

# Blended Learning Curriculum for Coaches



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## Introduction

INCLUDE project puts forward a comprehensive program involving research, direct action and the development of learning resources to educate and support coaches, executives and staff of sports academies working with young athletes (12-18 years old) so that they can actively contribute to tackling discrimination in youth sports. INCLUDE promotes inclusion and diversity by taking concrete action to tackle barriers linked to discrimination in youth sports.

The Blended Learning curriculum for coaches is based on national and transnational reports and research. Both trainers and athletes in the partner countries Cyprus, Greece, Ireland and Italy face discriminatory behaviours in youth sports. The blended learning curriculum focuses on the three main issues of discrimination, inclusion and diversity and focuses on target group coaches, aiming to improve the knowledge and competencies of coaches, thus empowering them to combat violence and tackle discrimination. The curriculum encompasses a theoretical framework complemented by activities, case studies, videos, and real-life examples. The structure of the curriculum is the following:

Module 1: Introduction  
in sport discrimination

Module 2: The role of  
the coaches

Module 3:  
Discrimination in your  
sport club

Module 4: Create a  
workshop training  
session



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## MODULE 1: Introduction in sport discrimination

### Learning Objectives

By the end of this Unit, you should be able to:

- Comprehend the fundamental theoretical aspects of discrimination, including its origins and repercussions, and identify prevalent types of discrimination in sports.
- Generate examples demonstrating how sports can promote inclusion, diversity, and gender equality.
- Analyse the significance of anti-discrimination initiatives in coaching young athletes and understand their impact on fostering a supportive environment.
- Outline effective strategies and exemplify best practices for addressing homophobic language in sports settings, emphasising creating an inclusive and respectful atmosphere.

### What is discrimination in youth coaching?

In this section, you are going to learn about discrimination in youth coaching and the importance of inclusion, diversity and equality.

However, before giving you theoretical input on the topic, take some time to watch the introductory video below.

Tip: Use the subtitles in English: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mW7LhqIPqc8>



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After watching the video, try to answer the following questions. Remember, these questions are meant to guide your reflection and encourage deeper thinking about the content of the video. Feel free to pause, rewind, or rewatch specific parts of the video to explore your thoughts and insights fully:

1. What kind of discrimination were the two girls facing when practising sports?
2. How does the video showcase the ways of discrimination against women, and what tips do the protagonists have to overcome discrimination?
3. Have you ever experienced similar ways of discrimination in sports? If yes, please let us know in which way. If not, have you experienced that friends have felt discriminated against in a sporting environment?
4. As a coach, how can you support and promote inclusivity in sports?



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## What is the definition of discrimination in the context of sports?

Article 2 of the Racial Equality Directive defines discrimination 'as occurring where one person is treated less favourably than another is, has been or would be treated in a comparable situation on grounds of racial or ethnic origin'. ([Fighting Discrimination in Sport - European Parliament](#)).

Discrimination in sports refers to the unjust or differential treatment of individuals or groups based on various characteristics, such as:

- Race
- Gender
- Sexual orientation
- Religion
- Disability
- Socioeconomic status

This type of discrimination can take various forms, including exclusion, unequal opportunities, harassment, bias, and prejudice. It hinders the principles of fair play, equity, and inclusivity in sports.

However, it is essential to note that not all forms of differentiation qualify as discrimination. Discrimination comes into play when differentiation is rooted in unjust or illegal factors. In practical terms, it entails treating individuals differently in similar circumstances, based on at least one criterion prohibited by law. Furthermore, sociologists highlight that discrimination can be a subjective, internal experience. Surveys conducted by Eurostat indicate that the perception of discrimination is more widespread than actual discrimination. Whether it occurs in the workplace or leisure activities, it is crucial to investigate discrimination from both an objective and subjective perspective, with the diligence of a researcher.



## Navigating inclusivity and exclusivity in the realm of sports

The sport presents a contradiction. On one hand, it is a popular and inclusive activity that welcomes individuals from all backgrounds and genders, seemingly free from discrimination. However, competitive sports can also be seen as a means of categorising and ranking participants based on their skill levels, creating a form of exclusion for those who may not perform as well. This exclusion may appear discriminatory, but it is not typically based on factors like social status, birth, religion, or background. Most sports have rules and categories, such as age groups, weight classes, and rankings, designed to ensure fairness and equal treatment, to allow the best athletes to succeed, regardless of their skin colour.

The primary distinction is between genders, where separate competitions for men and women are considered "natural." Following the principles of sports, performance is seen as a fair measure in societies that value fundamental equality among individuals. Consequently, sport provides an essentially level playing field and an opportunity for integration for all participants, regardless of their cultural or national origins. This reflects the humanist tradition of sports championed by Pierre de Coubertin, the founder of the modern Olympics, who aimed to bring together athletes from diverse geographical, cultural, religious, and social backgrounds to compete under the same rules and in a shared ethical framework, forming a single "sporting community."

However, a closer look reveals that these ethical principles are often disregarded. In practice, some participants and fans, either due to their membership in a specific group or perceived affiliation, experience injustice, racism, and discrimination, exposing the paradox of sports. Furthermore, competitive sports centered on physical performance segregate not only men and women but also separate athletes with disabilities from others. At the highest level, events like the Paralympics are organised separately, underscoring that society does not always align with its principles and intentions.





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Despite the notion of the universality of sport in politics, day-to-day practices and the actions of sports institutions demonstrate that sports are still influenced by identity-based assertions and various forms of discrimination, including those related to gender, ethnicity, physical appearance, and sexual orientation, among others.

