

# Evaluation Study Together in Sport project

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By HIGGS

| Higher Incubator Giving Growth & Sustainability |



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# Limitations

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The purpose of this evaluation study is to provide information in regard to the implementation of the “Together in Sport” project funded by the European Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund and the German Federal Office for Migration and Refugees.

The project is implemented by the German Olympic Sports Confederation (Deutscher Olympischer Sportbund, DOSB) in cooperation with the Hellenic Olympic Committee (HOC) and METAdrasi with the collaboration of local municipalities in Greece.

# Limitations

- The evaluation study was prepared and conducted by the team of the HIGGS Social Impact Assessment Measurement Service to measure and depict the social impact of the “Together in Sport” project. It was based on information and data provided by METAdrasi on primary data collected through satisfaction questionnaires via the interview process to interested parties.
- The information provided by METAdrasi has not been independently confirmed by HIGGS team in any way.
- HIGGS team treats the data, assumptions or estimates provided by METAdrasi as accurate. It is clarified that HIGGS team proceeded to an independent primary research regarding the presentation of the findings of questionnaires and interviews.
- This study is not or should not be considered as a promise or binding provision for the future impact of the “Together in Sport” project. The exploitation of this study by any party and any decisions based thereon are the sole responsibility of those who will use this study. Each recipient should make their own estimates about the “Together in Sport” project and its future course.
- HIGGS team bears no liability or responsibility of any kind with regard to this study and cannot be held responsible for any errors or omissions that may result from the use of the analysis presented herein.

# Executive Summary

The present Evaluation Study was developed in order to assess the impact of the “Together in Sport” project as a whole, explore the successes and challenges experienced and evaluate the results achieved during its 21-month duration.

The initial section of the study lays emphasis on the methodology and tools used for the evaluation process. The evaluation was based on a mixed-methods approach, using both qualitative and quantitative data and methods to inform the evidence-based conclusions, inferences and recommendations. The second section of the assessment focuses on the main findings emerged by the key findings of Social Impact Assessment (SIA).

It is reckoned that the “Together in Sport” project in the specific area its objectives to a significant extent although some minor challenges occurred. Some of the main findings of the project are presented below:

# Executive Summary

- The number of children - **4.950** - benefiting from the project was consistently significant as a percentage of total population.
- Project's impact proved very positive for asylum seeking children in terms of developing strong relationships with peers and the feeling of belonging.
- In many occasions the sports activities operated as significant boosters of feelings of regularity, while also boosting morale and happiness/calmness feelings across the main stakeholders: refugee children, parents, camps' personnel.
- The outbreak of the pandemic Covid- 19 has definitely impacted the project activities, as some activities were postponed, nevertheless operations were reinitiated as soon as possible.

- The number -**73**- of events (sports and recreational activities) were impressive, indicating the urgent need of communities for relevant activities.
- The coordination and collaboration among various stakeholders participating in the project were excellent in terms of project execution.
- The project could further benefit from a more structured approach of connecting to other local stakeholders and sports associations.
- Local societies were at points very supportive to the project. However, they participated primarily at events-level. A further interaction between refugee children and locals could be achieved in order for the project to achieve one of its main objectives, that of inclusion.

# The project

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The project's aim is to enable participation in sports and other recreational activities for asylum seeking children in every stage of the asylum procedure in order to promote meaningful recreational activities and to strengthen reception structures in participating municipalities.

Using sports as the core component of the project, the project initial goal is to give the chance to asylum seeking children and youngsters to get in touch and learn more about organized sports and to develop relationships through sports with their peers from the local communities. The project is offered free of charge and is addressed to asylum seeking children and youngsters aged 7-17 and their peers from local communities. In addition, the support of the cooperating municipalities was important for the project to succeed its goals.

# The project

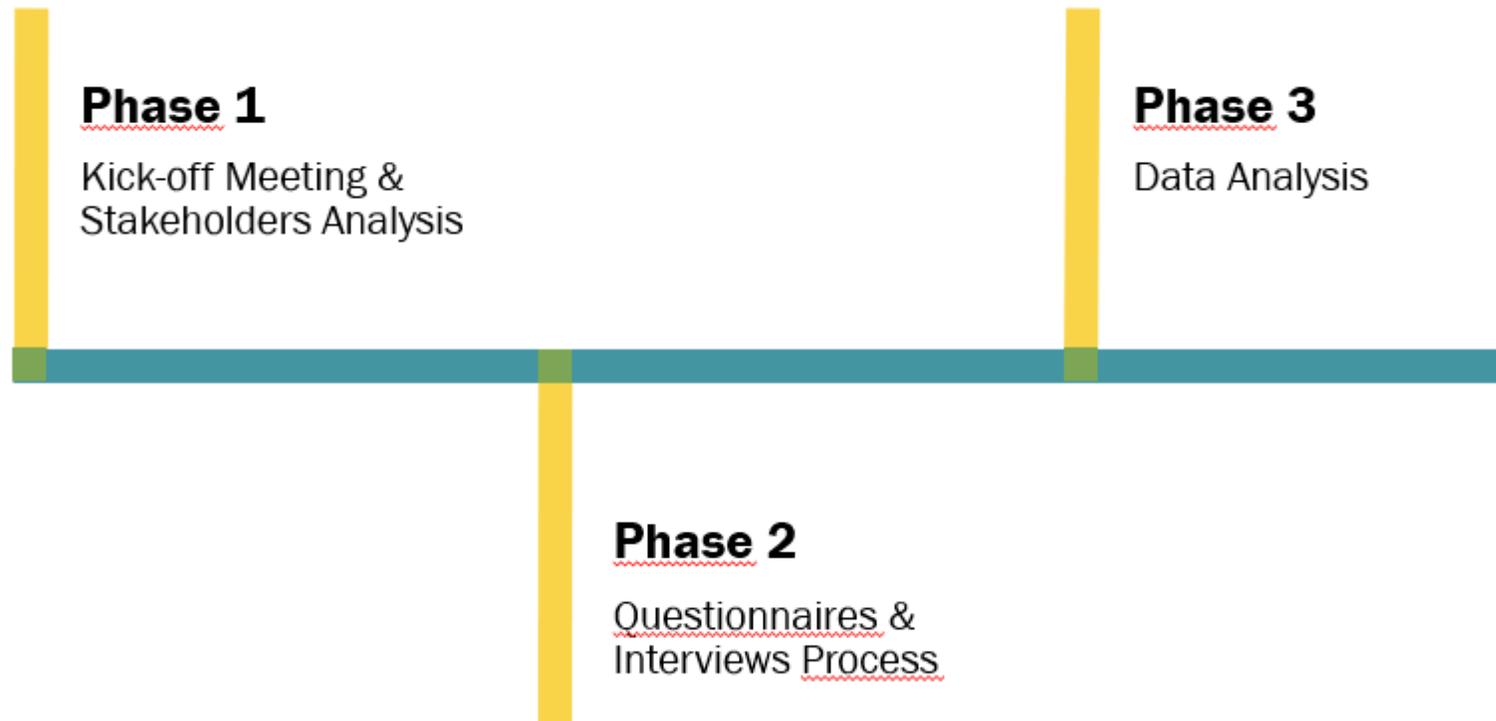
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Specifically, the project “Together in Sport” aims to:

- Cultivate and promote values like mutual respect, team spirit and intercultural tolerance.
- Familiarize the participants with the values of Olympic education.
- Improve the everyday life of asylum seeking children/youngsters and to enhance their sense of belonging.
- Strengthen the existing structures and the initiatives regarding the reception and the care especially of unaccompanied minors at local level.
- Promote new communication channels through sports, in order to enable the peaceful coexistence among children and youngsters coming from different cultural backgrounds.
- Reduce the reservations of local communities towards asylum seekers and improve and strengthen social cohesion.

# The methodology

The methodology consisted of three key phases



The Social Impact Assessment (SIA) study of the “Together in Sport” captures qualitative and quantitative dimensions of the project’s implementation.

# The methodology

In the first stage of the study, a kick-off meeting with the core team of METAdrasi and an interview with the Project Manager (PM) of the organization was conducted in order to gather initial opinions and feedback about the scope and the aims of the project. During this phase a stakeholder analysis was prepared and discussed with METAdrasi team in order to determine the interested parties which were to be involved in the process.



Specifically, the research focused on the following stakeholders:

- **Beneficiaries of the project**
- **Project partners** (coaches, representatives of municipalities, representatives of sports facilities)
- **Team members of METAdrasi**

# The methodology

In the second phase, satisfaction questionnaires were created for each stakeholder group and interviews were conducted with stakeholders who directly or indirectly were impacted from the implementation of the project in order to collect their views, opinions and experiences gained through their participation.

In particular, HIGGS, with the support of the leader partner, organized interviews either in person or via video/tele conference in order to assess the involvement of the stakeholders and enlighten aspects of the project.



# TiS in Numbers



The “Together in Sport” project was implemented in Ioannina, Kavala and Attika region. A dedicated local team was developed in each of the three cities in Greece supported daily by the coordination team based in Athens led to a very successful project implementation.

# TiS in Numbers

During the project implementation, **8** different sport activities (football, swimming, running track, wrestling, beach Volley, tae kwon do and wrestling) by creating **82** in total different groups. The number of recreational activities and events organized is indicative of the success of the project, as most children participated in a total of **73** events, as it is depicted in the table below.

In addition, as highlighted by the interviews in the 3 regions, though no official data could be provided, a significant number of local children were interacting with the Facilities' children.

| TiS in Numbers  | Value Reached |
|---|---------------|
| Number of beneficiaries   | <b>4.950</b>  |
| Number of participants in regular training activities             | <b>583</b>    |
| Number of participants in recreational activities                 | <b>4.594</b>  |
| Number of recreational activities and events organised            | <b>73</b>     |
| Number of partners (Municipalities, Coaches, Sports associations) | <b>82</b>     |
| Number of capacity building sessions                              | <b>12</b>     |
| Number of capacity building sessions                              | <b>8</b>      |

## Together in Sport Events

| Kavala                                    | Athens                               | Ioannina                        |
|---|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| National team game in Xanthi              | Beach Volley                         | Football Game PAS GIANNINA      |
| Blue City Multisports                     | Sports Activities (EAS Championship) | Gym Park Event                  |
| Handball Event                            | Tae Kwon Do                          | Joint Practice TAE - KWONDO     |
| Joint Football Practice Sport Club Kavala | Wrestling                            | Wrestling                       |
| Joint Volley Practice Sport Club Kavala   | Rugby Game                           | Volley Match                    |
| Street Handball                           | Sports activities in OAKA            | Friendly Football Game          |
| Sporting Action In Kalamitsa              | Open Taekwondo Course                | Track Event                     |
| Sports Event                              | Judo Training                        | Wax Museum*                     |
| Swimming                                  | Football                             | Biking at Ioannina Lake*        |
| Basketball Game Attendance                | Game Attendance                      | Silverware Museum*              |
| Football                                  | Hiking (Hymettus)                    | Papagianni Museum*              |
| Basketball Training                       | Explore Museum*                      | Perama Cave*                    |
| Running Track                             | Goulandris Museum*                   | Outdoor Activities (Voutsaras)* |
| Basketball Tournament                     | Olympic Museum*                      |                                 |
| Friendly Football Game                    | Olympic Museum & Veikou Park*        |                                 |
| Angioplasty Course*                       | Panathenaic Stadium*                 |                                 |
| Action in the camp (Nea Peramos)*         | Planetarium*                         |                                 |
| Ancient theatre of philippon*             | Adventure Park*                      |                                 |
| Nestos, Riverland*                        |                                      |                                 |
| Wax Museum*                               |                                      |                                 |

