



**Erasmus+ (ERASMUS+)**  
**Call: ERASMUS-SPORT-2024**  
**Project: 101183703 — IN YOUTH FOOTBALL**

**COMMUNICATION:**  
**ELECTRONIC NEWS, SOCIAL MEDIA AND WEBSITE**

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## **1. Executive summary**

This document presents the dissemination and visibility strategies for the IN YOUTH FOOTBALL project (ERASMUS-SPORT-2024, project number: 101183703). The initiative is being organized and implemented across three countries: Portugal, with the University of Coimbra and the Madeira Football Association; Poland, with the University of Rzeszów; and the Czech Republic, represented by Charles University. The project is designed to span a duration of 12 months. Within this document, we provide detailed information and supporting materials intended for project partners to facilitate the effective dissemination of project outcomes and achievements.

In terms of dissemination strategies, various approaches have been adopted in alignment with the proposal presented:

- **Website**: Development of the project website is currently underway, serving as a central hub for key information regarding the initiative. The site features a variety of hyperlinks designed to showcase primary outputs, share experiences, highlight benefits, present statistics, and provide insights from our partners.
- **Social Media Platforms**: Our Instagram platform has been utilized to effectively disseminate the core concepts and missions of the project. Additionally, members of the coordination team actively promote the project through the Faculty of Sports Science and Physical Education's social media page at the University of Coimbra, thereby increasing visibility and engagement.

- **Electronic News:** Various partners have leveraged their respective websites and collaborated with local authorities to publicize the major activities and outcomes of the project. This strategic approach helps ensure that our initiatives reach a broader audience.
- **Conference on Bio-Banding Issues in Youth Soccer:** A specialized conference addressing bio-banding issues in youth soccer has been organized, providing an excellent venue for discussing the project's findings and fostering collaboration among professionals in the field.

These strategies collectively aim to enhance the visibility of the IN YOUTH FOOTBALL project and maximize its impact within the community and beyond.

## **2. Logo**

The first step defined by the members of project was the development of the logo. Below we show the logo of the project. This figure illustrates the design and elements of the project logo, showcasing its visual identity:



**Figure 1. Project Logo representation.**

### **3. Website**

As mentioned earlier, the project website is currently under development. We are in the process of uploading presentations and key information related to the project. To enhance user navigation and organization, we have incorporated four distinct sections on the website: **Home**, **Resources/Deliverables**, **Meetings**, and **Dissemination and Social Media**. Furthermore, the main page includes the rationale and purpose of the project. Below we will detail the text.

#### **3.1. About the project**

##### **3.1.1. Rationale**

Football is practiced worldwide by many children and adolescents. Data from COACHKIDS+, a project co-funded by the Erasmus+ Sport programme of the European Commission, showed that at under-8 years old 476.296 male participants already practiced (Emmonds et al., 2023). However, a substantial decrease in rates of participation occurred during adolescence (12-14 years old), mainly because coaches tend to select the physical advantage players, as noted by former Manchester United Coach Sir Alex Ferguson in his biography (p. 260): *“the biggest risk was that we had erred in our assessment of a particular boy and could have used his spot to work with a more talented youngster. We had to wait a little longer to see the potential in some boys, because not everyone’s physique develops at the same rate”* (Ferguson 2015, p. 260). The number of youth female football participants also tended to increase during the last decade (UEFA, 2020); however, rates of dropout tend to be higher than males (Møllerlækken et al., 2015).

The Women's Sports Foundation noted that the first reason for dropout is the lack of opportunities to play (Women Sports Foundation, 2023).

Grouping players by age groups did not account for differences between participants in physical maturation. This fact explains why at under-12 years old, the height and weight range could range from 132.2 to 160.7cm and 26.0 to 55.0kg, respectively. Corresponding data for under-14 football participants is 142.8-182.9cm and 34.0-77.5kg (Malina et al., 2018). Consequently, players who are taller, heavier and advanced in biological maturation are often perceived as more talented by coaches (Malina, 2003). These players are often selected and retained systematically in the sport, which in turn is associated with coaching specialisation, training resources, and investment in their development (Malina et al., 2015). Late adolescent maturing players have consistently excluded from the sport regardless of their ability (Cumming et al., 2018).

To promote equal participation among young football players, a bio-banding approach is necessary. Bio-banding involves grouping athletes based on their biological development rather than their chronological age (Cumming et al., 2018). This strategy can also be utilized not only to retain and attract more players in football but also to enhance overall player development.