## Discrimination: a legal notion in Europe's increasing awareness

Anti-discrimination policies originally emerged in the context of employment access. According to the French Labor Code, discrimination is defined as differential treatment based on various factors such as origin, gender, morals, sexual orientation, age, family situation, ethnic or racial affiliation (real or perceived), political beliefs, involvement in trade unions or mutual benefit societies, religious convictions, physical appearance, name, health status, or disability. Discrimination is unequivocally prohibited in France, as it is in most European nations ([Non-discrimination. \(n.d.\). European Commission](#)). The European integration process has significantly contributed to the incorporation of various forms of discrimination into public policies, either separately or in conjunction, with a particular focus on ethnic discrimination.

The Treaty of Amsterdam, dated November 20, 1997, marked a pivotal moment by introducing European responsibility for addressing discrimination. Article 13 of this treaty expanded the notion of discrimination beyond gender-based discrimination to encompass all forms of discrimination, especially those rooted in actual or perceived ethnic origin. Consequently, principles of equality, non-discrimination, and diversity are frequently enshrined in the legislation of European Union (EU) member states.

The Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, adopted in 2000, emphasises the prohibition of discrimination on any grounds, including sex, race, colour, ethnic or social origin, membership in a national minority, and others. Furthermore, it underscores the EU's commitment to respecting cultural, religious, and linguistic diversity.



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With this comprehensive definition in mind, the question arises: **does discrimination persist in sports?** Given the presence of national communities dispersed across various European countries, sports are often seen as a means of integrating population groups that face discrimination. This widely held belief in sports as a unifying and integrating force was corroborated by a 2004 European Commission survey, which found that 64% of European Union citizens considered sports as a tool to combat discrimination (Special Eurobarometer 213 (2004), "Citizens of the European Union and sport", *opinion poll conducted at the request of the Directorate-General of Education and Culture and co-ordinated by the Directorate-General of Press and Communication, European Commission, November 2004*).

The Council of the European Union echoed this sentiment in December 2000, describing sports as a factor that promotes integration, societal participation, tolerance, and the acceptance of differences. This aligns with the principles outlined in the European Sports Charter of 1992, which not only reiterates the right of access to sports for all (initially included in the 1975 European Charter of Sport for All) but also underscores the importance of keeping sports free from discrimination related to religion, race, gender, or political beliefs.

In 2007, the European Commission reaffirmed its commitment to these universal ideals in European sports through its "White Paper on Sport" ([EUR-Lex - I35010 - EN - EUR-Lex](#), (n.d.)). This document outlines the objectives of fostering social inclusion through sports and developing related activities.





### Let's think!

1. Reflect on your experiences as a coach. What are some **specific instances** where you have observed discrimination?

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2. Have you ever heard of discrimination on the **high-elite level**? List some incidents that you might have seen or heard about.

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3. Reflect on the European Union's effort to combat discrimination in sports. How **effective** are the mentioned treaties, in your opinion?

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## The most common forms of discrimination in (youth) sports

There are different forms of discrimination, which you will learn in-depth during this course. The following table explains different grounds of discrimination:

Term (or ground)	Definition/description	Examples
<b>Sexism</b>	'Sexism is linked to power in that those with power are typically treated with favour, and those without power are typically discriminated against. Sexism is also related to stereotypes since discriminatory actions or attitudes are frequently based on false beliefs or generalisations about gender and on considering gender as relevant where it is not.' <sup>1</sup>	Female athletes are getting paid less than their male counterparts and receive less (or different) media coverage when a transgender person is not accepted in a sports team or is not allowed to compete in sports.
<b>Racism</b>	'Ideas or theories of superiority of one race or group of persons of one colour or ethnic origin'. <sup>2</sup>	When black-skinned athletes experience verbal abuse by the audience (intentional discrimination). Prejudices against foreign athletes expressed non-verbally or in the tone of voice (unintentional discrimination)
<b>Disability discrimination (Ableism)</b>	'Ableism is the discrimination of and social prejudice against people with disabilities based on the belief that typical abilities are superior. At its heart, ableism is rooted in the assumption that disabled people require 'fixing' and defines people by their disability. Like racism and sexism, ableism classifies entire groups of people as 'less than' and includes harmful stereotypes, misconceptions, and generalisations of people with disabilities.' <sup>3</sup>	When people with disabilities cannot access the sporting facilities. When sports federations (or the state) provide less support (e.g. financial support for travelling to international tournaments) to athletes with disabilities compared to other athletes of the same sport.
<b>Discrimination based on religion or belief</b>	When people are treated less favourably because of their religion or beliefs.	When a sporting federation requires all athletes to wear a specific type of sporting clothing/uniform, it cannot be used by some athletes because it is prohibited by their religion (indirect discrimination).

<sup>1</sup> [What is sexism?](#) (2023, October 19). European Institute for Gender Equality.

<sup>2</sup> [Racism.](#) Migration and Home Affairs.

<sup>3</sup> Eisenmenger, A. (2022). [Ableism 101](#). Access Living.



<b>Classism</b>	'Classism is differential treatment based on social class or perceived social class. Classism is the systematic oppression of subordinated class groups to advantage and strengthen the dominant class groups. It is the systematic assignment of characteristics of worth and ability based on social class. <sup>4</sup>	When in certain sports clubs (e.g., golf or tennis), one has to apply for membership and have certain references (of status and position) to get in.
<b>Ageism</b>	'Ageism is defined as discrimination against older people because of negative and inaccurate stereotypes—and it is so ingrained in our culture that we often do not even notice. Most organisations now have diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) departments to tackle racism and gender bias. <sup>5</sup>	When athletes continue to compete after the 'proper' age, they receive negative media attention and comments.
<b>Lookism</b>	'Prejudice or discrimination based on physical appearance and especially physical appearance is believed to fall short of societal notions of beauty'. <sup>6</sup>	Female athletes who fit the cultural ideals of beauty and femininity receive more (and more positive) media coverage than other female athletes.
<b>Homophobia</b>	'Homophobia can be defined as an irrational fear of and aversion to homosexuality and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people based on prejudice and similar to racism, xenophobia, anti-semitism and sexism'. <sup>7</sup>	Exclusion of LGBTQ+ persons in sport, e.g. when a transwoman is excluded from doing sports together with other women.
<b>Multiple discrimination (intersectionality)</b>	'Any combination of forms of discrimination against persons on the grounds of sex, racial or ethnic origin, religion or belief, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender identity or other characteristics, and to discrimination suffered by those who have, or who are perceived to have those characteristics'. <sup>8</sup>	A transgender athlete of colour might be discriminated against on multiple grounds (e.g. race/skin colour and gender identity)