\* Non-sports related events

# Findings of Impact Assessment

The representatives of the HIGGS with the support of the leader partner, organized - **57** - interviews either in person or via video/tele conference, from the 31<sup>st</sup> of August till the 22<sup>nd</sup> of September in order to meet the interested parties involved in the project. The site visits in the 3 regions included interviews and questionnaire-based research aimed at:

- METAdrasi personnel (7 persons)
- Representatives of the Municipalities (2 persons)
- Representative of the Prefecture of Ipeiros (1 person)
- External collaborators participated in the project (4 persons)
- Coaches and representatives of Sports Associations (6 persons)
- The heads of the Open Facilities of Temporary Reception (4 persons)
- Representatives of the Hellenic Olympic Committee (2 persons)
- Refugee children from the Open Facilities (31 persons) with the following characteristics: 18 out of 31 were boys and the rest were girls. 15 children were below the age of 10, while the oldest ones were 15 years old.

Regarding the interviews with the children, prior consent from their guardians was provided while the interviews were facilitated by interpreters provided by either the Open Facility management team or METAdrasi.

# Stakeholders

The Social Impact Assessment focused on the following key aspects of the project:

- Beneficiaries
- Partners
- Team members

# Beneficiaries

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Initially, HIGGS designed a semi-structured questionnaire as a guide for the interview process with beneficiaries. However, due to the young age of participants, most of them found it difficult to respond to the questions developed, thus a semi-structured discussions approach was chosen as a method to assess the project's impact on them.

**All children** interviewed were **very positive** about the project. During the interviews, the **children's need to exit the facilities** in which they spend a tremendous part of their time daily, it was more than evident; the Heads of the Open facilities in the three (3) regions have also confirmed the above statement. Moreover, HIGGS representatives noticed that between the children of the four (4) Open Facilities and the local coordinators, a reliable and strong relationship has been developed through the project implementation.

# Beneficiaries

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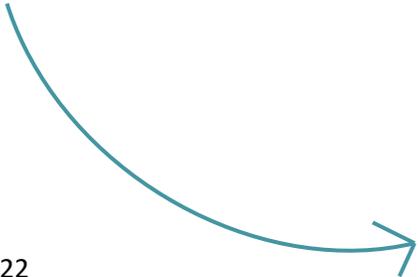
Other findings from the interview process include:

- ❖ All children (100%) were very happy and satisfied with the sports trainings hours and how regular those were.
- ❖ Children stated that they liked both the regular trainings and the recreational events: for some of them “Together in Sports” signaled the first time ever participating in such activities.
- ❖ Most participants (85%) admitted that during the games with other peers, **there were no disagreements or other negative issues evolving** and in the few cases that minor disagreements took place, these were resolved in a quick and smooth manner by the coaches or/and their peers.

# Beneficiaries

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- ❖ All the children strongly agreed that through the project **they had the chance to meet and discuss** with peers of local origins, especially during the events. However, some children **demanded more interactions** with local peers in order to manage to develop strong and reliable relationships.
- ❖ Moreover, **all revealed that the project offered them the opportunity to learn and participate in sport activities that they did not have knowledge of in the past.**
- ❖ All of them confessed that through their participation in the “Together in Sport” project they came to **feel happier as they learned new things and exercised themselves.**
- ❖ **All children emphatically requested** the project to be continued for the next year.
- ❖ Almost all the children seemed to be at ease with the local coordinators, formulating a relation of trust.



Overall, children seemed very happy about their participation in the “Together in Sport” project. Some of them highlighted that it was their first time participated in such activities. Finally, all of them, with no exception indicated their willingness for the continuation of the project.

# Beneficiaries

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A small distinction between the beneficiaries group should be highlighted. As mentioned in program's data "Together in Sports" involved both smaller children (<10 years old) and older ones (12-15 years old). Although most positive impact noted involved the group of children as a unitary beneficiary, in terms of sports activities a distinction needs to be highlighted. Older children reported a higher level of sports learning and of physical strength build-up, while younger ones highlighted the effect of being energized and happier through the various sports activities. This is consistent with expected results, and is a fundamental feature of the "Together in Sports" approach: though not structured precisely as such, the project covered the specialized needs of the beneficiaries' sub-segments with significant care and success, much attributed to the implementing team's reflexes and focus on project delivery.

# Partners

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HIGGS team met 19 persons from various partners (representatives from the municipalities, the Heads of the Open Facilities of Temporary Reception, coaches, etc) in order to assess the impact of the project from their perspective. It should be stressed that the role of the partners was differentiated in terms of the intensity of the cooperation, with representatives of local authorities being less involved than others, like the Heads of the Open Facilities or the coaches and therefore some of the following statements cannot be answered by all.

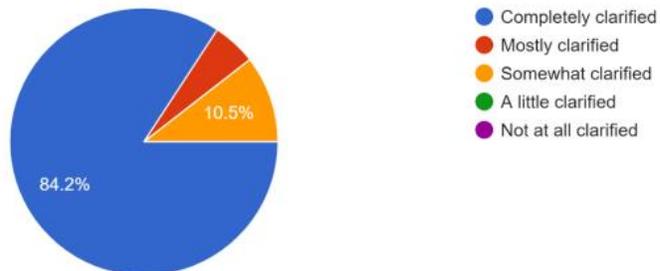
Some of the main findings of the interview process are presented below:

# Partners

- ❖ **84.2%** of the responders agreed that **their tasks were completely clarified by the lead partner**, mostly clarified was for the 5.3% and somewhat clarified for the rest 10.5%. In addition, 31.6% of the partners pointed out that they intensively participated in the project, 36.8 % that they were highly involved and 31.6% had a limited participation in the project.

