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# PROGRESS

Promoting gender rights, equality skills in sport

## Internal report: desk research phase



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# 1. INTRODUCTION

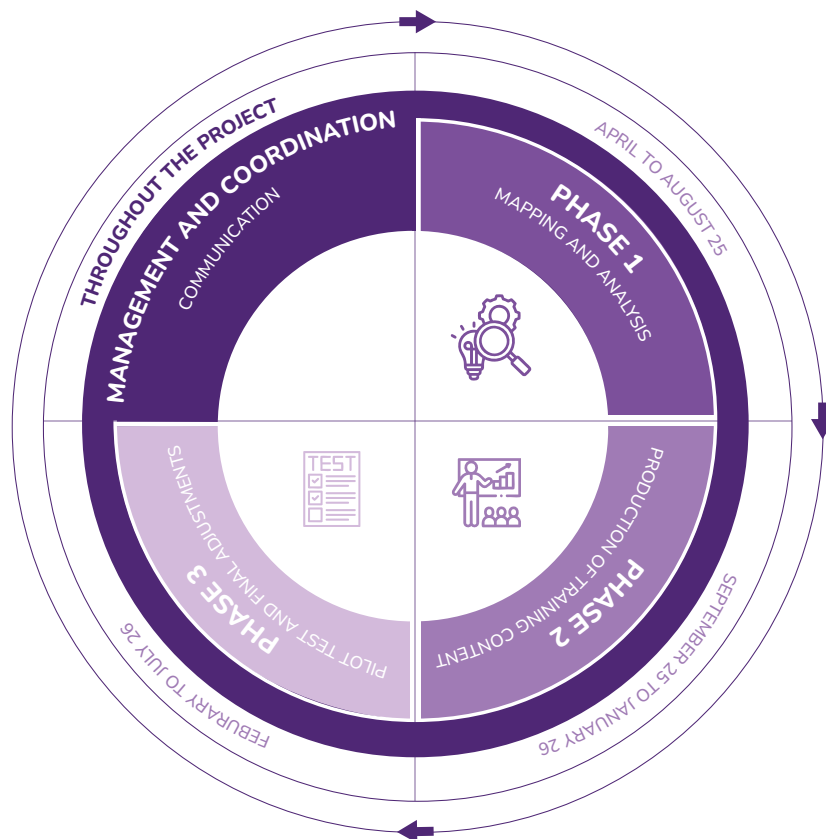
This internal report provides a synthetic overview of key findings from the desk research conducted by the PROGRESS project partners in France, Spain (Valencian Region), and at the European level.

Its purpose is not to be exhaustive, but to offer a clear and comparative foundation that supports collective decision-making for Phase 2 of the project, particularly the design of a training module and a toolkit aimed at sports trainers.

It is also important to note that this document does not reflect the full complexity or diversity of gender equality in sport across Europe. The analysis is based on contributions from a limited number of contexts (France, Spain, and the EU level) and therefore does not claim to represent all European realities.

## **Phase 2: Production of training content**

From September 2025 to January 2026



**Thank you to all the partners who engaged in the desk research. The time, knowledge, and perspectives you brought have shaped this report, which stands as a shared achievement and a foundation for the work ahead.**

**This report is intended for internal use only and is not meant for public dissemination.**

## 2. COMPARATIVE OVERVIEW OF GENDER EQUALITY AND INCLUSION IN SPORT

| CRITERIAS                                   | FRANCE                                                                                    | SPAIN<br>(VALENCIAN REGION)                                                                                                       | EUROPE                                                                    |
|---------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| WOMEN PARTICIPATION                         | 59% of women practice sports regularly                                                    | 55.4% practice sport; only 22.2% license holders are women                                                                        | -                                                                         |
| WOMEN IN GOVERNANCE                         | Only 2 Olympic federations led by women (out of 35)                                       | 18% of federation presidencies held by women; less than 15% of accredited coaches are women                                       | Generally low representation; varies widely across the EU                 |
| LGBTQIA+ INCLUSION                          | 52% report discrimination; visibility improving (e.g., Paris 2024) but challenges persist | Structural barriers remain; progressive laws not always implemented                                                               | 80% hear hostile language; 1 in 5 drop out of sport; transphobia is high  |
| SPORTS TRAINERS TRAINING ON GENDER EQUALITY | No mandatory gender/inclusion training for coaches                                        | Few women in coaching programmes; training needs acknowledged                                                                     | EU-level tools exist, but application is uneven across countries          |
| LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORK                  | National laws (2014, 2022); action plans; parity goals                                    | Progressive national and regional laws (e.g., trans rights, LGBTI laws); parity goals                                             | Strong strategic frameworks (e.g., EU Gender Equality Strategy, Charter)  |
| STRUCTURAL AND CULTURAL BARRIERS            | Gap between law and practice; limited indicators for impact                               | Local resistance, especially in rural areas or traditional clubs                                                                  | Inconsistent policies: misinformation and lack of awareness remain common |
| POSITIVE INITIATIVES                        | Club of 300 women leaders; Métiers Pluri'Elles; awareness campaigns                       | Gender equality guides; inclusive urban sports pilots; female networks; equality plans mandatory; support fund for elite athletes | Pride events, inclusive clubs, EGLSF advocacy across member states        |

## 3. LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORKS

A key observation from the desk research conducted in France, Spain (Valencian Region), and at the European level is that a legal and political framework does exist to support gender equality and LGBTQIA+ inclusion in sport. This framework includes national laws, regional regulations, and EU-wide strategies, all of which signal a growing recognition of sport as a powerful instrument for promoting inclusion, equal opportunity, and social cohesion. In recent years, there has been notable momentum in adopting new legislation and action plans that explicitly address the rights and needs of women and LGBTQIA+ individuals in the sports context. Many of these laws are relatively recent, reflecting a wider political shift and an increased awareness of the systemic barriers that persist within the sector.

