

## Debate report “*The Gender-Transformative Power of Sports*”

29/11/2024 – Royal Belgian Football Association, Tubize (Belgium)

Closing event of the project “*The Gender-Transformative Power of Sports for and by Students*”

### Introduction

#### Context

The project “*The Gender-Transformative Power of Sports for and by Students*,” funded by the European Union and implemented by Plan International Belgium, Plan International Spain and the Vrije Universiteit Brussel, began in early 2022 and closed at the end of 2024. It addresses gender-based violence (GBV) in five cities in Belgium and Spain, focusing on universities and sports. The project engages Physical Education students in a GBV prevention journey, using interactive, sports-based methods to strengthen 4 concrete competencies (mentalisation, non-violent communication, emotion regulation and problem solving). Students become “*Ambassadors for Gender Equality*,” leading awareness initiatives in their universities, schools and sports clubs.

In this context, a closing event titled “*The Gender-Transformative Power of Sports*” was organised on November 29, 2024, in Belgium. A roundtable debate took place to share knowledge on preventing GBV in sports, between experts, representatives from sports networks and federations, educational institutions, sports organisations and sports coaches.

#### Objectives of the debate

The debate aimed to present the results of the project and facilitate knowledge-sharing between experts from Belgium and Spain. The event was attended by 32 participants in person, and an online link was provided for some who wished to attend via Teams.

### Overview of the experts

#### Belgium

##### An De Kock - SPORTIEQ

Title: Integrity Knowledge and Support

An De Kock works as a policy officer at Sportieq, a knowledge and expert centre on ethics and health in sport in Belgium. She supports sports organisations with the development of an integrity policy and is responsible for the development of new instruments and workshops regarding violence in sport.

##### Kole Gjeshaj – Panathlon Wallonie-Bruxelles

Title: Vice-President Panathlon

Kole Gjeshaj is a scientific collaborator at the Université Libre de Bruxelles and Vice-President of Panathlon Wallonie-Bruxelles and Panathlon Belgium. He has extensive experience in gender equality in



sport, including roles at the European Commission, FISU, and the Council of Europe. He was an alumnus of ULB and the University of Pisa, he specializes in sport policy, and ethics.

### **Géraldine Heinen - RBFA**

Title: Football & Social Responsibility Advisor

Géraldine Heinen is the Social & Environmental Sustainability Advisor and Child & Youth Protection Officer at the Royal Belgian Football Association (RBFA), ensuring sustainable practices and safeguarding children in football. Previously, she worked at FIFA as a Development Project Manager, leading strategic initiatives with NGOs and government agencies to drive impactful change.

### **Margot Gysbrechts - Out for the Win**

Title: Spokesperson & Board member

Margot Gysbrechts is the spokesperson and educational coordinator for Out for the Win, a non-profit organization dedicated to normalizing LGBTQIA+ inclusion in sports. With seven years of experience, Margot has collaborated with federations, sports clubs, and governments, including Pro League, to raise awareness about the barriers LGBTQIA+ individuals face in sports.

### **Karolien Adriaens – Thomas More**

Title: Ph.D. Researcher Safeguarding Sport and Society

Dr. Karolien Adriaens is a clinical psychologist and a researcher specializing in safe sport within the "Safeguarding Sport and Society" program at Thomas More University of Applied Sciences. Her work focuses on promoting safety and well-being in sports environments.

## **Spain**

### **Celia Domínguez - Fundación Fútbol Más**

Title: Project Coordinator Fundación Fútbol Más

Celia Domínguez holds a degree in Psychology with a specialization in social action and joined Fútbol Más España in 2023 as Project Coordinator. She oversees project implementation teams and leads a team of over 20 professionals developing initiatives in Spain and across the EU.

### **José Ignacio Alonso Romero - Kunina Sports**

Title: Director Kunina Sports and Education

José Ignacio Alonso Romero, a law graduate, is an international expert in humanitarian aid and the prevention of violence against children. With 21 years of experience, he is a member of the Council of Europe's Pool of Experts on preventing violence against children in sport. A passionate sportsman, he is dedicated to creating safe spaces for children in sport.



## Marina Álvarez Estepa - Claret School Madrid

Title: Head of Physical Education in Claret School in Madrid

Marina Álvarez Estepa is Head of the Physical Education Department at Claret School in Madrid, where she oversees over 56 sports teams, and teaches Physical Education Didactics at Nebrija University. A former professional indoor soccer player, she won two European and four Spanish Championships. She began coaching at 17, including roles with Madrid's National Indoor Football Team and Atlético de Madrid's youth teams.

