

Initiative	FutbolNet
<p><b>Description</b></p>	<p><b>The Community Champions League is an EFDN project in partnership with nine community-engaged football clubs from the Netherlands, England, Scotland, Norway, Portugal, Hungary, Belgium and Germany. NAC Breda, Feyenoord Foundation, Aberdeen FC Community Trust, Chelsea Foundation, Club Brugge Foundation, SV Werder Bremen, Vålerenga Fotball, Ferencvarosi TC and Fundação Benfica deliver the Pan-European programme in collaboration with EFDN.</b></p> <p>To promote social integration through sport, the Community Champions League provides the opportunity for youngsters from different cultures to come together to build relationships and friendships, while breaking down barriers through the prevention of violence, racism and intolerance in grassroots sports and their communities.</p> <p>The Community Champions League project highlights the key element of “cultural understanding” in order to generate and emphasise mutual respect, at the same time as, helping the participants involved boost their confidence, to build strong relationships between other young people in their communities.</p> <p>The project is focused on fair play, respect and tolerance, promoting social cohesion, equal opportunities and participation in sports for young boys and girls between the ages of 7 and 15 years. More specifically, the local Community Champions League puts young people with different backgrounds from the same neighbourhood together to compete as a team against their peers from other parts of the city, in order to become the Community Champions of their city. The participating clubs organise workshops, community contributions and other events to promote volunteering and active citizenship. Thanks to a dynamic engagement of the whole neighbourhood within the programme, strong and active communities are, therefore, naturally being built within the cities.</p>
<p><b>Implementation</b></p>	<p>There are two ways to recruit participants for the Community Champions League programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clubs are getting in touch with schools and select a minimum of 12 schools which take part in the Community Champions League competition. The participating schools come from different areas of the city.</li> </ul> <p>Participants can subscribe on the clubs’ Foundation page to take part in the CCL competition. Once participants are subscribed and allowed to join the competition teams will be divided based on the district and postal code where they live.</p>
<p><b>Impact</b></p>	<p>The Community Champions League is an on-going project that runs throughout the entire school year, every year. The CCL consists of different activities, including:</p> <p><b>The preparation event</b></p> <p>At the preparation event, all participants will get to meet their teammates for the first time. At the event, the Community Champions methodology is explained to all participants, their parents and volunteers. They will also discuss and agree on their team name, stadium name and discuss the first voluntary community activities their neighbourhood can organise.</p>

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**Kick-off event**

The Local Leagues all start with a sport event where the first points of the season can be earned. All participating teams are offered an afternoon of sport and games. The event aims to make a team out of the different individuals through all kinds of team building activities.

**Training sessions**

Each team gets 4 training sessions. Two training sessions are combined training sessions with multiple teams so the young people can play with each other. Two training sessions are at the field that is used to play the League matches. After the training session, other young people from the community can join the session as a reward for their fair support points.

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**Workshops.**

Every team participates in 4 workshops. Two workshops are the same throughout the European project (no violence and discrimination and the other is on respect and sportsmanship). The other two workshops can be adjusted according to local needs (social cohesion and acceptance of refugees, prevention youth or street crime, prevention of NEET's etc. )

**Community Contributions**

All the teams can score additional points by volunteering for community activities that benefits their own community. The activities need to be approved by the local project coordinators. The community activities can be a wide variety of volunteering activities that the teams can deliver to earn additional Community Champions Reward points.

**CCL Competition**

The European Community Champions League is played in ten cities from nine European countries. These local Community Champions Leagues were a social street football competition, whereby the participating teams could win more points by showing 'Fair Play', 'Fair Support' and by 'Volunteering' in community activities, alongside, gaining points from winning the Street Football matches. Each league consists of 12 teams, divided into 2 groups and in total 60 games are played during the year.

All local competitions were played during the normal football competitions and started in September of each year. The finals were played in April / May. From mid-April, the young people could register for the next year, so there was enough time to inspire their friends to join the Community Champions competition. Depending on the country, there is a winter

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	<p>break in which it is not possible to play outside matches. The competition continued with inside training sessions, workshops and Community contributions.</p> <p>Community Champions is a project of the European Football for Development Network Foundation (EFDN) in partnership with ten community-engaged football clubs from the Netherlands, England, Scotland, Norway, Denmark, Portugal, Hungary, Belgium and Germany. The project is supported by a great number of local, national and international NGO's, National and regional FA's, Professional Leagues and local governments</p>
<p><b>Lessons learnt</b></p>	<p>The outcomes were measured on participants and partner organisational level. Some of the indicated outcomes below are based on a short and long term:</p> <p><b>Local participants</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• increased participation in sport, physical activity and voluntary activities</li> <li>• raised awareness about a healthier lifestyle and wellbeing</li> <li>• Increased feeling of self-confidence and self-esteem (personal growth) (psycho-social analysis of participants on self-confidence and self-esteem items: personality test)</li> <li>• increased mobility of the participants (participation reasons, social mobility recording)</li> <li>• enhanced number of social contacts and relationships</li> <li>• Raised awareness about the possibilities to volunteer (and become more active in society)</li> <li>• Grown as a role model within their community</li> </ul> <p><b>Project participating organisations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sharing of best practice amongst project partners and the wider project partner network.</li> <li>• Engagement, research and consultation with local, regional and (inter)national sport for all and sport-based social inclusion projects and practitioners.</li> <li>• Improved collaboration between the participating organisations, stakeholders, schools...</li> <li>• Enhanced competences of staff in the effective implementation and delivery of social inclusion activities.</li> </ul> <p>Exposure to European opportunities in both sport and other careers, providing improved European mobility opportunities for staff and practitioners, both within sport and outside of it.</p>
<p><b>Conclusion</b></p>	<p>The programme's seminars are delivered twice a year, which provides each partner with a great platform to share knowledge and hold discussions on how the methodology can be internationally improved. During each seminar, each partner can also share experiences of the do's and don'ts they experienced, when carrying out the project. This helped all partners improve the implementation of their CCL projects.</p> <p>By analysing the implementation phase of the different consortium partners, we were able to identify that planning the CCL competition with secondary schools was much harder to carry out as with elementary schools. One of the reasons for this, is that youngsters from elementary schools are much easier to motivate and engage for the competitions as youngsters from a higher age.</p>

Visit the SIDFOOT website for more information and resources: <https://www.sidfoot.eu/>

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