### 3.1 - National and European framework

In France, gender equality in sport is addressed through several legislative texts, including the 2014 Law on Gender Parity and the 2022 Law reinforcing the fight against discrimination in sport. These laws are complemented by national action plans and ministerial strategies that encourage equal access, representation, and protection against discrimination.

Spain's legal landscape—particularly in the Valencian Region—is among the most advanced in Europe. Both national and regional laws explicitly recognize the rights of women and LGBTQIA+ individuals in sport. For example, the Valencian Sports Law includes gender parity obligations for sports organizations and incorporates specific rights for trans and intersex individuals. Additionally, regional institutions have produced detailed equality guides and policies targeted at sport clubs and federations.

At the European level, several key documents shape the overarching vision: the EU Gender Equality Strategy 2020–2025, the LGBTIQ Equality Strategy, and the Revised European Sports Charter all articulate sport as a vehicle for equality and inclusion. These frameworks promote equal access, visibility, and the protection of minority rights in sport across EU member states.

### 3.2 - Terminological and contextual differences

While the overall commitment to equality and inclusion is shared across the French, Spanish, and European contexts, the terminology used to describe these issues varies significantly, reflecting differences in legal and political frameworks. These differences are not only linguistic but also conceptual, and they shape how gender equality is understood and acted upon in each context.

In France, policy and legal texts tend to use terms such as “gender identity” and “sexual orientation”, which align with broader anti-discrimination language and human rights frameworks. These terms are generally used to refer to individual rights, framed within a universalist legal approach that emphasizes equality before the law and respect for personal privacy, rather than the explicit recognition of specific groups.

In contrast, in Spain, and particularly in the Valencian Region, the terminology is often more

direct. Policy and legal texts commonly refer to “LGBT”, “LGBTI”, or “trans” persons, and equality laws explicitly list these populations as subjects of protection. This more explicit recognition of specific groups reflects a proactive political stance that aims to name and address the needs of marginalized communities more directly.

At the European level, terminology such as “LGBTIQ” is often used, especially in the context of EU strategies and projects, aligning with international human rights standards. Terms like “inclusion”, “diversity”, and “equal access” dominate policy language, with a strong emphasis on the systemic transformation of institutions and cultural practices.

### POINTS TO KEEP IN MIND

The wording used to refer to gender equality in legal and policy texts varies from one context to another. While some frameworks emphasize individual rights through terms like “gender identity” and “sexual orientation”, others explicitly refer to groups such as “LGBT” or “trans people”.

It may be helpful to clearly define these terms within the training material, and to provide contextual explanations when necessary. Doing so can help ensure a shared understanding among participants and make the content more inclusive and adaptable across different national and cultural contexts.

## 3.3 - Clear gaps between law and practice

Despite encouraging legal and policy developments, the reality within clubs, federations, and sports communities frequently falls short of these ambitions. There is a consistent and observable gap, a disconnect between policy and law texts and actual implementation on the ground.

From the desk research, the gap can be explained by several recurring challenges:

- Lack of mandatory training for sport professionals on gender equality, inclusion, and non-discrimination. For instance, in France, while national policies promote inclusion, there is no requirement for coaches or educators to undergo training on gender equality. It remains largely optional, leading to highly uneven awareness across the sector.

- Weak or absent monitoring and accountability mechanisms. In both France and Spain, laws may set goals for gender parity—such as increasing the presence of women in leadership—but few concrete indicators or enforcement systems exist to track progress. For example, the FNPSL notes that despite strong legal frameworks, there is little data collection on representation in clubs, making it difficult to measure change or hold structures accountable.

- Cultural and institutional resistance, particularly in male-dominated sports or rural areas. In the Valencian Region, the FVMP highlights that despite progressive equality laws, many clubs still operate within traditionally masculine cultures. This can lead to a lack of support for inclusive practices and even open resistance to change. Stereotypes about “feminine” or “masculine” sports persist, influencing participation and leadership opportunities.

- Fragmentation and inconsistency of inclusion policies across Europe, particularly in relation to transgender athletes is highlighted in the EGLSF report. While EU-level strategies exist, the report also underlines the need for training, harmonization, and capacity-building, suggesting that more targeted support may be necessary to ensure effective implementation at all levels of sport.

### **POINTS TO KEEP IN MIND**

Each report mentions a gap between the legal and policy frameworks and their implementation in practice, particularly regarding parity (governance of sports federations) and participation of trans athletes.

How to make sports trainers aware of this gap and implement concrete actions in their clubs/organizations to reduce it? (Concrete examples/actions?)

## 4. STRUCTURAL AND CULTURAL BARRIERS

The desk research shows that sport continues to be shaped by a range of structural, cultural, and symbolic barriers that limit equal access and inclusion, particularly for women and LGB-TQIA+ individuals. These obstacles take multiple forms and have a direct impact within sports institutions, sports clubs, and local communities. Here are the challenges mentioned in the findings.

### 4.1 - Underrepresentation of women and minorities in structured sports

Across the observed contexts, women remain underrepresented in structured sport, from leadership and decision-making roles to professional positions and licensed participation. In France, among the 35 summer Olympic federations, only two are currently presided over by women. In the Valencian Region of Spain, just 18% of regional sports federations are led by women, and women account for only 15% of accredited coaches. Similarly, women represent around 33% of the sports workforce in France, but with lower visibility in elite and male-dominated disciplines.

Participation figures confirm the gap: in the Valencian Region, only 22.2% of federation license holders are women. Minority groups also face barriers—surveys show that over half of LGB-TQIA+ athletes in France have been exposed to homophobic or transphobic behaviour in sport, and many avoid structured participation altogether. The FVMP report further highlights that women's sports receive less media coverage and prestige, reinforcing invisibility and limiting role models for younger generations.