<sup>4</sup> [What is Classism?](#) From Class Action: Building bridges across the class divide (classism.org)

<sup>5</sup> Weir, K.. [Ageism is one of the last socially acceptable prejudices. Psychologists are working to change that.](#)

<sup>6</sup> [Definition of lookism.](#) In the Merriam-Webster Dictionary.

<sup>7</sup> [Homophobia in Europe](#) - Wednesday, 18 January 2006. (n.d.). © European Union, 2006 - Source: European Parliament.

<sup>8</sup> [Multiple discrimination.](#) (2023, October 19). European Institute for Gender Equality.



 **Let's think!**

1. Can you think of any more ways of discrimination? If so, please write them down.

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**Policy information and advice: Deep dive on Homophobia in sports**

Despite the European Union's extensive legislative framework, incidents of racism and homophobia in sports remain prevalent. Discrimination in sports often centres around external characteristics like skin colour, body shape, and gender, with statistics from 2017 indicating that 3% of respondents reported experiencing racist violence in the previous year, while 24% faced racist harassment during that period. Additionally, a 2018 poll revealed that 90% of respondents perceived homo/transphobia as a significant issue in sports, with gay men feeling that homophobia was a more significant problem compared to lesbian/gay women and bisexual individuals (Katsarova, 2021).

Regarding homophobia in sports, a 2018 survey provided data on discrimination related to LGBTQI+ sexual orientation and gender identity within various sports fields in the EU. The survey found that the majority of respondents (90%) recognised homo-/transphobia as a prevalent issue in sports, and gay men perceived it as a more significant problem than lesbian/gay women and bisexual individuals.

A [video](#) produced by researchers from Monash University and the University of British Columbia delves into topics related to homophobic language in sports and how shifts in social norms can create a more inclusive environment for the LGBTQ community.



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Watch the video and make notes on how to tackle homophobia in sports. Think of your club and how to implement strategies to welcome the LGBTQ+ community.



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## MODULE 2: The role of the coaches

### Introduction

The learning objectives of this module are to equip coaches in youth sports with the knowledge and skills to address discrimination and prejudice incidents within their clubs. Coaches will better understand the presence and impact of discrimination, enabling them to identify and reflect on its occurrence within the club environment.

### Discrimination in Your Club

Discrimination within a youth sports club can have far-reaching consequences on the overall wellbeing of athletes and the club's culture. As coaches, it is crucial to reflect on and acknowledge the current situation regarding discrimination within your club. By doing so, you can better understand the challenges athletes face and the extent to which discrimination may exist.

### Reflective Exercise

Begin by examining the composition of your club and its diversity. Reflect on whether there is representation from individuals of different racial, ethnic, gender, religious, and socioeconomic backgrounds. Take note of any imbalances and potential areas of underrepresentation or exclusion.

Next, analyse the interactions among athletes and coaching staff. Are there any instances of favouritism or unequal treatment based on personal characteristics? It is essential to pay attention to how athletes from diverse backgrounds are integrated into the team and whether they are provided with equal opportunities to participate and excel.

Consider conducting anonymous surveys or holding open discussions with athletes and coaching staff to gather their perspectives and experiences related to discrimination. Create a safe and non-judgmental space for individuals to share their concerns and observations.



## Prejudice Incidents

Understanding Prejudice in Sports: Prejudice incidents in sports can manifest in various forms, with racism being a particularly concerning issue. Racism involves the belief in the superiority of one race over others, leading to discriminatory attitudes and behaviours towards individuals from different racial backgrounds. To combat racism effectively, coaches must first understand its underlying causes and effects.

### **Theoretical Text 1:** “Safe Sport Is Not for Everyone: Equity-Deserving Athletes’ Perspectives of, Experiences and Recommendations for Safe Sport”

This text explores the concern that athletes, especially those from equity-deserving groups, are often overlooked in developing Safe Sport initiatives. Existing literature outside of sports indicates that individuals from marginalised backgrounds experience more violence. To address this, the study interviewed athletes with marginalised identities to understand how they interpret and experience Safe Sport. The findings revealed that these athletes view Safe Sport as an unattainable ideal, particularly for those from equity-deserving groups. They reported facing discriminatory comments, behaviours, and systemic barriers from coaches and teammates and within the structural aspects of sports. The study suggests that incorporating equity, diversity, and inclusion principles is crucial to safeguarding equity-deserving athletes.

### **Theoretical Text 2:** "Impact of Stereotyping and Prejudice on Athlete Performance"

This text examines the detrimental effects of racial stereotypes and prejudice on athletes' performance and wellbeing. It highlights how the fear of confirming negative stereotypes can lead to a phenomenon known as stereotype threat, affecting the confidence and abilities of athletes from racial minority backgrounds. Coaches will gain insights into techniques to create an empowering and supportive environment, mitigating the impact of stereotypes and fostering a positive mindset among all athletes.