### Overview of the participants

The 32 participants represented Plan International Belgium, Plan International Spain, the Vrije Universiteit Brussel and several other organisations: Brussel Gay Sport, Younited Belgium, Charleroi Sport, schools, Thomas More University, the "Exception Movement", Flow De Gand, member of the Royal Belgian Football Association, the Francophone Hockey League, the Royal Federation of Sports in Free Education asbl. The online invitation was sent to individuals from the University of Seville and one member of the European Commission.

### Debate format

The format of the debate was a panel discussion moderated by Evert Zinzen, Dean of Physical Education and Physiotherapy at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel, with the experts sharing insights, followed by an open Q&A from the audience.

### Content

Roméo Matsas, Director for Policy and Social Change at Plan International Belgium opened the afternoon session by welcoming the participants in-person and online, and by thanking the European Commission and the RBFA for their support. He also stressed the relevance of the topic and the combined efforts made by the partners throughout this project. He introduced the two speakers who provided the welcoming address, Mrs Verhaegen and Solorzano, as well as the moderator of the debate, Prof. Evert Zinzen.

The session began with an introduction by Isabelle Verhaegen, National Director of Plan International Belgium, where she emphasized the organisation's focus on using sport as a tool to promote gender equality, challenge dominant gender norms and she highlighted the importance of the project. Despite challenges in raising awareness, Isabelle Verhaegen expressed confidence that the project and its efforts would contribute to concrete measures for preventing gender-based violence in sports across Europe.

Begoña Solórzano, Director of National Programmes at Plan International Spain, emphasised that gender-based violence remains a widespread issue in Europe, with sports environments often reflecting persistent gender inequalities. Girls, in particular, are affected, as unsafe spaces limit their participation.

Then, she **presented the project**, explaining that it focused on Physical Education students, future coaches and teachers, empowering them to challenge these norms and create safer, more inclusive environments. She added that in Spain and Belgium, sports are powerful tools for promoting respect,

equality, and empathy. This approach encourages young people to lead efforts in creating safer communities. Ultimately, she added that the project seeks to foster a culture of safety and respect, addressing the root causes of gender-based violence and advancing gender equality across Europe.

Her insights highlighted the transformative power of sports as a platform for engaging communities on themes of power, respect, cooperation, and fairness. The project's peer-to-peer approach demonstrates how sports can drive real societal change.

Next, Tiphaine Clerincx, PhD student, and Assistant Professor and Postdoctoral researcher at Sport & Society Hebe Schailleé from the Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB), presented their **methodologies and recommendations**, supported by a PowerPoint presentation (see Annex 1). They elaborated on their focus: the development of a gender-based violence prevention intervention, explaining the rationale behind this critical topic.

Moderated by Evert Zinzen, Dean of Physical Education and Physiotherapy at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel, the debate transitioned into a rich exchange of ideas. He introduced each keynote speaker and facilitated dynamic dialogue among the expert panel and participants, culminating in actionable strategies for fostering a safer and more inclusive sports environment. The exchange underscored the potential of sports to catalyse broader societal changes.

The discussion culminated in a thought-provoking debate on the prevention of gender-based violence in sports. Participants and panellists were encouraged to share experiences, insights, and actionable strategies for fostering a safer and more inclusive sports environment.

## Insights from keynote speakers

### An De Kock - SPORTIEQ, Integrity Knowledge and Support

An De Kock shared her perspective on creating a strong foundation for addressing gender-based violence and safeguarding in sports. She explained “It begins with a strong foundation (that stands for a quality policy) focused on how your organisation generally is organised (HR policy, education,) but also focused on communication, particularly how people are represented and portrayed in sports. It emphasizes the importance of safeguarding and educating coaches, including addressing gender-based violence. The next level of the pyramid (prevention policy) builds on this by establishing a code of conduct, screening volunteers, and engaging in conversations about appropriate behaviour. At the top of the pyramid lies the reaction phase, which involves clear procedures for reporting incidents and educating everyone on how to report and to whom.

For example, integrity policies often focus primarily on the top of the pyramid, dealing with responses to incidents. However, the next step is shifting attention to prevention, much like the morning training session, which is designed to foster proactive prevention strategies.”

Celia Domínguez Gallego: “The education should be the main pillar. Clubs have reporting systems and protocols to know where they can report but there's no system on how to know what will happen after having reported. This is even more dangerous because you are left alone. People often don't use the reporting mechanisms.”