This underrepresentation reflects structural barriers that restrict access to governance, technical roles, and federated participation, perpetuating unequal opportunities in the sports ecosystem.

#### POINTS TO KEEP IN MIND

Sensitize about the systemic nature of underrepresentation (governance, coaching, licenses, workforce).

Provide tools and strategies for fostering inclusive recruitment and retention practices in clubs and federations.

### 4.2 - Gender stereotypes in sports disciplines

While underrepresentation shows the outcomes, gender stereotypes explain many of the *causes*.

Gender stereotypes continue to shape participation and opportunities in sport. Strength-based and competitive disciplines like football or rugby are still perceived as “male”, while activities such as gymnastics or dance are often coded as “female”. These cultural expectations limit

choices for both women and men, discouraging participation outside traditional norms.

The three desk research highlights that such stereotypes are reproduced early in life, particularly in school settings and grassroots sport, where boys and girls are often encouraged towards different disciplines based on gendered expectations rather than personal interest.

This cultural framing contributes to the underrepresentation of women in sports traditionally viewed as masculine, as well as to the stigmatization of men who participate in activities coded as feminine. The EGLSF desk research further underlines how these gendered norms intersect with sexual orientation and gender identity, reinforcing exclusionary attitudes towards athletes who do not conform to traditional gender expressions.

These stereotypes not only shape participation but also extend to professional pathways. Women coaches remain underrepresented in male-dominated sports, while men face barriers when seeking roles in sports like dance or synchronized swimming. The FNPSL research notes that even when women achieve visibility in disciplines such as football, they continue to face skepticism regarding their competence and legitimacy.

#### **POINTS TO KEEP IN MIND**

Show how stereotypes are reproduced from grassroots to elite sport, and their impact on participation.

Provide trainers with tools to challenge stereotypes in everyday practice (e.g., inclusive language, mixed training sessions).

Address media influence and encourage critical reflection on representation.

### **4.3 - Hostile environment for LGBTQIA+ individuals**

Despite progress in anti-discrimination policies, sport remains a challenging environment for many LGBTQIA+ individuals. Surveys such as the European Outsport project show that almost 90% of participants perceive homophobia and transphobia in sport, while one in five avoid participation altogether because of their sexual orientation or gender identity. In France, more than half of LGBTQIA+ athletes report experiencing discriminatory behaviour, a figure that rises to over 60% in team sports.

The desk research stresses that hostility often manifests not only through overt exclusion but also through everyday language, ridicule, and invisibility. Homophobic jokes, transphobic comments, or the absence of openly LGBTQIA+ role models contribute to an environment where athletes feel unsafe. As a result, many remain closeted in their sporting contexts, with some choosing to abandon structured sport altogether. Transgender and non-binary individuals face particularly acute barriers: contested eligibility rules in competitive sport often trickle down to grassroots level, creating confusion, anxiety, and a sense of not belonging even in recreational spaces.

In response to these barriers, LGBTQIA+ clubs and associations have emerged across Europe as important safe havens. They offer athletes a sense of belonging, visibility, and community that mainstream sport often fails to provide. Such clubs not only allow LGBTQIA+ people to participate without fear of discrimination but also act as laboratories for inclusive practices, which can later inspire and influence mainstream organizations. Their very existence, however, highlights the shortcomings of traditional sport structures in providing safety and equality for all.

Addressing hostility in sport is essential to ensure that all athletes can participate safely and equally. Trainers and sports organizations play a central role in this effort. Beyond teaching technical skills, trainers serve as role models and cultural gatekeepers: by challenging discriminatory behaviours, using inclusive language, and enforcing clear codes of conduct, they can help transform the sporting environment. At the same time, organizations must implement structural measures—such as inclusive facilities, visible allyship, and ongoing staff training—to make equality a lived reality rather than a mere principle. Mainstream clubs, in particular, can draw valuable lessons from LGBTQIA+ associations, which have developed practices and spaces that foster safety, belonging, and visibility. By actively tackling discrimination, trainers and organizations can ensure that sport becomes a welcoming space for everyone, rather than one where hostility persists.

#### **4.4 - Local resistance to inclusion**

Despite progress in policies and awareness-raising campaigns, local sports environments often remain spaces where inclusion encounters resistance. These barriers are not only structural but also cultural, reflecting entrenched attitudes, traditions, and power relations.

In many regions, grassroots sports clubs reproduce a masculinized culture that continues to privilege male-dominated disciplines (e.g., football, cycling, rugby) and sidelines women's sports or disciplines perceived as "feminine." Local federations and clubs often comply formally with equality laws (e.g., parity rules in boards), but practical implementation lags behind: women remain excluded from decision-making roles and coaching positions, and LGBTQIA+ athletes frequently lack safe spaces.

The Spanish case shows how rural areas, in contrast to larger cities, remain tied to traditional sports identities, which hinders innovation and inclusive practices. Similarly, in France, small clubs—particularly in rural areas—struggle to recruit and retain female coaches or volunteers due to limited resources and entrenched stereotypes. Local leaders sometimes perceive inclusion policies as an external imposition rather than a local priority, which limits genuine commitment.

Furthermore, public controversies around transgender athletes amplify local resistance. While international federations debate policies on eligibility, grassroots organizations often lack the expertise to interpret or apply these rules, resulting in exclusionary practices. The spillover of media narratives portraying trans women as a "threat" to fairness creates mistrust, which can discourage clubs from engaging in inclusion initiatives altogether.

Local resistance therefore operates at the intersection of tradition, lack of training, and broa-

der societal discourses. **It demonstrates that national or European policies cannot guarantee impact without deep engagement with local actors, including capacity-building for coaches, volunteers, and decision-makers who shape everyday sporting environments.**

### POINTS TO KEEP IN MIND

Analyzing the desk research tends to show that local sports clubs see inclusion measures as external impositions, not internal needs.