### 3.1.2. Purpose

IN YOUTH FOOTBALL represents a complementary consortium dedicated to increasing retention and integration of young players in football. It adopts a strategy that combines participants according to their biological maturity rather than their age, aiming

to reduce maturity-related mismatches in parameters such as body size, strength, power, and skills.

Finally, at the bottom of the website, we have included the logos of our partners—University of Coimbra, Madeira Football Association, University of Rzeszów, and Charles University—as well as a hyperlink to our Instagram page (see below):

<https://www.instagram.com/in youthfootball?igsh=MWJ3cG1nd3N4Z204bw==>

#### **4. Social media platforms**

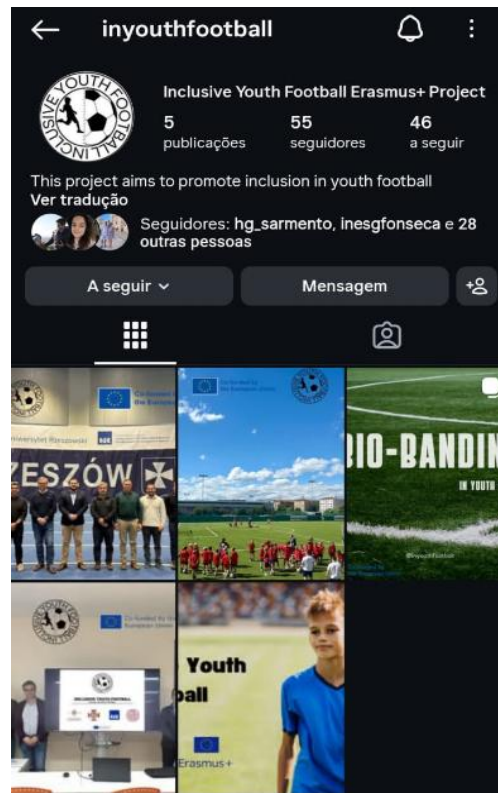
Instagram has been widely used to present the main findings and events derived from the project. Currently, the members of the leading institution have invited more than **100 colleagues to follow the social media platform**. Out of these, **fifty-four have engaged with the content and followed the page**.

##### **4.1. Details**

- The first post was created in January to announce the successful application for the grant and to identify all partners involved in the project.
- The second post, also created in January, announced the first collaborative meeting among the different partners. This meeting took place in Coimbra and provided an opportunity to discuss the work packages assigned to each partner.
- The third post was made in September to explain what bio-banding is and why it is important for coaches to be aware of this strategy in order to promote the retention of youth soccer participants.

## IN YOUTH FOOTBALL REPORT

- Following the organization of the information collected in Prague, another post was published to provide practical information about bio-banding in a club context, focusing on training and game strategies.





## IN YOUTH FOOTBALL REPORT





### 5. Electronic news

The partners have used electronic websites to detail the activities of the project.

Below we will present the respective links.

- <https://www.uc.pt/fcdef/noticias/inclusive-youth-football-inicia-trabalhos-na-fcdefuc/>
- <https://www.uc.pt/fcdef/noticias/fcdefuc-vai-a-praga-acompanhar-os-trabalhos-do-projeto-inclusive-youth-football/>
- <https://www.dnoticias.pt/2025/12/18/474355-af-madeira-volta-a-integrar-projecto-de-promocao-do-futebol-inclusivo/>
- <https://www.facebook.com/photo?fbid=872660891958775&set=pcb.872661341958730>

### 6. Conference on Bio-Banding Issues in Youth Soccer

## **IN YOUTH FOOTBALL REPORT**

We had the opportunity to develop a dissemination activity by organizing an international conference focused on maturation in youth soccer. Within this context, we were able to explore the bio-banding approach, integrating both practical and scientific perspectives.

**Date of event:** 03-09-2025

**Activities to use of bio-banding in a football club (training, competitions)**

**Number of attendees:** 40

### **Program**

9:00-9:30: Start of the event: project and introduction to the topic. Dr. František Zahálka

9:30-10:30: Biobanding application procedures. Dr. Tomáš Malý

10:30-11:00: Biobanding training concept. Dr. Maroš Kal'ata

11:00 – 11:30: Nutrition in youth soccer. Dr. Diogo Martinho

11:30 – 12:00: Panel discussion and conclusion.