## Roles and Responsibilities of Coaches

Coaches in society have many roles and responsibilities in combatting discrimination in sports and in creating a safe and inclusive environment, as well as supporting athletes affected by such events. Some of these include:

- Tackling Racism Through Sports: Sports can be a powerful platform to combat racism and promote social cohesion. Coaches play a vital role in fostering an environment where athletes can challenge stereotypes, embrace diversity, and learn to respect one another.
- Promoting Cultural Exchange: Organising cultural exchange programs or events to facilitate interaction and understanding among athletes from different backgrounds.
- Educating Athletes: Providing educational sessions on racism, cultural sensitivity, and the importance of inclusion in sports to raise awareness and combat prejudice.
- Leading by Example: Coaches must demonstrate inclusive behaviour, show that racism has no place in sports, and hold athletes accountable for their actions.

By addressing prejudice incidents and actively promoting anti-racism efforts, coaches can contribute to a more inclusive and respectful sports environment where athletes from all backgrounds can thrive and excel.

## Your Role as a Coach

As a coach in youth sports, your role is to develop athletes' skills and create a safe, inclusive, and respectful training environment. Understanding real-life discrimination scenarios in a training situation will help you recognise the potential challenges and develop effective strategies to address such issues. Here are two text examples illustrating discrimination incidents in youth sports:

### Example 1: Lee Chin, GAA Player



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Lee Chin is a highly esteemed Irish sportsman, widely recognised for his accomplishments in hurling, representing Wexford at both county and club levels. Born to a Malaysian Chinese father and an Irish mother, Chin has openly shared the experiences of racial abuse endured by him and his family, both on the streets and during matches.

On April 8, 2023, an unfortunate incident unfolded during a charity hurling match, where Lee Chin, a prominent figure in Wexford's hurling team, faced racist abuse from certain spectators. The situation escalated to the extent that the match had to be abandoned due to the unacceptable conduct exhibited by a section of the crowd.

Instances of racism in sports remain a profoundly concerning issue, underscoring the imperative for unwavering efforts to combat discrimination and foster inclusivity within the sporting community. Lee Chin's encounter emphasises the criticality of cultivating a secure and respectful environment for athletes devoid of any form of discrimination.





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As coaches, it is crucial to acknowledge the gravity of such incidents and join in raising awareness, providing education, and taking decisive actions to combat racism not only in sports but also in broader society. By promoting a culture of respect and understanding, we can strive to create an environment where all athletes feel valued, celebrated, and empowered to pursue their sporting passions without fear of discrimination.

*Please be advised that the following video depicts an event where racial abuse is present. Viewer discretion is advised as the content may be triggering or distressing to some individuals. Please exercise caution while viewing and consider its potential impact on yourself or others watching. If you find the content distressing, it is essential to prioritise your emotional wellbeing and seek support if needed.*



[Video by GAA MAN on YouTube](#)



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## Example 2: Republic of Ireland's Women's Team



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In 2017, the Republic of Ireland women's national football team went on strike. The strike resulted from ongoing issues concerning player welfare, working conditions, and support provided to the women's team. The players were advocating for better treatment and representation, expressing their concerns over gender equality and discrimination within the sport. The players were subject to share tracksuits and change in bathrooms, among other things.

Coaches are responsible in youth sports to prevent similar incidents by fostering inclusivity, supporting players' well-being, encouraging open communication, setting positive examples, and collaborating with organisations to address discrimination and promote equality.

Click [here](#) to watch an impactful video initially posted on the Independent. ie website, featuring an interview with the 2017 Republic of Ireland's women's team. In this interview, the players express their grievances and reasons behind their stance on the situation.



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## MODULE 3: Discrimination in your sports club

### Learning Objectives

By the end of this Unit, you should be able to:

- Understand the key theoretical elements of discrimination, its causes and consequences and the most common forms of discrimination in sports
- To create an inclusive environment for you as a coach and your young athletes
- Learning reporting measurements with real-life discrimination as a coach
- Be able to clarify the roles of parents in case of discrimination in youth sports and the responsibilities of coaches in real-life scenarios.

### Creation of an inclusive environment.

In this section, you will learn how we can create an inclusive environment in youth sports and the importance of inclusion, diversity and equality. Before giving you a theoretical input on the topic, take some time to watch the video below:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3y0aRM5lb5o>







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Try to provide answers to the following questions after watching the video. Keep in mind that the purpose of these questions is to facilitate your contemplation and promote a more in-depth discussion of the video's subject matter. Please feel free to pause, fast-forward, or rewind the video to thoroughly explore your ideas and revelations:

1. How can we achieve inclusion in sports?
2. What is included in the inclusion spectrum?
3. In what inclusion solutions depend on?
4. In your role as a coach, what activities are you doing to promote inclusivity in sports?

The following text gives an overview of the theoretical background on an inclusive environment in sports.

Everyone should feel appreciated, respected, safe, and allowed to engage in the activity of their choosing for an inclusive environment in sports. Here are some ideas for fostering diversity in sports. The first step is to increase opportunities and make accommodations for those with disabilities; next, we must educate all players about respect, empathy, and teamwork and, most importantly, encourage coaches and staff to be diverse and culturally competent.

Sports must be inclusive in order to have a good impact on people, groups, and society as a whole. Sports may increase diversity and representation of various racial, ethnic, and cultural groups in leadership and management positions inside the sport and in the larger community by being inclusive. For people who play sports, inclusivity may help them grow personally, socially, and academically while they exercise and develop their abilities, relationships, and morals. Additionally, as athletes learn to accept, understand, and work together, inclusivity can strengthen the sense of community, tolerance, and solidarity among them. Finally, by being inviting and accessible to all, inclusion helps ensure the long-term survival and expansion of sports clubs by helping them draw in and keep more members, volunteers, and sponsors.



