's challenges to real-world skills and future career readiness.

Why this game matters

The GPS Sports Challenge Game serves as an engaging tool to reinforce the core themes of the Handbook—green skills, EU values, and education through sport. By combining physical activity with sustainability-focused learning, this game empowers young people to take active roles in environmental responsibility, leadership, and personal development. This game can be adapted for different age groups, locations, and skill levels, making it an effective, scalable approach for teachers, coaches, and trainers across various educational and sports institutions.

Green skills and Peace through Sport

Implementation in schools, universities & youth centers

To integrate this interactive learning model, educators and trainers can:

- Conduct this game as part of sports education programs or community events.
- Adapt the activities for local sustainability initiatives.
- Incorporate it into youth leadership and career readiness training.
- Use it as a team-building exercise for students in transition phases (e.g., secondary school to university or university to the job market).

This hands-on, educational approach ensures that students develop key competencies while experiencing the transformative power of sport. By introducing the GPS Sports Challenge Game into the Handbook, we create a dynamic and impactful way to blend sports, sustainability, and education. This game provides a memorable and engaging experience while equipping young people with the essential skills they need for their future careers and social responsibility.



3. Two-day outdoor camp

The suggested activity “Two-day outdoor camp” is a GPS event organized in Veles at a marked tracking trail to Mountain Hub Papradiste. It is a two-day event that includes 10 km walking on a marked trail through a wood and hill terrain and preparation for a camp and overnight there. The final goal is to come to the Mountain Hub Papradiste where different outdoor activities and games are planned and performed. These include team challenges, teambuilding games, preparation of campfire, meals, and storytelling of personal experiences from the day and overall experiences with outdoor activities and camps. The primary objective is to discover nature and its beauties by organizing an outdoor camp that integrates physical activities, social activities, and learning. The final goal is to improve the green skills of the participants by engaging them in outdoor sports and activities that build not only their competencies and understanding on nature but also their personality and social skills. Table 3 provides a detail overview of performed activities and tasks.

Table 3. Implementation plan template for “Two – day outdoor camp”

GPS Two-day outdoor camp “The fun and learning outdoor”		
Implementation plan template		
GOALS & OBJECTIVES	<i>Identify the planned goals of the project overall.</i>	Objectives: The main aim of the activity is to promote education in and through sports with a special focus on the development of green mindset, and skills of the future among youth. To achieve this goal, the team of the Federation of Sports Pedagogues of Macedonia organized a two-day outdoor camp called “The fun and learning outdoor”.
SCOPE	Participants <i>Identify the participants.</i>	Target Groups: The project targets young people aged 15-18 secondary school students from different social groups in urban and rural



		schools in Veles. The project also targets PE teachers and other subject teachers (geography and biology), teacher educators, and staff from the local mountaineering association. The students from each school were led by their PE teacher, and supported by other subject teachers and teacher educators. The students voluntarily applied for participation by submitting a registration form and signing a consent form, both from the side of the students and the parents. The organization of the camps was approved by the school management of involved schools.
Green skills and Peace through Sport	Geographical Coverage <i>Identify geographical coverage.</i>	The city of Veles, North Macedonia
	Timeframe <i>Describe the action's timeframe.</i>	Prior to the camp, an announcement of the camp was shared and students were invited to participate by registering online. The announcement included all relevant information as the duration of the camp, the duration of the hiking part, eligible participants (only healthy participants were accepted), the time of departure and arrival, costs for organizing the camp, and food during the stay, required equipment, means of transport, responsible persons and teachers, detailed program etc.
RESOURCES	Personnel <i>Specify personnel required for the surveillance of the action.</i>	10 PE teachers 4 teachers from other subjects 1 teacher educator 4 staff persons from the local mountaineering club



	Equipment <i>Specify required equipment required for the surveillance.</i>	• Participants received a list of requested personal equipment. • The Mountain Hub Papradiste provided sleeping facilities and facilities needed to prepare the meals. • PE teachers provided sleeping bags as a back up option and requirement needed for the games.
	Facilities <i>Specify the activities required.</i>	The facilities of the Mountain Hub Papradiste
ACTION PLAN	Main tasks <i>Provide a chart of the main tasks/stops with estimated start dates and timeframe (duration of each task/stop).</i>	1. Design of the idea for the camp and drafting the program and requested items for submission. 2. Approval from the school management and announcement of the camp. Subscription of participants. 3. Meeting with all participants two days before the event. Information is shared related to needed equipment, technical organization, and planned activities. 4. Meeting of the group and movement to the Mountain Hub –4 hours walk with breaks 5. Accommodation in the Mountain hub, preparation of lunch 9all participants together) 6. Organization of team building activities and challenge games 7. Organization of storytelling sessions followed up with social night – music and dances 8. Sleepover and morning activities 9. Workshop for safety in mountains and eco-awareness. 10. Hiking back to the meeting point, and collection of feedback for the experience of the participants.