» Teach trainers what impact can bring inclusion measures to a club development?

**In conclusion, overcoming local resistance requires moving beyond compliance with formal equality frameworks and fostering a deeper cultural shift within clubs and communities. By empowering trainers and local leaders to view inclusion not as a constraint but as an opportunity to strengthen participation, cohesion, and sustainability, the sports sector can turn resistance into innovation. Inclusion should therefore be understood not only as a matter of rights, but also as a catalyst for stronger, more dynamic, and future-proof local sport structures.**

## 5. EMERGING TRENDS AND INSPIRING INITIATIVES

### 5.1 - Women's leadership networks, LGBTQIA+ sports competitions, awareness campaigns

Across Europe, new initiatives are emerging to strengthen visibility and solidarity among underrepresented groups in sport. In France, the “Club des 300 dirigeantes sportives” (CNOSF) gathers women in leadership roles—presidents, managers, and decision-makers—to share experiences, build networks, and receive targeted training. This not only increases their visibility but also challenges the glass ceiling that persists in governance. For LGBTQIA+ athletes, dedicated competitions such as the Gay Games provide safe environments for participation and visibility. These events also act as testing grounds for inclusive practices that can inspire mainstream clubs. Awareness campaigns are another powerful driver: in France, the International Day Against Homophobia in Sport has been adopted by Ligue 1 football, raising visibility around discrimination, even though some players resist participation. Together, these initiatives illustrate how collective visibility and solidarity can counterbalance exclusionary cultures.

### 5.2 - Mediatization to foster gender equality and engagement of federations and major sports organizations

The role of media and major federations is central in promoting equality. The FVMP desk research highlights that in the Valencian Region, women's sports receive significantly less media coverage than men's, reinforcing invisibility and limiting role models. Yet, major international events are beginning to challenge this. The Paris 2024 Olympic Games showcases a record number of openly LGBTQIA+ athletes (around 190), setting a new milestone for representation and normalisation. At the same time, federations in both Spain and France have launched targeted campaigns to promote women's sports and address gender disparities. For example, the French Ministry of Sports developed the “Terrain d'égalité” label, linked to major events, which guarantees gender parity, prevention of sexist and sexual violence, and visibility for women in sport. These initiatives demonstrate how federations and large-scale events can leverage mediatization to break stereotypes and make equality mainstream.

### 5.3 - Emergence and development of equality plans in sports organizations

The desk research also highlights a growing trend towards institutionalising equality through dedicated plans and charters. In the Valencian Region, federations are required by law to implement equality measures, and universities have published guides for designing equality plans in clubs and federations. These tools help translate policy into practice, even if local implementation remains uneven. In France, the All Equal interministerial plan (2023–2027) explicitly addresses sport as a lever for equality, while the national plan against anti-LGBT+ hatred (2023–2026) introduces mandatory training for sports professionals and sanctions for discriminatory behaviours. Furthermore, at the European level, strategies such as the EU Gender Equality Strategy 2020–2025 and the LGBTIQ Equality Strategy provide overarching frameworks that national federations and local clubs are beginning to adapt. These equality plans signal a shift: inclusion is no longer treated as optional but increasingly as a formal governance requirement.

## 6. OVERVIEW OF EXISTING GENDER EQUALITY TRAINING RESOURCES IN SPORT

Across the three partners, the desk research led to the identification of 16 existing training contents that address gender equality and inclusion in and through sport. These contents vary significantly in terms of format, objectives, pedagogical approach, certification and target groups.

### 6.1 - Format

Training formats observed across the consortium reflect a broad spectrum of pedagogical and operational choices:

- Asynchronous online training modules tend to be self-directed and structured into sequenced units, occasionally culminating in a certificate. These formats are accessible and scalable but require significant self-motivation.
- Hybrid formats combine online components with in-person sessions, often in a professionalising logic. They allow participants to benefit from theoretical foundations and practical applications (e.g., group work, case studies, field projects), often supported by individual or group tutoring.
- Structured in-person training sessions usually take the form of short seminars, workshops or conferences. These formats prioritise direct interaction, collective reflection, and often a strong local anchoring. Some include cascade training or action plans for follow-up.
- Modular pedagogical resources are designed for open use, with no formal training structure. These include downloadable guides, multimedia kits, and classroom activities that can be used independently by teachers or facilitators.

To keep in mind: hybrid formats offer the most structured and professionalised learning experience. In-person formats are especially valuable for fostering dialogue and engagement. Modular resources facilitate wide dissemination and flexible appropriation by educators and practitioners.

### 6.2 - Learning objectives

Training contents address a wide range of pedagogical objectives, distributed across several dimensions:

- Awareness-raising focuses on social inequalities in sport, including gender gaps, stereotypes, and hate speech. It aims to trigger reflection, challenge assumptions, and generate critical thinking.
- Competence-building covers specialised knowledge such as gender studies, public policy frameworks, and intervention strategies. It also includes development of facilitator skills and the ability to train others.

- Practical tools for implementation help learners to adapt sport practices, develop inclusive language, or create educational resources.

- Project-based transformation encourages participants to design and implement concrete actions in their local context, promoting change at organizational or structural levels.

- Cultural and organizational change is a transversal objective in several trainings, with a focus on inclusive leadership and sustainable reforms.

To keep in mind: many contents operate across multiple levels, from basic awareness to organizational transformation. There is a strong complementarity between educational, sport-specific, and leadership-oriented objectives.

### **6.3 - Pedagogical methods**

Four main pedagogical approaches can be identified across the training contents:

- Transmission-based methods rely on lectures, readings, or theoretical content. They are useful for introducing key concepts and providing structure but can be limited in terms of learner engagement.

- Interactive approaches favour active participation, debates, role play, and collaborative work. These foster peer learning and critical discussion.