An De Kock: “You need a concrete plan with clear steps, make sure there is a process after having reported, you also need to train safeguarding focal points and connect with other organisations that can

help and take care of the victims. Even if you have a great procedure, you need to create a culture where everybody feels safe to report.”

José Ignacio Alonso Romero: “We see that often the framework is there, but it doesn’t work. Sometimes the focal points don’t have the necessary skills. Sometimes they don’t know the protocol. Having a protocol is only the start. People who use it must know what to do.”

Participant: “We practice urban sport in open space and are confronted with unpredictable aspects (open space, people, comments): how could we deal with that?”

An De Kock: “Difficult question, local governments can play a role here by launching campaigns and by joining forces with schools and other organisations. You need to spread the message in all sectors, not work individually but with a common objective.”

Participant: “I think it is crucial not only to start from a framework, but to start from the bottom, from every sporter individually.”

Evert Zinzen: “Safe spaces are okay, but we also need brave spaces, to be able to show ourselves and to feel free. It starts with brave people who put GBV on the agenda. It’s possible to educate everyone, for that we need brave people.”

### **Géraldine Heinen - RBFA, Football & Social Responsibility Advisor**

Géraldine Heinen discussed the RBFA's approach to creating a safe environment in football and addressing incidents of gender-based violence. She shared: “We have two policies: an anti-discrimination policy (Come Together action plan) and a safeguarding policy. We ensure that there is follow-up if something happens in football and take all incidents seriously. While we have a reporting tool, the focus is not solely on this. We want athletes to feel comfortable speaking up within their local environment - talking to coaches, parents, or adults who know how to handle the situation. Our goal is to create a safe environment in football, which is why we’ve established an expert group to handle reported cases. Step by step, we are progressing: 'safetogether.be' includes an interactive quiz with real-life situations that encourage players to speak up, take action, and seek help.

It is crucial for all sports federations at every level (FIFA, IOC, SPORTIEQ, UEFA) to speak with one voice and encourage athletes to “dare to speak.”

Participant: “Do you have the feeling that clubs are open for these topics. How can we motivate people?”

An De Kock: “It’s a struggle for a lot of sport federations, they’re trying to integrate safeguarding in their funding mechanisms for clubs, but clubs are built on volunteers, and it takes time to create the necessary awareness and ‘sense of urgency’. We notice that clubs that are well-structured are more open. On the federation level a lot of work has been done (also because it is mandatory). The next step is going to clubs and include this topic in already existing trainings, such as coaches’ trainings.”

Géraldine Heinen: “For the first time in the Pro League, clubs will be required to include their own safeguarding policy as part of their precondition of their Football and Social Responsibility licence.”

Celia Domínguez Gallego: “But often safeguarding officers are not useful, and the function is not clear. They don’t have requirements, nor criteria. It is the same as having a protocol, it is the theory, but how to put it in practice? We need to stop and reconsider it and create a meaningful change, but this takes time.”

Kole Gjeshaj: “We must ask the question ‘what kind of skills do you want to acquire in a sport club?’ What do we learn in physical education lessons in schools? Do we talk about the basic values of sports and promote certain behaviour? We must speak in one language.”

### **Margot Gysbrechts – Out for the Win, Spokesperson & Board member**

Margot Gysbrechts shared insights from the work of Out for the Win, a platform supporting LGBTQIA+ athletes. She explained: “At the beginning Out for the Win was a storyteller platform for LGBTQIA+ athletes from all around the world. Everyone was sharing the same feelings and stories. This is why we started our educational work. We are trying to help federations, clubs and organisations, to raise awareness around LGBTQIA+ presence (and not inclusiveness because we’re not there yet). The sports world is very gendered, very binary and we try to raise awareness on how this is causing harm. We also organise sport events for people who dropped out from their own sport clubs and try to engage role models. Most of our participants are between 18-23 years old.

We work with several clubs in the Pro League. Of the four clubs within the pilot project, two finished their action plan.”

Karolien Adriaens: “What are the options for 30+ LGBTQIA+ athletes? LGBTQIA+ clubs often are focused on homosexual men, but non-binary persons or trans-persons might not feel included because of specific needs. There is a real need of initiatives.”

Margot Gysbrechts: “It’s a good comment; we are aware of the issue. Therefore, we got rid of our age limit, and everyone is welcome to join, but we also encourage them to contact us so we can look into solutions together and find a place where they can sport.”

Participant: “We welcome all gender in our sport clubs (Brussel Gay Sports), but we are aware of the challenge to also be an open space for trans-gender sporters. We are interested to get help on this to be able to include all people.”