COMMUNICATION STRATEGY DURING THE ACTION	<i>Specify methods for involving the community in the action.</i>	School management needed to approve the program for the camp. The local mountaineering club was involved as a support.
REPORTING UPON COMPLETION OF THE ACTION	<i>Describe to whom and how the results will be reported.</i>	Preparation of a comprehensive report or presentation summarizing the project's objectives, deliverables, and outcomes. Share the action with relevant stakeholders, such as management representatives or educational institutions, team members as well as any relevant organization.
FUTURE ACTIONS	<i>Suggest plans for the future actions/replication implemented by the partners.</i>	Presentations Workshops or training sessions Promotional campaigns Publications Collaborations and networking

Reflection & discussion

At the end of camp, teachers discussed with participants and collected their feedback by leading a group discussion to reflect on:

- What was your experience with the camp?
- What did you learn?
- What did you like the most?
- What you didn't like or can be done differently?
- What were some challenges you faced, and how did you overcome them?
- How does this experience change you?
- What did you learn about yourself during the camp?
- What did you learn about teamwork and leadership?
- How did sustainability play a role in camp?
- How can similar sports events be used to promote environmental awareness?

Encouraging reflection will enhance the learning experience, allowing participants to connect the experiences from the camp with challenges to real-world skills.

Why this camp matters?

The GPS “Two days outdoor camp” serves as an engaging tool to reinforce the core themes of the Handbook—green skills, EU values, and education through sport. By combining physical activity, and outdoor participation with the development of green

skills, personal learning, and sustainability-focused learning, this activity empowered young people to take active roles in their lives and learn for the positive benefits of outdoor activities and being outdoors combined with developing personal skills related to environment protection, environmental responsibility, leadership, and personal development. This camp can be adapted for different age groups, locations, and skill levels, making it an effective, scalable approach for teachers, coaches, and trainers across various educational and sports institutions.

Implementation in schools, universities & youth centers

The same or similar organization of the camp can be done in different periods of the year when changes in nature are different and require different skills. It can be done as an extracurricular activity in schools but can be also realized over a longer period and act like a school in nature, helping to integrate outdoor movement with sustainability and green skills learning about subject-specific learning – biology, geography, science, history, etc. This hands-on, educational approach ensures that students develop key competencies while experiencing the transformative power of sport.





5.0. APPLYING THE GPS HANDBOOK

PRACTICAL TIPS FOR PHYSICAL EDUCATORS, COACHES, TEACHERS & TRAINERS

By applying the GPS methodology and handbook content, physical educators and coaches can transform sports training into a holistic development tool, equipping young people with the skills, mindset and resilience needed to thrive in their careers, communities, and personal lives.

1. Understanding the GPS approach: Education Through Sport (ETS)

- Recognize sports as an educational tool beyond physical health—use it to develop key sustainability competencies and skills of the future.
- Align training programs with EU values, environmental consciousness and career readiness.
- Introduce sports-based activities that promote leadership, teamwork, resilience and a green mindset.

2. Integrating sport-based skill development in training

A. Teaching critical thinking & problem-solving through sport

- Use game strategy sessions to encourage analytical thinking.
- Apply scenario-based learning (e.g., “What if the opponent changes tactics?”) to promote adaptive thinking.
- Encourage reflections after physical activities/ games—“What worked? What didn’t? How can we improve?”.
- Example: Have individuals to identify weaknesses in an opponent’s formation and adjust team tactics.



B. Promoting leadership & social influence

- Assign team captain roles on rotation to develop leadership in all participants.
- Create peer coaching exercises where more experienced players mentor others.
- Encourage young people to organize training drills or warm-ups.
- Example: Have a different individual each week/ day to lead part of the warm-up or strategy discussion.

C. Encouraging sustainability and green practices

- Use eco-friendly sports equipment (e.g., biodegradable cones, recycled uniforms).
- Organize outdoor training sessions in parks and green spaces to highlight environmental consciousness.
- Engage in sustainable practices, such as using reusable water bottles and setting up recycling bins at sports facilities.
- Example: Organize a plogging event (jogging + trash collection) to combine fitness with environmental action.

D. Cultivating emotional intelligence & resilience

- Introduce meditation or mindfulness exercises before and after training to enhance focus and stress management.
- Teach individuals how to handle failure constructively (e.g., post-game discussions about lessons learned).
- Encourage a growth mindset by emphasizing progress over perfection.
- Example: Individuals analyze how they handled frustration in a physical activity/ match and set improvement goals.

3. Applying HIIT & functional training to develop competencies

- Use high-intensity interval training (HIIT) workouts to simulate real-world challenges, building endurance, focus and adaptability.
- Encourage goal-setting and self-reflection—each session should have clear objectives linked to skill-building.



- Example: Group HIIT challenge – teams take turns designing workouts that balance physical endurance and strategic planning.

4. Connecting sport to career readiness

- Align sport-based experiences with workplace skills, such as teamwork, adaptability, communication and problem-solving.
- Organize “Career in sport” days where professionals share how sport helped them succeed in non-sport industries.
- Link leadership roles in training to project management and entrepreneurship skills.
- Example: Student-led coaching program – older students train younger ones, mimicking workplace mentoring.