## Review your club's policies and practices to prevent and address discrimination.

Clubs and sports groups must operate without discrimination or victimisation, and this obligation extends to not discriminating against anyone who applies to join the club. They might also be accountable for keeping their locations and events secure and free of sexual harassment.

### You can use the following guidelines and procedures:

- Establish an anti-discrimination policy outlining your club's commitment to equality and diversity.
- Educate and training your employees, coaches, volunteers, and members on how to recognise, avoid, and deal with harassment and discrimination;
- Create a complaint process that enables anyone who encounters or sees discrimination or harassment to report it and receive assistance.
- Take appropriate measures, such as warnings, penalties, or expulsions, against anyone who exhibits discriminatory or harassing behaviour.

### Promote a culture of inclusion and respect in your sport club

Avoiding discrimination and recognising diversity while establishing good relationships among all members of your sports club are all part of creating an inclusive atmosphere. You can encourage an environment of respect and inclusiveness in several ways, including:

- Inspiring people of all backgrounds, abilities, and identities to take part in your sporting events
- Creating chances for individuals from various groups to interact and gain knowledge from one another
- Appreciating the contributions and accomplishments of each member of your athletic club.



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- Aiding campaigns like Rainbow Laces or No Room for Racism that promote awareness and dispel myths about various groups in sport.

 **Let's think!**

**1.** Reflect on your experiences as a coach. What aspects of inclusivity you apply on your team?

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**2.** Please write down some activities you are doing with your team.

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## Learning reporting measurements as a coach.

The wellbeing, performance, and opportunities of athletes and coaches can all be negatively impacted by discrimination in sports coaching. Discrimination can be based on a variety of things, including gender, race, ethnicity, handicap, sexual orientation, and religion. As soon as you can, you should report any instances of discrimination in sports coaching to the appropriate sports organisation or body, such as the club, federation, league, or association. To manage such concerns and take proper action, they should have policies and processes. In order to safeguard your rights and pursue justice, you should also seek legal counsel or support from anti-discrimination organisations or human rights organisations.

You should keep track of the events and gather proof of prejudice, such as quotes, emails, texts, pictures, or videos that can bolster your case. By sharing your experience, becoming involved in movements or campaigns, or getting in touch with the media or social media, you should also speak up and bring attention to the problem. This could contribute to a more varied and inclusive atmosphere in sports by challenging the prejudices and assumptions that support discrimination. Finally, it would help if you looked for assistance from peers, mentors, counsellors, or other sources that can provide you with direction and inspiration while assisting you in coping with the emotional and psychological effects of discrimination.

As a coach, you are responsible for preventing and addressing discrimination in your sports club. You can achieve this by:

- Educating yourself and your athletes with the regulations and guidelines intended to prevent prejudice in sports
- Fostering an environment that respects and promotes diversity and inclusion
- Ensuring that all of your athletes receive equal opportunity and support regardless of their particular traits
- Addressing any prejudices, bias, or treatment discrimination that might exist in your sports team or in society at large
- Bringing any instances or claims of discrimination to the attention of the relevant authorities



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Below you can see some statements.

- Discrimination is when someone is treated unfairly or unequally because of who they are or what they represent, including their gender, race, sexual orientation, or ability.
- Discrimination can have a negative impact on a person's performance, opportunities, and engagement in sports and society, as well as on their physical, mental, and emotional health.
- Promoting inclusiveness, diversity, and respect in sports and taking legal action against those who engage in discrimination or harassment are effective ways to combat and prevent discrimination.
- Discrimination is a social and structural problem that calls for collective duty and accountability from sports organisations, the government, the media, and fans. It is not only a personal issue.



### Let's think!

1. Review the above statements and write down ways to report them.

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## The role of parents.

In sports, a parent's job is to support and promote their child's participation, accomplishments, and enjoyment. Parents are in charge of exposing their kids to physical education or sporting activities, and their support has been linked to early sports engagement. Parents can also affect their child's drive, self-worth, wellbeing, behaviour, and athletic performance. Therefore, parents must maintain open lines of communication with coaches and clubs so that everyone is working towards the same objectives. Parental roles in sports might include:

- Offering assistance in transportation, supplies, fees, and food.
- Giving emotional support such as compliments, criticism, consolation, and encouragement.
- Offering informative help in counsel, direction, education, and resources.

## On the other hand, we have the responsibilities of the coaches.

- Coaches are responsible for teaching the fundamentals of sports, such as skill development, fair competition and sportsmanship.
- Coaches are responsible for designing and implementing sporting strategies, scheduling and running team practice sessions, maintaining sports equipment, scheduling and presiding over games, working to improve team unity and sportsmanship, and ensuring all team members get equal playing time.
- Coaches are responsible for encouraging healthy development in players. They can influence their physical, psychological, social, and emotional well-being.
- Coaches are responsible for creating a safe, positive, and respectful environment for all players, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, religion, or ability. They can promote diversity, inclusion, and equity in youth sports.



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The possibility of disagreement or miscommunication between parents and coaches is one of the difficulties in youth sports. Conflicts over playing time, coaching interference, abuse or hostility, and a lack of communication are prominent drivers of conflict. The coach-parent connection, the athlete's health and performance, and the whole sporting experience can all be harmed by these problems. In order to handle disputes, respect boundaries, communicate clearly, and support the athlete, the coach and parents should work together.