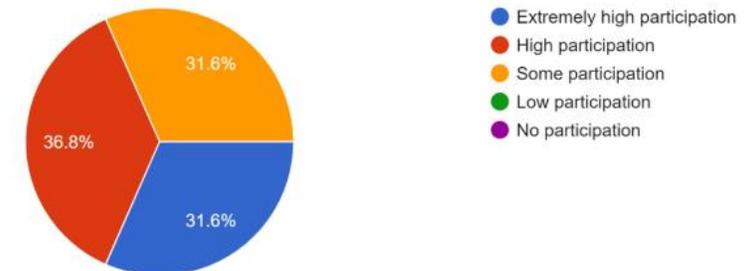
How clearly were your tasks clarified by the lead partner?

19 responses



How much participative was your role?

19 responses

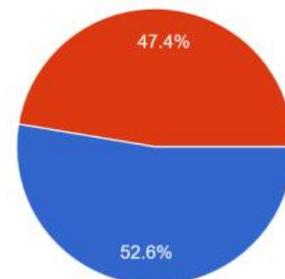


# Partners

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Regarding their satisfaction level, 52.6% felt completely satisfied by their role in the project and the other 47.4% were mostly satisfied with their role.

How satisfied were you with your role in the project?  
19 responses



- Completely satisfied
- Mostly satisfied
- Somewhat satisfied
- A little satisfied
- Not at all satisfied

# Partners

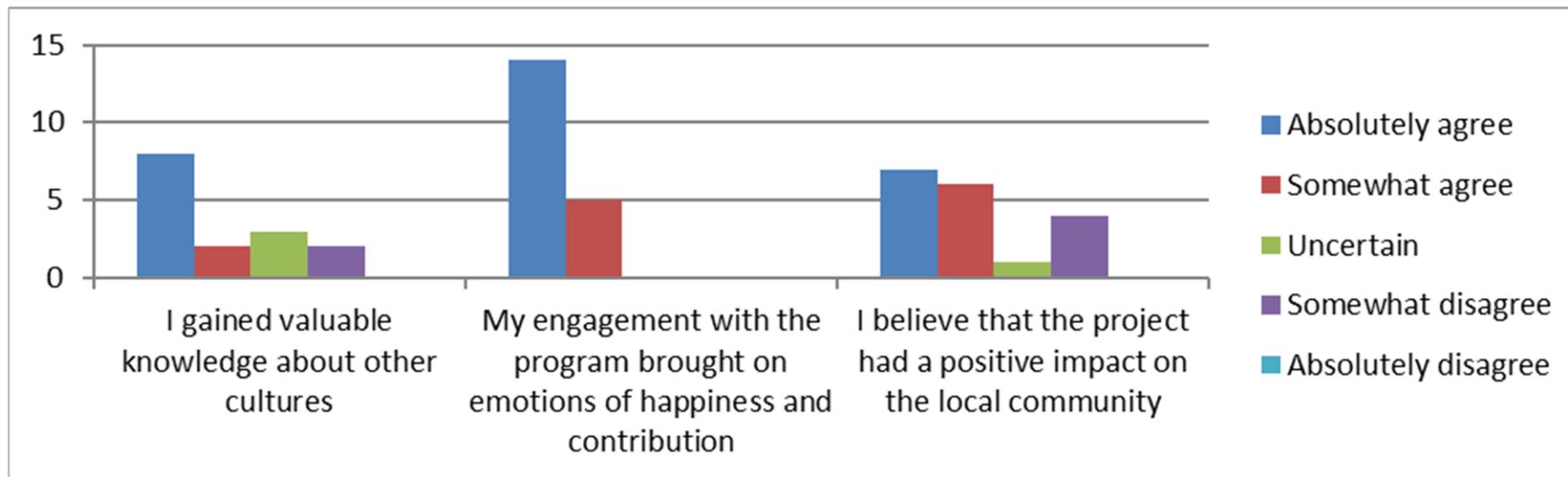
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Additionally, partners were asked to evaluate some statements regarding the level of organisation received by the lead partner.

- ❖ Eight (8) of the partners absolutely agreed and four somewhat agreed that from their participation in the project, **they gained valuable knowledge about other cultures**. Three partners felt uncertain about this statement as they did not have a direct connection with the target group and the other two partners disagreed since they had past experiences or an overall understanding of people with migrant background.
- ❖ Ten (10) partners (52.6%) also revealed that from their participation in the project, they can understand better the needs of asylum seeking children, while two others disagreed (mainly because of their significant prior knowledge of the sector).
- ❖ **All partners (100%) stated that their engagement with the project brought on emotions of happiness and contribution.**