- Professionalising methods are anchored in real-life application. They include case studies, project design, tutoring, and field observations. These approaches promote the transfer of learning into practice.

- Open and autonomous learning allows users to engage with content at their own pace. Resources are designed for self-study, sometimes accompanied by reflection activities but without active facilitation.

To keep in mind: most trainings combine several methods in modular formats. Audiovisual supports are often used in reflexive ways rather than purely didactic. Professionalising formats include more sustained learner engagement and active posture development.

### **6.4 - Evaluation and certification**

A wide range of evaluation and certification processes was observed:

- No formal evaluation or certification: Learning remains informal and focused on knowledge acquisition or awareness.

- Formative or qualitative evaluation: Often based on self-reflection, group discussion, or personal outputs, without official recognition.

- Participation certificates or completion badges: Issued upon completion of a course, sometimes following quizzes or activity reports.

- Action-based assessment: Involves the implementation of a project or plan in a real-world setting, often accompanied by tutoring or mentoring.

To keep in mind: formal certification remains limited. However, several initiatives include meaningful evaluation strategies grounded in real-world application, which contribute to professional development and the formal recognition of acquired competences.

## 6.5 - Target groups

Training contents target various professional and non-professional profiles, including:

- Sport professionals (coaches, trainers, educators) already in post.
- Trainees in formal education (university students, vocational learners).
- Teachers and school educators, often in physical education or citizenship education.
- Youth audiences, both athletes and non-athletes.
- Club and federation leaders, policy-makers or managers in sports governance.

To keep in mind: some programmes address a mixed audience, while others are specifically tailored to a role or professional level. There is a visible divide between targeted, professional formats and freely available, general-purpose resources. The potential for adaptation, transferability, and upscaling differs significantly depending on the targeted patterns and format.

Despite this diversity, several recurring common patterns and content clusters emerge:

The first category of contents focuses on strengthening professional capacities through structured, often hybrid, formats. These trainings typically combine theoretical input with project-based learning, mentorship, and reflective practices. They aim to equip professionals with the ability to identify and analyse gender-based inequalities and discrimination, design inclusive initiatives, and act as agents of change within their institutions. Some also explicitly cover leadership development, policy frameworks, and systemic approaches to fostering equality in sport.

Another group of contents adopts a more introductory or sensitization-oriented approach. These are shorter in duration and often delivered face-to-face. They focus on raising awareness about gender inequalities, stereotypes, and barriers to inclusion in sports movement. The pedagogical methods include lectures, debates, participatory workshops, and case studies. Their main objective is to foster critical thinking, empathy, and a first level understanding of inclusive practices among diverse actors—such as volunteers, educators, or early-career sport professionals.

A third set of resources consists of pedagogical tools and self-directed learning materials. These include downloadable guides, audio-visual content, and activity sheets that can be integrated into school curricula or used independently by educators and trainers. While these materials are not embedded in formal training programmes, they offer valuable content on media representation, stereotype deconstruction, inclusive language, and gender-based violence prevention.

Their modular design allows for flexibility and adaptation to different teaching contexts.

Lastly, some interventions take the form of seminars or stand-alone awareness-raising events, which typically bring together educators, students, and sport stakeholders to exchange views and practices. These sessions aim to trigger reflection, broaden perspectives, and initiate dialogue on diversity and inclusion in sport. While they often lack a formal evaluation or certification process, they provide important entry points into these topics for local or institutional actors.

Taken together, these training contents highlight both the richness and diversity of current approaches to gender equality education in sport, while also revealing structural gaps and areas for improvement. Among the main challenges are the lack of integration into formal training pathways, the absence of standardised evaluation or recognition mechanisms, and the limited availability of intersectional and LGBTQIA+-inclusive content. At the same time, the desk research offers concrete entry points and pedagogical innovations that can inform the design of future training programmes under the PROGRESS project.

# 7. KEY GAPS AND NEEDS EXPRESSED BY PARTNERS

## 7.1 - Introduction

The desk research analysis carried out by the PROGRESS partners has brought to light several points that deserve particular attention as we move towards the next stage of the project.

Although valuable resources and promising practices already exist across Europe, their fragmented nature, limited transferability, and lack of formal recognition reduce their overall impact.

What emerges clearly is that while useful resources and promising practices already exist, they are often fragmented, poorly recognized, or difficult to transfer across different contexts. Trainers frequently feel underprepared to address issues of gender and inclusion, and the competences they develop are rarely acknowledged in formal qualification frameworks. At the same time, inspiring approaches can be observed: hybrid training models that combine theory and practice, innovative pedagogical methods that challenge unconscious bias, and recognition mechanisms such as certificates or micro-credentials.

These lessons provide us with a practical set of “things to keep in mind” as we initiate Phase 2 of PROGRESS. They will help ensure that the training module and pedagogical toolbox are not only responsive to identified needs, but are also designed to be accessible, adaptable, and impactful in the daily reality of sports organizations.

Importantly, these considerations are not prescriptive or exhaustive: they are intended as guiding reflections to inform our work, but they do not all need to be implemented in full as we move into the next phase.

## 7.2 - Key points to keep in mind for Phase 2 of PROGRESS

### **Lack of structure, integration, and recognition**

One of the most significant gaps identified is the lack of formalization and institutional anchoring of gender equality training. Many existing initiatives are developed at the local level, disconnected from national curricula or professional qualification frameworks. As a result, they are typically offered as standalone workshops, with limited follow-up, no clear articulation with vocational pathways, and no obligation for sports educators to participate.

The competences acquired through these trainings—whether related to inclusive coaching, awareness of discrimination, or leadership on equality issues—are rarely acknowledged or certified. Trainers may develop skills through experience or participation in ad hoc workshops, but these remain invisible in formal recruitment or assessment processes. In some cases, as in France or Spain, gender equality is addressed in strategic documents or governance guidelines, but without any corresponding implementation in professional development tracks.