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5. Using sport and sport events to promote EU values & social inclusion

- Design multi-national or mixed-background teams to foster inclusion and cultural exchange.
- Discuss fair play principles and how they relate to justice and equity in broader society.
- Organize sports-for-good initiatives, such as fundraising games for environmental or social causes.
- Example: EU sports exchange week – students from different backgrounds form mixed teams to participate in physical activities/ competitions.

6. Creating an active & green community

- Develop eco-conscious sports events (e.g., zero-waste competitions).
- Involve students in urban green initiatives (e.g., planting trees, creating bike-friendly school routes).
- Example: City sport scavenger hunt – participants explore urban green spaces and learn about sustainability through an interactive, team-based game.

7. Encouraging reflection & lifelong learning



- After each session, facilitate discussions: “What did you learn today beyond sports?”
- Encourage athletes to set personal and collective goals.
- Example: Sustainability journals – students track their sustainability efforts in sports and daily life.

“Green Skills and Peace through Sport” approach is not just about physical activity—it’s about empowering young people with the tools they need for success in education, work, and life.

Expanding the role of sport in developing entrepreneurial and digital skills

- **Why it matters:**
 - The modern job market values entrepreneurial thinking, digital literacy, and adaptability.
 - Sport provides an experiential learning platform where young people can develop initiative, creativity, and problem-solving skills.

- **How to implement:**

Sports entrepreneurship challenges – encourage students to create and manage their own mini-sports events or eco-friendly sports businesses.

- Example: Organizing a community sports festival that includes sustainable practices (e.g., using reusable water bottles, digital tickets, or eco-friendly merchandise).
- Example: Designing and pitching a new sports-related business (e.g., an app for tracking sustainable workouts).

Technology and data in sports – teach youth how to use technology in sports for monitoring performance and promoting sustainability.

- Example: Wearable technology – using fitness trackers to analyze performance and adapt training strategies.
- Example: Social media for sports activism – encouraging young people to promote sustainability, inclusion, and EU values through digital platforms.



Sport and mental health - coping with transitions and stress

- **Why it matters:**

- Many young people struggle with stress, anxiety, and mental health challenges, especially during transitions from education to employment.
- Sports offer an effective tool for stress management, emotional regulation, and resilience-building.

- **How to implement:**

Mindfulness and sports training

- Integrate breathing exercises, visualization, and meditation into sports sessions.
- Example: Yoga or stretching routines at the start or end of practice to promote focus and relaxation.

Resilience and growth mindset in sport

- Teach how to handle failure constructively through game debriefs.
- Example: After a loss, players discuss challenges faced and reframe setbacks as learning experiences.

Peer support and mental health awareness

- Organize team-building exercises that promote a safe and supportive environment.
- Example: Journaling about sports experiences and linking them to personal growth.

Gamification and interactive learning in sports training

- **Why it matters:**

- Young people engage better with interactive and playful learning methods.
- Gamification can increase motivation, participation, and learning outcomes.

- **How to implement:**

Sports-based educational games

- Create scavenger hunts or QR-code-based exploration games that promote sports, sustainability, and local culture.



- Example: Green city challenge – teams locate and visit eco-friendly landmarks in their city while completing fitness tasks.

Use of digital tools and apps

- Introduce mobile apps that track progress in physical fitness, sustainability efforts, and teamwork.
- Example: Kahoot or quizzes – quizzes on sports history, EU values or sustainability before practice sessions.

Eco-sports challenges

- Organize “eco-friendly competitions” that incorporate sustainability.
- Example: Teams earn points for proper waste disposal, using public transport to sports events, or volunteering in environmental projects.

Strengthening community engagement and volunteerism through sport

- **Why it matters:**
 - Sports can mobilize young people to engage in social and environmental causes.
 - Encourages active citizenship, European identity, and leadership.

- **How to implement:**

Organize community clean-up and green initiatives

- Example: Plogging events – running combined with trash collection.
- Example: Tree-planting after physical activities/ competitions – Participants plant a tree for every match played/ every physical activity done.

Engage with local businesses and NGOs

- Collaborate with eco-friendly companies for sponsorships.
- Example: Partner with sportswear brands that promote sustainable gear.

Sports as a tool for social inclusion

- Organize inclusive sports events that bring together marginalized groups, refugees and disabled youth.
- Example: Wheelchair sport day – educating participants on disability inclusion through practical experience.



Actionable steps for teachers, coaches and trainers

• How to apply the GPS Handbook in daily practice

Create themed sports sessions

- Dedicate one session per week to integrating GPS themes (e.g., sustainability, leadership, digital skills).
- Example: Monday – leadership through team sports, Wednesday – Green sports day, Friday – Digital sports innovations.

Personalized development plans for individuals

- Help young people identify their strengths in sport and connect them to career opportunities.
- Example: One-on-one coaching for personal growth goals – linking sports experience to life and job readiness.

Encourage reflection and continuous improvement

- Use post-training discussions, feedback journals, and peer reviews.
- Example: Individual's self-assessment forms where they evaluate their progress in both sports and life skills.



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