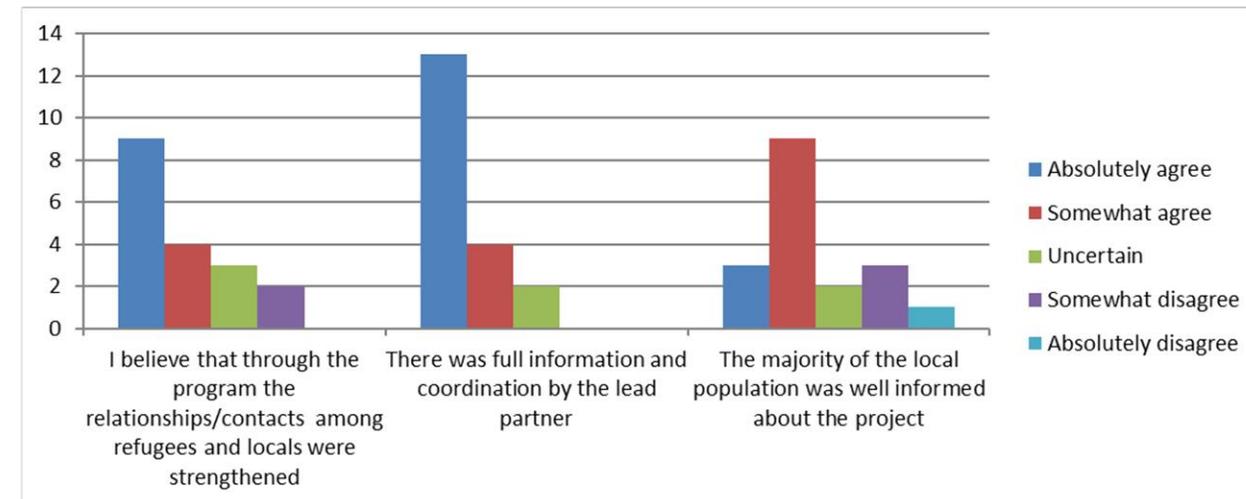
# Partners

- ❖ The majority of the partners (68.4%) agreed that the project had a positive impact on the local community, one partner felt uncertain with the statement as his/her position does not allow him/her to comment on this statement and the other four partners somewhat disagreed.



# Partners

- ❖ Regarding the relationships and contacts developed among refugees and locals, **13 partners agreed that the relationships among them were strengthened** by their participation in the project.
- ❖ In relation to the information and coordination received by the lead partner, **seventeen partners (89.4%) stated that there was complete information sharing and coordination** and only two partners neither agreed nor disagreed with the above statement as they referred that sometimes the degree of responsiveness of the lead organisation is somewhat slow due to overload.
- ❖ According to the majority of partners (63.2%), **the local population was well informed** about the project, especially during the last months of the project implementation while two partners do not know about the visibility of the project in the community and the rest four partners disagreed as they believe that the local population was not aware of the project in depth.



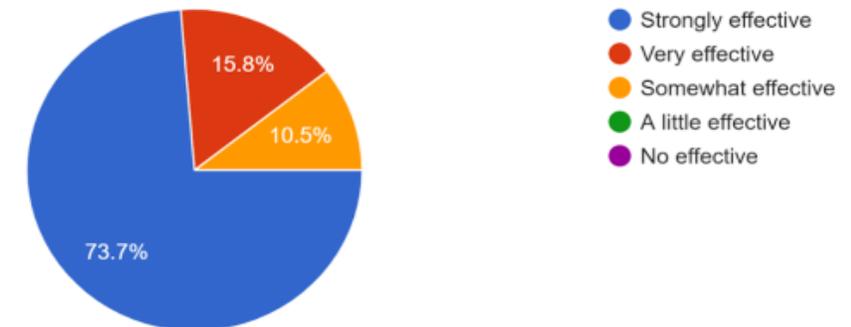
# Partners

As for the quality of the communication with the lead partners, the high percentage of **73.7% of the partners characterized the quality as strongly effective, the other 15.8% as very effective and 10.5% as somewhat effective.**

It is worth mentioning that most partners agreed that the collaboration and communication with both the core team of METAdrasi and the coordinators was in a high level.

During the interview process, all partners revealed that their tasks and their role regarding the implementation of the project had been discussed and agreed from the launch of the project. People of METAdrasi were described as positive, ready to hear their needs and ideas and communicate appropriately what was expected from them in the project.

The quality of your communication with the lead was:  
19 responses



# Partners

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Moreover, **84.2% are thinking of some type of continuation of the cooperation** with the project after its completion. Some of them also proposed the introduction of new activities, such as more sports and/or events, while others referred that the project could be expanded to children with disabilities and to younger ages (under 7 years old) and others suggested the adding of more workshops regarding healthy nutrition and wellness.

**All partners also strongly agreed that the project was all worth it and that they would join such a project again.**

It is worth mentioning that the majority of the partners (68.4%) was their first opportunity to participate in a project of similar thematic area, while the other 31.6% had not taken part in a similar project (i.e. a sports-focused project) before and thus this experience was revealing of the benefits of sports.

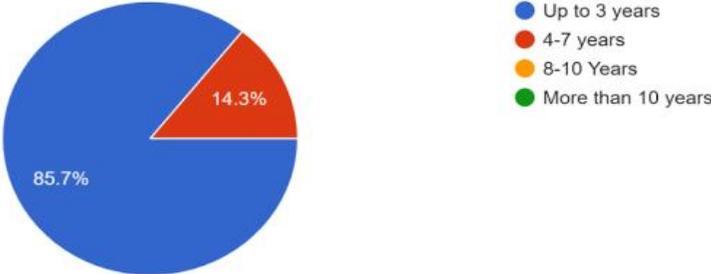
By some partners, it was stressed that there are no opportunities to participate in such projects for areas outside Attika and that it is very important for the community to be aware of such initiatives and to participate actively.

# Team members

HIGGS representatives interviewed 7 team members in total in the 3 areas of the project implementation. It is worth mentioning that all team members of METAdrasi facilitated HIGGS representatives regarding the on-site visits in the Open Facilities. The majority of the team members are employees with significant prior experience in the refugee sector, while some new employees, who were later added to the team, were full aware of the concept, the successes and the barriers arisen. However, all of them were full connected with the project and felt proud regarding their participation and the work done during the project implementation.

The majority (58.7%) of the employees have been working in the organisation up to 3 years while the 14.3% is in the organisation between 4-7 years.