Possible directions for phase 2:

- Introduce a short “Equality Skills Certificate” or micro-credentials that can be issued upon completion of the training module.
- Align the training content with national qualification frameworks or continuing education schemes.
- Integrate gender equality training into mainstream curricula for sport educators and coaching diplomas

### **Limited pedagogical capacity and trainer expertise**

Another major concern is the lack of pedagogical capacity among sports trainers to address issues of gender, diversity, and inclusion. Most trainers receive little or no preparation on these topics during their formal education, and opportunities for continuing professional development in this area remain scarce. The consequence is a widespread feeling of unpreparedness when confronted with discriminatory incidents, inclusion challenges, or the needs of LGBTQIA+ athletes.

Desk research highlights the need for modules on:

- Educational posture: trainers as educators and cultural mediators.
- Unconscious bias: addressing stereotypes that shape sport participation and practice.
- Inclusive coaching: safe space protocols, inclusive language, and mixed-gender training sessions.

Possible directions for phase 2:

- Include dedicated modules on unconscious bias, inclusive communication, and trainers’ educational posture.
- Use participatory methods such as video case studies, role-playing exercises, and reflective discussion.
- Provide sample tools such as codes of conduct for inclusive clubs, safe-space protocols, or inclusive language checklists.

### **Fragmented and inaccessible resources**

While the number of pedagogical resources on gender equality in sport is growing, they remain unevenly distributed, often incomplete, poorly translated, or difficult to transfer between contexts. Urban settings tend to benefit from pilot projects and specialized departments, while rural or grassroots clubs lack basic access to tools or support.

Moreover, there is limited coordination between stakeholders—NGOs, federations, academic institutions, and public authorities—resulting in duplication of effort and missed opportunities for mutual learning.

Possible directions for phase 2:

- Develop a user-friendly, modular toolkit including downloadable guides, templates for club action plans, and case studies.
- Ensure accessibility through translation, plain language, and adaptability to different levels (educational, recreational, professional).
- Encourage co-construction and sharing of resources between partners and promote their visibility through joint platforms or repositories.

### **Lack of monitoring, evaluation, and knowledge capitalization**

Another recurring gap concerns the absence of meaningful evaluation of equality actions. Despite regulatory progress in some countries (e.g. parity laws, anti-discrimination charters), the real impact of these measures remains difficult to assess. In practice, symbolic campaigns often coexist with resistance on the ground—such as athletes refusing to engage with inclusion initiatives—without any mechanism for follow-up or feedback.

Few training programmes incorporate formative assessment, participant feedback, or post-training follow-up. Trainers are rarely asked to share their observations on whether behaviours or attitudes evolve. Yet their proximity to the field makes them valuable sources of insight.

Possible directions for phase 2:

- Develop simple tools for formative assessment: pre- and post-training self-assessment, feedback forms, observation grids.
- Include reflective assignments (e.g. action plans, personal diaries) to track the evolution of trainers' practices.
- Explore mechanisms for post-training follow-up or community feedback to assess long-term impact.

### **Inclusion, intersectionality, and content**

Finally, the analysis points to the need for a more ambitious and inclusive approach to equality in sport. While gender is increasingly recognized as a relevant axis of discrimination, the interconnectedness of social categories such as ethnicity, disability, class, and sexual orientation is often overlooked.

LGBTQIA+ issues are particularly underrepresented. When they are addressed, the content is often superficial, limited to awareness-raising, and disconnected from broader reflection on norms, identities, and structures of exclusion.

Possible directions for phase 2:

- Embed intersectionality as a transversal principle throughout the training module and toolkit.
- Include dedicated segments on LGBTQIA+ inclusion, with real-life testimonies and concrete coaching adaptations.
- Design exercises addressing multiple discrimination scenarios, and provide adaptable examples for diverse contexts (e.g. disability, migration, religion, etc.).

# 8. PROPOSED STRUCTURE OF THE TRAINING MODULE AND THE TOOLKIT

## 8.1 - Training module

### Target groups

- Adult educators, trainers, and facilitators working in sport or community-based education.
- Both experienced and novice trainers, with a focus on those lacking prior expertise in gender equality.

These groups are multipliers. They were prioritised due to their key role in shaping inclusive practice. Other potential targets—youth participants, general public, or school students—were excluded (even if they remain indirect beneficiaries) to maintain a professional and training-of-trainers focus.

### Main objective

To equip adult educators with knowledge, tools, and competencies to promote gender equality and LGBTQIA+ inclusion in sport through reflective, inclusive, and transferable educational practices.

This combines awareness-raising, competence-building, and organizational change, as identified in the existing resources. Objectives such as only raising initial awareness without deeper engagement were deemed insufficient alone for long-term impact.

### Format

Hybrid structure:

- Asynchronous online content (hosted on Moodle or equivalent): theory-based modules, video lectures, reading materials, quizzes and case studies.
- Synchronous sessions (remotely): peer workshops and collaborative reflection.
- Optional local implementation: participants plan and initiate a local inclusive initiative or awareness activity contextualized to their organization or community.

Hybrid design ensures scalability and engagement. Purely in-person training formats (e.g. single-session seminars, standalone awareness-raising events) were not prioritised for the core module due to limited reach and difficulty in harmonisation across contexts. Fully asynchronous learning was also avoided alone due to risks of disengagement.

### Pedagogical structure (main modules):

- Understanding gender and diversity in sport: concepts and theories, social construction of gender, forms of discrimination, inequalities and representation in sport.
- Inclusive practices and institutional change: tools for inclusive communication and coaching, building safe spaces, strategies for change in clubs or institutions.
- Training others and leading change: role of sport educators as change agents in designing and delivering awareness-raising sessions, action planning and evaluation.