### Let's think!

Describe the difference between a supportive and a pushy parent. The video below will help you. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g9K5bhefo\\_0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g9K5bhefo_0)

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## Supportive vs Pushy Parents in Youth Sports

- A supportive parent shows their child unwavering love and support no matter how well they do or how their child does. They do not alter their plans in response to the results of competitions and treat their child the same whether they win or lose.
- A supportive parent also respects the child's autonomy and choices, encourages them to enjoy themselves and their activities, pays attention to their feelings and concerns, acknowledges their efforts and advancements, and provides them with coping mechanisms for stressful situations.
- A pushy parent puts too much pressure on their kids to succeed, win, or meet certain objectives. Depending on the child's performance or outcomes, they could criticise, punish, or withhold their affection.
- Along with interfering with their child's participation in sports, pushy parents may also argue with authorities or coaches or make comparisons between their child and other players. They could also disregard the child's mental and physical health, for example, by failing to recognise injuries, burnout, or anxiety symptoms.

## How coaches can Help Pushy Parents Become More Supportive

- Set explicit guidelines and expectations for their behaviour while acknowledging their intentions and worries. You may use the phrase "I appreciate your interest in your child's sport, but please do not coach from the sidelines or yell at the officials" as an example.
- Help them recognise how their pressure harms their child's motivation, well-being, and pleasure of the activity. You may, for instance, discuss studies or examples that demonstrate how forceful parenting can result in young athletes experiencing fatigue, anxiety, or low self-esteem.



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- Encourage them to accept their child's freedom of choice and autonomy while paying attention to their feelings and ideas. For instance, you could request that they often speak with their child about their involvement in sports and encourage them to pursue their own objectives and passions.
- Teach them how to give their child both positive and constructive criticism based on their efforts and advancements rather than their results or consequences. Instead of saying things like "You should have scored more goals" or "You let the team down," you may advise them to say something like "I'm proud of how hard you worked today" or "You showed great sportsmanship."
- Remind them that playing youth sports is mostly about having fun and developing new abilities, not about winning, being famous, or getting scholarships. Ask them to emphasise the advantages of their child participating in sports, such as making friends, staying healthy, or gaining character.



## MODULE 4: Create a workshop training session

Creation of an inclusive environment workshop

Learning objectives

By the end of this Unit, you should be able to:

- Explain the necessity of an inclusive environment at your local sports club;
- Give original examples of inclusive and exclusive sports environments;
- Discuss the importance of implementing training workshops for inclusive sports environments in your club;
- Apply guidelines for effective workshop planning;
- Outline possible challenges in workshop planning and implementation.

### The benefits of inclusive sports environments

In this section, you will learn about the benefits of sports environments that promote inclusion, diversity and equality. But before diving deep, take some time to watch the introductory video below:





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After watching the video, try to answer the following reflective questions. Remember, these questions are meant to guide your reflection and encourage deeper thinking about the content of the video. Feel free to pause, rewind, or rewatch specific parts of the video to fully explore your thoughts and insights:

1. What is your initial emotional response to the video? Did it evoke any specific feelings or reactions in you?
2. How does the video highlight the importance of inclusion in sports? What examples or scenarios demonstrate this?
3. How does the video showcase the transformative power of sports for individuals with disabilities? How does it contribute to their physical, emotional, and social wellbeing?
4. How do the coaches, volunteers, and community members featured in the video support and promote inclusivity in sports? What impact do their efforts have on the athletes?

Creating an **inclusive environment** at a sports club is crucial for various reasons. Below are some arguments that explain the value of an inclusive environment for all interested parties.



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## Equal Opportunities

Inclusive sports clubs provide equal opportunities for individuals to participate and excel in sports activities. This fosters a sense of fairness and promotes social justice.

## Physical and Mental Health Benefits

Participation in sports has numerous physical and mental health benefits, such as improved cardiovascular fitness, motor skills development, enhanced self-esteem, and reduced stress levels. An inclusive environment ensures that these benefits are accessible to everyone, regardless of their abilities or status.

## Social Integration

Inclusive sports clubs promote social integration by bringing together individuals from diverse backgrounds and abilities. It helps break down stereotypes and creates opportunities for social interaction, building empathy, understanding, and friendships.

## Skill Development

Inclusive sports clubs offer a platform for individuals to develop their athletic skills, regardless of their abilities or status. By providing appropriate coaching and support, athletes can improve their skills, enhance their performance, and achieve personal growth.

## Educational and Life Skills

Inclusive sports clubs offer valuable educational and life skills to participants. They teach teamwork, communication, problem-solving, goal-setting, discipline, and resilience. These skills are transferable and contribute to overall personal development.

## Building Positive Attitudes

An inclusive environment at a sports club helps challenge stereotypes and prejudices related to disabilities or status. It educates participants and spectators, fostering positive attitudes towards inclusion and diversity. This positively impacts not only the



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## Examples of inclusive and discriminatory sports environments

Inclusive Sports Environments	Discriminatory Sports Environments
In a soccer league, a team is formed with typically developing children and children with disabilities. Coaches ensure all players have equal opportunities to participate, contribute, and develop their skills.	A coach frequently uses derogatory language or offensive jokes during practice, unaware of its impact on certain athletes.
In a track and field competition, athletes with physical disabilities are provided with adaptive equipment such as racing wheelchairs or prosthetics.	A young athlete with a physical disability expresses interest in joining the club, but the coaching staff is uncertain about adapting training sessions to accommodate their needs.
Inclusive sports environments prioritise open communication and collaboration between coaches, athletes, parents, and any support personnel involved. This ensures everyone knows individual needs, goals, and progress, allowing for practical support and adaptation.	Coaches consistently select the same group of athletes for competitive matches, neglecting the skills and potential of other team members who come from diverse backgrounds or have less experience.
Youth sports organisations often conduct awareness and education initiatives to promote inclusivity among athletes, parents, and the wider community. This can include workshops, seminars, or campaigns that raise awareness about different abilities, promote empathy, and challenge stereotypes.	A group of athletes consistently targets and bullies a teammate who is perceived as different due to their race, gender, or any other characteristic.
In an inclusive sports environment, peer mentoring and support are encouraged. Older or more experienced athletes may volunteer as mentors to help and guide younger or less experienced participants, fostering a sense of inclusion, leadership, and camaraderie.	During tryouts or team selection, coaches unknowingly exhibit bias based on appearance, gender, or preconceived notions about certain athletic abilities.
Some youth sports programs create sensory-friendly environments for children with sensory processing challenges or autism spectrum disorders. These programs modify the sensory aspects of sports activities, such as noise levels, lighting, and equipment, to ensure a	An athlete comes out as LGBTQ+, and some teammates or coaches exhibit discomfort, leading to exclusion or disrespectful behavior.