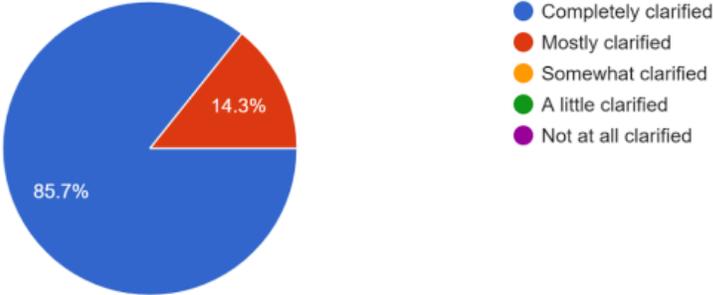
How many years have you been working in the organisation?  
7 responses



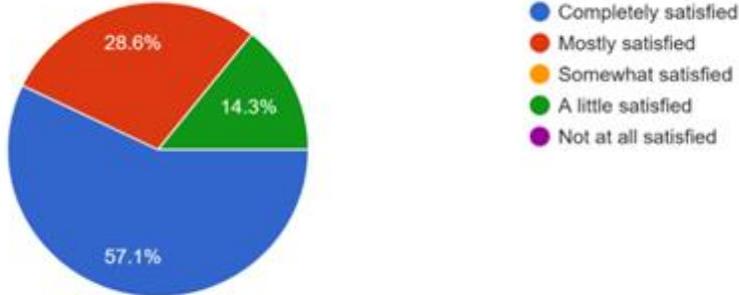
# Team members

85.7% of the team members stated that the tasks were completely clarified by the Project Manager (PM) and 14.3% mostly clarified. Moreover, 57.1% are completely satisfied with their tasks, responsibilities and their role in the project, 28.6% mostly satisfied and a small percentage of 14.3% somewhat satisfied.

How clearly were your tasks clarified by the Project Manager (PM) of the project?  
7 responses



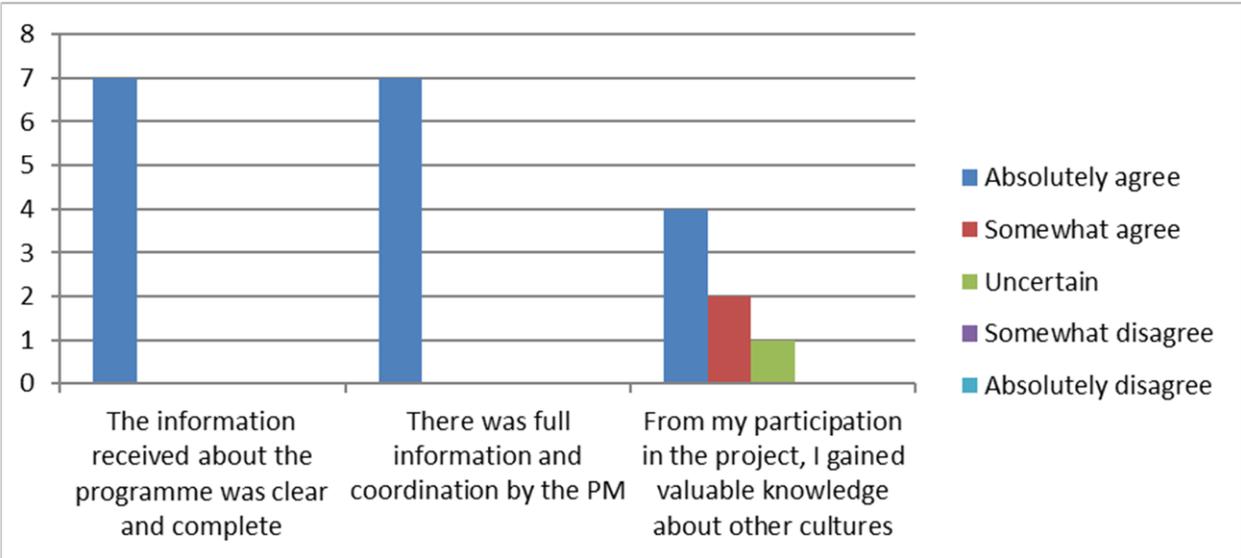
How satisfied were you with your role in the project?  
7 responses



# Team members

All interviewees absolutely agreed that **the information received about the project was clear and complete** and that there was full coordination by the PM.

Four team members (42.8%) also revealed that from their participation in the project, **they gained valuable knowledge about other cultures**. Two (2) partners somewhat agreed and one partner felt uncertain about this statement as he/she had previous experience with other cultures and the specific project did not give him/her an added value towards that end. It is very interesting that even team members highly experienced mentioned that through this project they felt closer to the refugee community than even before and **understood how sports can contribute to intercultural interactions**.



# Team members

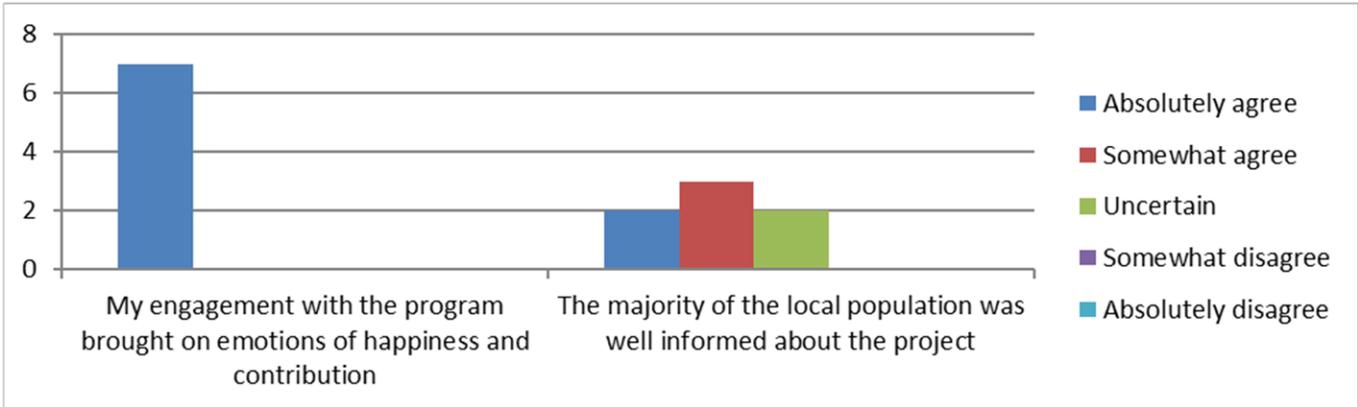
All interviewees (100%) strongly agreed that their engagement with the project brought on them emotions of happiness and of contribution. Some testimonials which reveal the above statement are the following:

*“It is the best job I ever had!”*

*“I think that the project made me a better person!”*

*“I feel that I offer something important to people that have many needs!”*

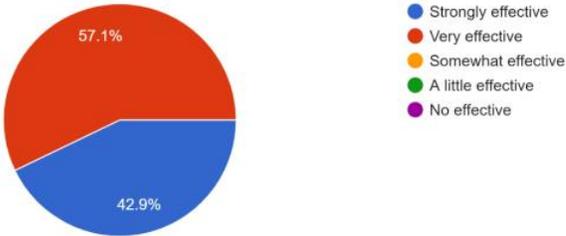
Regarding the outreach activities made for the dissemination of the project, one team member stated that the majority of the local population was well informed about the project, four team members somewhat agreed with the above statement and the two other felt uncertain. The uncertainty of the two team members lies on the fact that they believe that dissemination activities could have been better communicated to the wider public in order to reach even more people from the local communities.



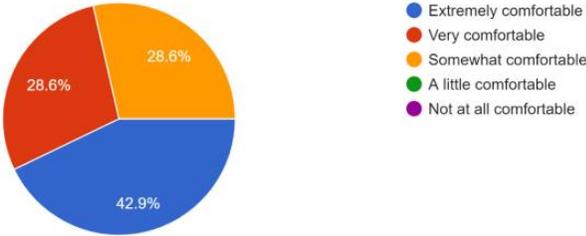
# Team members

42.9% of the team members mentioned that the **quality of the communication among the team was strongly effective and the rest 57.1% as very effective**. All of them noticed that the regular contact with Athens coordination team was extremely beneficial for the smooth implementation of everyday activities. Moreover, the majority (42.9%) of team members feel extremely comfortable with the decisions made, the 28.6% very comfortable and the same percentage somewhat comfortable.

The quality of your communication with the rest of the project team was:  
7 responses



How comfortable are you with the way decisions were made?  
7 responses



It is worth mentioning that most employees feel that they were included in the decision making process as the 42.9% stated that they were always included, the same percentage felt that the most of the times was included and a small percentage ( 14.3%) sometimes.

# Team members

All team members strongly believe that the ‘Together in Sport’ project is extremely beneficial for the target group.

According to observations made by HIGGS representatives, many children of the Open Facilities approached the local coordinators with a very joyful stance and asking when the training courses will start again.

Moreover, all local coordinators knew most of the children and call them by their names, thus projecting a sense of inclusiveness and of “community”.

Finally, all team members highlighted the willingness to continue working in the project.

How beneficial do you consider this programme was for the target population?  
7 responses



# TiS Experience!

TiS showed me a way of **enhancing children's activities** and daily schedule that I have never thought before

My involvement on the project affected me a lot! In that kind of jobs you give a lot of yourself and you **receive as many** from the kids and their families

During the bus transfer to the museum children sat down next to local children – when they exited the bus they **were already friends!**

The children would **blow off steam** during sports trainings – something very important for daily life within the Facility

We could never think sports as such a **great mediator** among people of different origins and culture

Our municipality is **fully supporting TiS** – I hope they know that they can come as often as they need to ask for support!

# Other similar funded activities

The recognition that sports have important advantages for achieving social integration of refugee children led to the development of several initiatives in the specific sector the last years, some of which are presented below:

- ❑ The Turkish Olympic Committee's (TOC) **'Active Kids Sport Schools'** project aims to unite and empower young people through sport. The project has focused on increasing the accessibility of sports for children in schools to strengthen both their physical and mental wellbeing. The 'Active Kids Sport Schools' project has significantly contributed to the lives of hundreds of children and Syrian refugees living in Turkey. By increasing their access to sport, it has improved social cohesion within their new communities and promoted the values of leading an active and healthy society.

# Other similar funded activities

- ❑ The ERASMUS+ project '**Sport welcomes Refugees**' aims at enhancing the social inclusion and participation of newly arrived migrants (11-60 target age group) at different levels of sport through training, awareness-raising and capacity-building of sports stakeholders. The project's workstreams include building an evidence-base (good-practice and developing quality criteria for inclusive sports projects), training and qualification of sports educators and clubs (training programme and online platform: sports clubs opening doors for refugees and migrants), Respect refugees campaigning and raising public awareness.
- ❑ Bonyan Organization's project '**Championing an Inclusive Future through Football**' in Istanbul and Mardin promotes well-being, social cohesion and safety among refugees and their host communities by leveraging the power of football and sports to foster peaceful coexistence. The project target is 4.000 children representing different ethnicities and regions, with an even split of Turkish and refugee children and of boys and girls. The project aims to increase access to existing sports facilities for both Turkish and refugee children; support Turkish schools so that they are able to host refugee students, create opportunities for the integration of Turkish people and refugees through sports and increase access to Turkey's existing Child Protection Communities for both Turkish and refugee children.

# Other similar funded activities

- ❑ **‘MOVE Beyond’** project is a two-year project supported by the EU’s Erasmus+ Sport Collaborative Partnerships, which aims to enhance cross-sector collaboration on grassroots sport and physical activities for societal inclusion of refugees by enabling stronger involvement of non-sport actors. The partners include the University of Copenhagen’s Advanced Migration Studies and Belgian organisation Demos, who specialise in research and analysis of best practices in inclusion of refugees and migrants, plus four “implementation pairs” that will work on small scale pilot implementation projects in four of the countries. These include DGI and the Danish Red Cross (Denmark), UISP Trentino and ATAS (Italy), Västra Götalands Idrottsförbund and Save the Children Sweden (Region West) (Sweden), and StreetGames and SPARC Sport (UK). In creating these cross-sector partnerships, the partners are aiming to show how to approach and overcome common barriers that prevent asylum seekers and refugees from getting involved in community sport or other activities offered in their communities.