The structure addresses individual, group and systemic levels. Contents purely focused on knowledge transmission without practice orientation were not retained as standalone modules.

## Pedagogical methods

- Blended: interactive online content, guided readings, video lectures, readings, real-life examples case studies.
- Interactive: peer learning, group reflection, feedback sessions.
- Professionalising: design of a personal/local action plan, contextualized action plan.
- Inclusive: intersectional approach addressing SOGIESC, ethnicity, age, lived experiences and other intersecting factors. Real-life scenarios and case studies will include diverse profiles and sport settings.
- Reflexive: educational posture, unconscious bias.

These methods were retained for their high engagement and adaptability.

Transmission-only approaches (e.g. lecture-heavy courses) were deprioritised unless complemented with reflexive or applied elements. Open and self-directed learning was transferred to the toolkit where it is more suitable for autonomous reuse.

## Certification and evaluation

- Completion badge and certificate of achievement, issued upon completion of all modules and submission of a reflective report or action plan.
- Optional digital portfolio including gathering learning outputs and personal reflections for use in professional contexts
- Formative feedback loop: peer review and tutor comments, with opportunities for self-assessment and iterative improvement.

These tools meet the need for recognition and monitoring expressed by all partners. Programmes with no certification or only informal completion without evaluation were deemed inadequate to foster recognition of competences.

## Expected impacts

- Strengthening capacity of adult educators to deliver impactful gender equality training.
- Formation of a European peer community of trainers, with ongoing exchange and dissemination.
- Multiplier effect at local/national levels through cascade training and implementation of inclusive initiatives.
- Contribution to professional recognition of competences related to gender education in sport.

## 8.2 - Toolkit

### Target audience

Trainers and facilitators wishing to deliver awareness-raising or professional training sessions on gender equality, LGBTQIA+ inclusion, non-discrimination in sport.

This complements the module audience and focuses on practitioners. Resources aimed at students or youth athletes directly were excluded from the toolkit to maintain a focus on training providers.

## General objective

To provide ready-to-use, adaptable, and context-sensitive resources that support trainers in designing and delivering inclusive, participatory, and impactful sessions in the field of sport and physical activity.

## Format

- Open-access digital toolkit, downloadable in full or by module/activity.
- Includes audiovisual resources, printable handouts, and facilitator materials suitable for both online and in-person use.

This format ensures scalability, flexibility, and European-level transferability. Formats requiring heavy technical infrastructure, or print-only resources were avoided to lower access barriers.

## Toolkit structure

- Trainer guide: educational philosophy and approach, tips for managing groups dynamics (ensuring safety, respect, and inclusion, dealing resistance), checklist for preparing a session.
- Activity sheets: objectives, duration, group size, materials required, detailed step-by-step instructions, reflection prompts and debriefing tips, versions for in-person and online use, suggestions for tailoring to specific groups.
- Visual and multimedia resources: slide templates with key statistics, short videos and case examples (diverse genders, contexts), infographics on stereotypes, inclusion strategies, good practices.
- Assessment and follow-up tools: self-evaluation grid (trainer and participant), feedback forms, suggestions for post-session activities and further learning, templates for documenting training outcomes and participant progress.

This structure enables immediate reusability and adaptation. Resources without pedagogical framing or lacking user guidance (e.g., standalone posters or campaigns) were not retained.

## Guiding principles

- Flexibility: suitable for 1h awareness sessions or multi-day workshops.
- Accessibility: designed for trainers with various levels of prior experience, easy-to-use tools requiring minimal equipment.
- Inclusivity: resources to address gender, LGBTQIA+, intersectionality.
- Transferability: adaptable to various national/local contexts and sectors (sport, education, youth work).
- Open innovation: encourages the addition of new tools, contributing to a shared European culture of practice.

## Expected impact

- Increased trainer autonomy and confidence, especially for non-specialist or early-career educators.
- Wider dissemination of inclusive pedagogical practices.
- Contribution to a shared knowledge base and cross-sectoral community of practice.
- Improved quality and sustainability of gender equality training in sport across Europe.

## 9. APPENDIX. SUMMARY OF THE DESK RESEARCH PHASE.

### 9.1 - EGLSF

| TITLE                                                              | FORMAT                                               | LEARNING OBJECTIVES                                                                    | LEARNING OBJECTIVES                                             | EVALUATION/ CERTIFICATION                                     | TARGET AUDIENCE                                                       |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Outsport Coach E-learning</i>                                   | Online                                               | Understand SOGIESC-related discrimination; foster inclusive sports environments        | Modular MOOC, educational tools, final exercises                | Chapter-end quizzes; final certificate                        | Coaches, PE teachers, youth educators, diversity consultants          |
| <i>Training Programme on Sport for All Genders and Sexualities</i> | In-person (4 days)                                   | Train local multipliers; understand binary norms and their discriminatory effects      | Online preparation, in-person sessions, post-training mentoring | Pre-training prep + post-training commitment; impact tracking | Organized sport professionals (local multipliers)                     |
| <i>Combating Hate Speech – Sport Educators</i>                     | In-person (5 hours)                                  | Raise awareness about hate speech; promote human rights through sport                  | 3 sessions based on human rights education methodologies        | Not specified                                                 | Sports coaches, PE teachers, sport educators                          |
| <i>Combating Hate Speech – Athletes</i>                            | In-person (3 hours)                                  | Recognize and respond to hate speech; empower athletes                                 | Participatory workshops; practical examples                     | Not specified                                                 | Young athletes (club-based, camps, national events)                   |
| <i>HEY Course – Sport &amp; Human Rights</i>                       | Online (4 weeks)                                     | Raise awareness on the sport-human rights nexus; train for social action through sport | E-learning modules, tutor support                               | Certificate + access to HEY trainer course                    | Young adults aged 18–30 (athletes, volunteers, influencers, students) |
| <i>UEFA Outraged Toolkit</i>                                       | Hybrid self-training (video + discussion), 60–90 min | Denounce all forms of discrimination through football                                  | Guided sessions, video materials, group discussions             | Feedback forms                                                | Parents, coaches, players (aged 11–14, 15–18, 19+)                    |

The *Outsport MOOC* stands out for its WHO endorsement and multilingual diffusion. The *Training Programme* offers a sophisticated instructional design integrating preparation, training, and follow-up. Two tools (*Combating Hate Speech*) distinctly target educators and athletes. The *HEY Course* is rooted in the Council of Europe’s democratic competence framework. The *UEFA Toolkit* adopts a broad, public-oriented approach.