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comfortable and inclusive experience for all participants.	
Inclusive youth sports environments often collaborate with external advocacy organisations, schools, and community groups to ensure a holistic approach to inclusion. These partnerships can provide access to resources, expertise, and support networks that enhance the inclusivity of sports programs.	Coaches organise team-building activities or celebrations without considering the diverse cultural backgrounds of their athletes, inadvertently excluding or alienating specific individuals.

 **Let's think!**

1. Reflect on your experiences coaching in your club. What specific instances have you observed the benefits of inclusivity for the athletes involved?

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2. Reflect on any **challenges or barriers** you have encountered in creating or maintaining an inclusive sports environment in your club. How have you addressed or overcome these challenges, and what lessons have you learned from them?

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3. Reflect on your **motivation and commitment** to fostering inclusive sports environments. How does understanding the benefits of inclusivity inspire and guide your coaching philosophy and practices?

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## Creating a training workshop at your club

### ***What is a training workshop for inclusive sports environments and why should I care?***

A training workshop for inclusive sports environments is a structured learning session that aims to equip coaches with the knowledge, skills, and strategies needed to create an inclusive and supportive sports environment for athletes of all abilities. The workshop should

- focus on promoting inclusivity, addressing barriers, and fostering positive experiences for athletes with diverse backgrounds and abilities;
- Aim to raise awareness, promote understanding, and equip coaches with practical tools to ensure their sports programs are welcoming, accessible, and supportive for athletes with diverse needs.

As a coach, organising a training workshop for inclusive sports environments is important for several reasons:

1. It enhances your coaching skills by learning specific techniques and strategies to engage and support athletes with diverse abilities effectively. It equips you with the knowledge and tools to create inclusive training sessions, adapt coaching approaches, and appropriately support individual athletes.
2. You can ensure that your sports program is inclusive, fostering a sense of belonging, promoting social interaction, and offering opportunities for personal growth and skill development for all interested parties.





3. It helps you understand and meet the legal and ethical responsibilities for inclusive opportunities for everyone, ensuring that your sports club or organisation is compliant with relevant legislation and promotes equal access and opportunities.

4. You actively contribute to the social impact of inclusive sports, making a difference in the lives of athletes and the broader community.

5. It provides an opportunity for your professional development as a coach. It allows you to expand your knowledge base, learn from experts in the field, and connect with other coaches and professionals who share a similar commitment to inclusivity in sports.



6. It demonstrates your commitment to inclusivity and positions you as a leader in creating inclusive sports environments. It enhances the reputation of your club or organisation and attracts athletes, families, and community members who value and prioritise inclusivity.

***- I am a coach. Can I organise a training workshop for inclusive sports environments?***

As a coach, you can organise a training workshop for inclusive sports environments. Such an initiative demonstrates your commitment to creating an inclusive sports environment and your desire to enhance your coaching skills.

***- For whom can I organise a training workshop for inclusive sports environments?***

As a coach, you can organise a training workshop for inclusive sports environments for various target audiences. Remember, the choice of target audience depends on your goals, resources, and the specific needs of your coaching community. Consider the groups that



will benefit the most from the workshop and align with your objectives for promoting inclusive sports environments.

### **Coaches within Your**

**Club/Organisation:** This lets you directly impact the coaching staff and enhance their understanding and skills in creating inclusive sports environments.

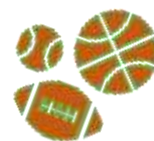
### **Coaches from Other Clubs or**

**Organisations:** This allows coaches to share knowledge, exchange ideas, and collaborate on creating inclusive sports environments across different settings.

**Youth Sports Administrators:** These individuals play a crucial role in shaping youth sports' policies, structures, and culture. Providing them with knowledge on inclusivity can have a broader impact on the entire sports ecosystem.

**Athletes' parents:** Targeting athletes' parents will contribute to the provision of appropriate support, encouragement, and advocacy for their children, fostering a positive and inclusive sports experience. It will also encourage the adoption of a collaborative approach between coaches, parents, and athletes.

**Physical Education Teachers:** By equipping PE teachers with knowledge and strategies for inclusive sports, you can impact the experiences of students with diverse abilities in school-based sports and physical activities.



## Guidelines for workshop's organisation and implementation

### Step 1: Define the Workshop Objectives

Ask yourself:

- What do you want coaches to learn and achieve through this workshop?
- What are the key challenges or areas of improvement related to inclusive sports environments that you want to address?
- What are the desired outcomes or changes you hope to see in participants' understanding or behaviour after attending the workshop?
- Who are the target participants, and what are their existing knowledge levels or experiences regarding inclusive sports environments?
- Are there specific policies, guidelines, or legal requirements related to inclusive sports environments that need to be addressed in the workshop?
- How can the workshop empower participants to become advocates for inclusion in their own sports communities?
- What are the specific challenges or barriers participants may face in creating inclusive sports environments, and how can the workshop help address them?
- How can the workshop foster collaboration and networking among participants to share best practices and support one another?

