

Announcement on World Refugee Day 2019

EL reiterates that grassroots sport is a vehicle for inclusion and empowerment of refugees

On World Refugee Day 2019, EL reiterates that grassroots sport is a significant and important tool for social inclusion and empowerment. With society being one of the core values of EL, and the refugee crisis still high on the political agenda in Europe, sport can play a fundamental role in the social integration and trauma relief of refugees.

EL strongly holds the conviction that sport creates real opportunities for participation in society, as it enables individuals of all abilities, to experience togetherness. Lotteries, driven by their core values, have always considered sport as a vehicle for inclusion and empowerment.

As a supporting partner of ASPIRE, an international project which focuses on social inclusion of people who are at risk of exclusion – especially refugees, EL recently had the opportunity to moderate the Project's Final Conference in Frankfurt. Co-financed by the Erasmus+ Programme of the EU and led by ENGSO, the European Sports NGO, ASPIRE seeks to establish how sports clubs, by creating opportunities to participate in sport activities and community life through sport, can support the inclusion of migrants and refugees.

Throughout the two-year Project, EL focused its support on dissemination, networking and knowledge sharing. It engaged with its members in the national trainings and encouraged them to get involved and share the project results.

'It was a real honour to moderate the Final Conference, which brought together a wide range of stakeholders from decision-makers in sport governing bodies, sport organisations to NGOS, foundations, think tanks and governments. This was an opportunity to present the key scientific results, conclusions and recommendations on the potential challenges and successes of sport as a context to help the social inclusion of refugees.' said Jutta Buyse, EL Deputy Secretary General.

The Final Conference shared a [Call to Action #Sport4Refugees](#), signed by 130 individuals and 83 organisations, which recognises the contribution and enormous potential of sport for inclusion.

“Sharing a commitment to society, the ASPIRE Project is an excellent example of how sport can lead to trauma relief of refugees and can lead to sport clubs to be more sustainable and inclusive.” Jutta added. EL will continue to support the work of ASPIRE and believes the Project will have a lasting societal impact.



Further information

- The UN World Refugee Day is on 20 June each year. The day honours the courage, strength and determination of all refugees who are forced to flee their homeland under threat of persecution, conflict and violence. The theme for 2019 is #StepWithRefugees. More information at <https://www.un.org/en/events/refugeeday/>
- ASPIRE stands for Activities, Sport & Play for the Integration of Refugees in Europe. More information here <https://www.aspiresport.eu/index.php/> ENGSO news article on the final conference is available here <https://www.engso.eu/post/aspire-conference-a-success-story-of-social-inclusion-meeting-sport-and-science>