# Other similar funded activities

- The partner of the TiS project, Hellenic Olympic Committee has launched on May 2021 its Programme '**Kids Love Sports**' which focuses on providing refugee children of primary school age with sports education and training. The programme is run by Hellenic Olympic Committee with co-funding of the European Union.

It aims to reach 4,000 children, most of them refugee children hosted in open reception centres in the wider Attica region, and give them the opportunity to visit the Panathenaic Stadium, within the next 24 months. The children will learn more about its history through an organized audio tour and practice sports under the guidance of great athletes. The '**Kids Love Sports**' Programme aims at further complementary activities to connect refugee children with sports activities conducted by Physical Education and Sport Science students from the National & Kapodistrian University of Athens within the selected open reception centers and under the supervision of the Hellenic Olympic Committee.

# Other similar funded activities

- ❑ **‘Sports for All’** helps young refugees build confidence, have fun, and connect with each other through sport. Volunteers take groups of young refugees aged seven to seventeen to play basketball together every Saturday. Actually, the program has two main goals.

The first is to promote social cohesion in Hashemi Shamali, where the Jordanian, Syrian, Iraqi, and other communities do not get many opportunities to interact. This leads to tensions between children and teens of different nationalities. ‘Sports for All ‘ project aims to break down these barriers, by encouraging the kids that take part to make friends outside of their own communities. The second goal is to teach leadership skills. In November 2018, a group of teens took part in a series of workshops led by a sports coach. Having been trained, these teens act as leaders in the Sports for All sessions.

# Other similar funded activities

- ❑ **'TeamUp'** project provides children aged from 6 to 18 with a suite of structured sports, play and movement activities. These activities combine to support children to deal with their complicated feelings. Each activity has a specific goal related to themes such as dealing with anger, stress and interacting with others.

The TeamUp programme ultimately helps to provide children with emotional support and a much-needed sense of stability. In the Netherlands TeamUp provides support to refugee children in more than 25 asylum reception centres and 17 reception schools. The activities are delivered by trained professional volunteers within the reception locations, or teachers and other educational staff within the schools. TeamUp is also active other locations - Uganda, Colombia, Sri Lanka and the Occupied Palestinian and on 2020 it was expanded to support refugee children in Sweden as well as Italy and Greece (in partnership with SOS Children's Villages).

# Other similar funded activities and the TiS project

“**Together in Sport**” project is highly relevant with the projects presented above and several key elements have a common rationale. Initially, all projects recognize the need of participation of refugee children in sports activities in order to reduce the risk of social exclusion. The tools and resources developed under these projects are specifically targeted to empower and support young children with a migrant background, to explore and find new opportunities.

Moreover, the methodology delivered by these initiatives was designed in such a way so as to increase the empowerment of the specific target group for better dealing with different situations of everyday life, to enhance their sense of belonging and promote new communication channels through sports, in order to enable the coexistence among children under focus and local children. Finally, most of the above projects aim to create synergies with regional/local authorities, social institutions, build cooperation structures with other stakeholders and promote an inclusive environment. This is totally aligned with the scope of the TiS project, which aims to empower refugee children with opportunities, improve their everyday life and finally strengthen social cohesion.

# Recommendations & Take-aways

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“Together in Sport” project can be overall characterized as very successful, even if the pandemic disruption is taken into consideration.

The following list presents some take-aways and recommendations derived from the various interviews and project data analysis:

- ❖ **The coordination procedures among the core team in Athens and the other two different points of project implementation were very efficient.** In some cases, a few more coordination meetings and exchanges on views among the 3 points are proposed as a boost for project implementation.
- ❖ All team members of METAdrasi seemed to enjoy the implementation of the project, especially during the final year in which tasks were clearer and **all pointed out the great collaboration with the current PM.**
- ❖ Both the regular activities and the events (sports and recreational ones) had extremely high participation, indicating the children's strong interest in participating in activities outside the Open Facilities.
- ❖ It is worth mentioning that during the project implementation, the number of partners who were engaged with the project was significant.
- ❖ An addition to the communication plan could include **on-site visits and outreach within the schools in the regions**, ideally during the first month of schools' operation in order to disseminate further the project.

# Recommendations & Take-aways

- ❖ The variety of sports activities could be enhanced with the addition of other sports. However, a re-planning of the regular activities is suggested in Attika, as many sport activities overlapped time-wise.
- ❖ Regarding regular training activities, the efforts to render them blended ones (i.e. participation of both locals and refugees in the same team) should be enhanced.
- ❖ The project addressed the great need of refugee children participating in activities, especially out of the Open Facilities and managed to activate them.
- ❖ Though there are some plans from one Open Facility (Ioannina) to create sports facilities within its premises and the Open Facility in Kavala has already created an in-site gym, the project should aim to maintain its outdoor activities approach, the latter being a valuable opportunity for children to exit the premises.
- ❖ The give-away of project's equipment or sports medals were highlighted as features that created significant pleasure to the children, enhanced project's visibility and connected locals with refugees.
- ❖ No culture or language issues were raised by partners as an issue affecting their role in the project. On the contrary, everyone agreed with the statement 'sports unite us all'.
- ❖ Some partners utilized their own channels for reaching out to the local population and it was very important for the further dissemination of the project. In addition, all partners highlighted that they are willing to do more if they are asked or consulted by METAdrasi.

## TiS in numbers



**4.950**  
**Beneficiaries**



**82**  
**Partners**



**73**  
**Events**