### Step 2: Plan the Workshop Logistics

- Decide on the workshop date, duration, and location. Ensure that the venue is accessible and can accommodate the number of participants attending.
- Arrange equipment, materials, and resources for the workshop activities and presentations.

### Step 3: Identify Workshop Facilitators

- Identify knowledgeable facilitators with expertise in inclusive coaching, diversity, and communication skills. Choose facilitators who are adaptable, flexible and culturally competent.
- If possible, consider inviting guest speakers who can provide valuable insights and experiences related to inclusivity in sports coaching.

### Step 4: Develop Workshop Content

- Based on the workshop objectives, create an outline or agenda that includes the topics and activities to be conducted.
- Divide the content into sessions and allocate appropriate time for each topic.

### Step 5: Prepare Workshop Materials

- Develop handouts, worksheets, or presentation slides to support the workshop content.
- Include relevant examples, case studies, and practical exercises to engage the participants and reinforce learning.

### Step 6: Promote the Workshop

- Create a concise workshop description highlighting the benefits and importance of attending.
- Use various communication channels like email, social media, club newsletters, and notice boards to promote the workshop to stakeholders.
- Encourage participants to register for the workshop to get an estimated number of attendees.





### Step 7: Conduct the Workshop

- Begin the workshop with an introduction, welcoming all participants and providing an overview of the workshop objectives and agenda.
- Follow the developed outline, covering each topic in a structured manner.
- Encourage active participation through group discussions, interactive activities, and Q&A sessions.
- Provide opportunities for participants to share their experiences, challenges, and insights about inclusivity in youth sports.
- Ensure that facilitators maintain a respectful and inclusive environment throughout the workshop.

### Step 8: Evaluate and Gather Feedback

- At the end of the workshop, distribute evaluation forms or surveys to gather feedback from the coaches.
- Review the feedback received to assess the workshop's effectiveness and identify improvement areas.
- Consider conducting follow-up sessions or providing additional resources based on the feedback and identified needs.

### Step 9: Monitor Progress and Continuously Improve

- Regularly assess the club's progress in creating an inclusive environment.
- Seek feedback from athletes and coaches regarding their experiences and any additional areas of improvement.
- Adapt and refine coaching practices and policies based on feedback and changing needs.

## Points to take into consideration while planning your workshop

While planning your workshops, you should remember that you may face several challenges or/and unexpected issues. We cannot, of course, name all the unpredictable situations you may be involved in during your training sessions, but the following situations should help you prepare yourself for the most common ones:

Varying levels of knowledge and awareness among participants about inclusive sports environments

Limited time and resources for delivering comprehensive content within the workshop

Balancing theoretical knowledge with practical application in a limited timeframe

Addressing sensitive topics related to inclusivity that may evoke strong emotions or differing opinions

Ensuring active participation and engagement of all participants throughout the workshop

Managing diverse learning styles and preferences among the participants

Managing diverse learning styles and preferences among the participants

Overcoming resistance or skepticism from participants who may be resistant to change or unfamiliar with inclusive practices

Addressing potential logistical challenges, such as securing an appropriate venue or obtaining necessary equipment.

Managing group dynamics and fostering a respectful and inclusive environment for open discussions.

Ensuring that the workshop content is relevant and applicable to participants' specific sports contexts.

## Indicative Agenda – Topics

The agenda below provides a general framework for a full-day workshop. Depending on the available time, you may need to adjust the duration of each session or consider organising a multi-day workshop to cover the content more comprehensively. Including breaks and interactive activities throughout the workshop is recommended to keep participants engaged.

Workshop Agenda: Creating Inclusive Sports Environments (8 hours)		
Topics	Sub-topics	Estimated Duration
Introduction and Icebreaker Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Welcome and introductions</li> <li>Icebreaker activity to foster connection and create a positive atmosphere</li> </ul>	30 mins
Understanding Inclusive Sports Environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Defining Inclusive sports environments and their importance</li> <li>Benefits of inclusion for athletes, coaches, and the sports community</li> <li>Exploring common barriers and challenges in creating inclusive sports environments</li> </ul>	60 mins
Legal and Ethical Considerations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Overview of relevant laws, policies, and guidelines related to inclusivity in sports</li> <li>Understanding the legal responsibilities and obligations of coaches and sports organisations</li> </ul>	30 mins



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ethical considerations in promoting inclusion and equality in sports</li> </ul>	
Perspectives of Athletes and Families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Guest speaker (athlete/parent) sharing personal experiences and insights on inclusive sports environments</li> <li>Interactive discussion and Q&amp;A session to explore participants' perspectives and reflections</li> </ul>	60 mins
Adapting Coaching Techniques	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understanding individual athlete needs and adapting coaching styles accordingly</li> <li>Techniques for effective communication, motivation, and feedback in inclusive sports settings</li> <li>Practical demonstrations and role-playing activities to showcase adaptive coaching strategies</li> </ul>	90 mins
Creating Inclusive Training Sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Designing training sessions that accommodate athletes of diverse abilities</li> <li>Adapting drills, equipment, and exercises to promote inclusivity</li> </ul>	90 mins





	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Group activity:</b> Collaborative development of inclusive training plans for specific sports scenarios</li> </ul>	
Collaboration and Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Building effective partnerships between coaches, athletes, parents, and sports administrators</li> <li>● Strategies for fostering collaboration, communication, and shared decision-making</li> <li>● Case studies and group discussions on successful collaborations in inclusive sports environments</li> </ul>	60 mins
Wrap-up and Action Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Recap of key learnings and takeaways from the workshop</li> <li>● Individual and group reflection on personal action plans for creating inclusive sports environments</li> <li>● Workshop evaluation and feedback</li> </ul>	30 mins
Conclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Closing remarks and appreciation</li> <li>● Distribution of certificates of participation (if applicable)</li> </ul>	15 mins





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