Strengths: Strong transferability potential; robust European structuring (Erasmus+, CoE).

Areas for improvement:

- Enhance contextualisation to local realities
- Strengthen the pedagogical structuring of materials
- Integrate long-term mentoring or support systems to maximise sustained impact

## 9.2 - FVMP

| TITLE                                                              | FORMAT                                 | LEARNING OBJECTIVES                                                           | LEARNING OBJECTIVES                                                      | EVALUATION/CERTIFICATION                                         | TARGET AUDIENCE                                             |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Guía Educación y Deporte: Buenas prácticas para la Igualdad</i> | Standalone pedagogical resource        | Promote equality in education and sport; provide tools for educators          | Theoretical guide + practical tools and activities                       | Adaptable methods (questionnaires, observation, self-assessment) | Educators and educational/sport programme managers          |
| <i>Promoción de la Igualdad en el Deporte (UPV)</i>                | Hybrid (online + in-person)            | Analyse inequalities and stereotypes; integrate a gender perspective          | Theoretical modules, practical sessions, interdisciplinary teaching team | No standardised evaluation; awareness-focused                    | Federation coaches, technical staff, sport science students |
| <i>Formación en Igualdad para Clubes</i>                           | Hybrid (2 days)                        | Raise awareness, prevent harassment, promote inclusive language               | Real-life scenarios, interactive workshops, final report                 | Final reflective report                                          | Coaches, educators, referees, club personnel                |
| <i>I Jornada Coeducación en Educación Física</i>                   | In-person (3.5-hour seminar)           | Strengthen the role of teachers in combatting sexism; provide practical tools | Roundtable discussions, practical activities, experience sharings        | Attendance certificate                                           | PE teachers (in training or in post)                        |
| <i>Campeonas Invisibles – Teaching Guide for Short Film</i>        | Classroom material (film + activities) | Encourage reflection on equality, stereotypes, and invisibility in sport      | Pre/post screening activities, discussions, comparative analysis         | Qualitative observation, participation, reflective writing       | Students aged 8–14 + PE teachers                            |

Several training courses originate from local public policies (e.g., *Guía Educación y Deporte* as part of Villena's municipal plan) or academic initiatives (e.g., *Cátedra Dona i Esport*). The goal of professionalising gender equality training within clubs is evident, alongside a clear focus on school PE and co-educational strategies.

Strengths: Strong local anchoring; concrete, modular pedagogical tools.

Areas for improvement:

- Better integration of intersectional approaches
- Development of digital learning supports to increase flexibility and dissemination
- Updating of statistical content and resources
- Fostering long-term communities of practice

### 9.3 - FNPSL

| TITLE                                                                                   | FORMAT                                                         | LEARNING OBJECTIVES                                                                                                                        | LEARNING OBJECTIVES                                                               | EVALUATION/CERTIFICATION                                                 | TARGET AUDIENCE                                          |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Les femmes dans le sport</i>                                                         | In-person (lecture + debate)                                   | Understand issues around the feminisation of sport; promote gender equality in sport careers; combat stereotypes and gender-based violence | Presentations, debates, video screenings, testimonies, reflective work, workshops | No formal evaluation                                                     | BPJEPS APT vocational learners (aged 16-25)              |
| <i>Lutter contre les discriminations et violences sexistes dans le sport (EGAL'APS)</i> | Hybrid (in-person + synchronous online + individual mentoring) | Analyse discrimination; design inclusive projects; develop professional leadership in sport                                                | Courses, applied projects, individual support                                     | Assessed through applied project                                         | Sport professionals, local government workers, activists |
| <i>Éducation aux médias et sport/égalité (CLEMI)</i>                                    | Online multimedia resource (asynchronous)                      | Deconstruct stereotypes; develop critical thinking; promote civic values through sport                                                     | Downloadable materials, videos, testimonies, teacher-led activities               | Informal teacher-led evaluation                                          | Primary and secondary teachers (especially PE)           |
| <i>Accueillir un public LGBT+ dans son club</i>                                         | Mainly online (Zoom), also available in-person                 | Foster LGB-TQIA+ inclusion in clubs; respond to discrimination; adapt sport practices                                                      | Awareness-raising, peer exchange, legal framework                                 | No formal evaluation                                                     | Club managers and sports administrators                  |
| <i>Femix'Sports Academy</i>                                                             | In-person or remote (adaptable format)                         | Understand stereotypes; design and implement concrete actions for equality in practice and governance                                      | Lectures, surveys, role play, individual action plan                              | Final questionnaire + formative evaluation; certificate of participation | Volunteers, educators, professionals, elected officials  |

To keep in mind: Wide range of formats, including embedded vocational training (BPJEPS), university-accredited modules (EGAL'APS), teaching kits (CLEMI), awareness sessions (LGBT+), and modular, certifying training (Femix'Sports Academy).

Strengths: Strong connection between theory and field practice; diverse target audiences; operational orientation; attention to trainer posture; more elaborate evaluation formats.

Areas for improvement:

- Improve documentation of mid-/long-term impact
- Structure post-training mentoring or support pathways
- Ensure broader accessibility (geographic, digital, economic)