Margot Gysbrechts: “Our goal is to have an inclusive sports world where everyone can sport freely. Therefore, we want to encourage sport clubs to work together with federations.”

### **Karolien Adriaens – Thomas More, Ph.D. Researcher Safeguarding Sport and Society**

Karolien Adriaens emphasized the importance of recognizing that “Anybody can be a bystander (a negative or a positive). It is important to notice the signs of interpersonal violence and of gender-based violence. This should be addressed in secondary and higher education. In higher education, bystander training should be integrated in the curricula. So, students know what to do when they witness a situation of gender-based violence. This education should be broader than only the physical education students. We need to start from the bottom-up, start from primary education. Often nobody acts because they did not pick up the signs or they don’t know how to react.”

José Ignacio Alonso Romero: “It is not always a problem of education, but also of culture. What is the real culture and atmosphere?”

Karolien Adriaens: “Safe environment is crucial in this. We need integrated courses from a young age.”

Evert Zinzen: “When a focal point is well trained and has the right personality, people will come to you. You must gain the trust of the students/sporters and create this safe environment.”

An De Kock: “Coaches are crucial. They are role models. They show the example.”



Celia Domínguez Gallego: “It is also very important to acknowledge the violence and to also call it this way. People are often afraid to call it violence. There is a lot of inequality in sports and GBV in sports is not only about physical violence. An important step is naming the violence.”

Karolien Adriaens: “Naming it can sometimes also be a barrier. We notice that society is not ready yet and that it can lead to drop-out of bystander trainees. We should also take this into account.”

Tiphaine Clerincx: “Starting from a quality level can be a good approach. When clubs are confronted with a scandal, they will be intrinsically motivated to act. In the TPS approach you get the students on board with a situation they are familiar with (a sports session), only at the end of the exercise they realise what was really happening and how the situation was linked to interpersonal violence/GBV.”

Participant: “To me naming it, is a secondary problem. Often situations of GBV are not considered as a problem. We must make the problem more visible.”

### **Kole Gjeshaj, Vice President of Panathlon Wallonie-Bruxelles and a member of the High-Level Group on Gender Equality in Sport at the European Commission**

Kole Gjeshaj discussed key findings from the European Commission and UNESCO reports on gender equality in sport. He said that “The European Commission Report ‘[Towards more Gender Equality in Sport](#)’ was drafted in 2021-2022. Composed of former high-level athletes, politicians, members of European and international sport federations as well as academics, the High-Level Group on gender equality in sport worked together to produce recommendations and address topics related to girls’ and women’s participation in sport, female coaches and officials, women’s representation in decision-making processes, media coverage as well as gender-based violence. It was the follow-up of a former report that was produced in 2014. The 15 experts aimed to make this report more practical and focus on the implementation of concrete actions at local, national and European level.

A crucial first step was to integrate sports in the EU Gender Equality Strategy 2021-2025.

The experts focused on 6 areas of engagement: Participation, Coaching and officiating, Leadership, Social and economic aspects of sport, Media coverage and Gender-based violence.

The choice of 8 transversal subjects made it possible to reflect new developments and needs identified in the implementation of gender equality policies and they can be the basis for any policy: Gender mainstreaming, Intersectionality, Gender budgeting/funding, Policy monitoring and evaluation and research, Education, Communication, Coordinators for Gender Equality and Men as allies.

The part on gender-based violence was drafted by Dr Tine Vertommen (Criminologist of the Thomas More University of Applied Sciences) and 4 concrete recommendations were formulated: Implement educational and prevention programmes, collect data and monitor initiatives, secure reporting channels and promote exchange of practice to prevent gender-based violence in sport.”

Kole also referred to a new [UNESCO report](#) which reveals that women and girls are still far from having equal access to sport at any level, professional or amateur. UNESCO urgently calls on its 194 Member States to tackle these inequalities by putting in place the recommendations contained in the report.”

Celia Domínguez Gallego: “When it comes to ‘men as allies’, I want to say that men shouldn’t be allies, but they should be actively involved.”



Funded by the European Union



Kole Gjelošhaj: “Leadership positions in sport are still dominated by men. If you want to make changes and if you want the debate to go faster, you need the support of allied men.”

### **Celia Domínguez Gallego - Fundación Fútbol Más, State Social Coordinator**

Celia Domínguez Gallego discussed the role of sport in fostering development and gender equality, saying that “The perspective of *sports for development* is different from the perspective of *sports for competition*. Sports are a way to achieve something, but achievement is not the goal. Sport has a great power because it has some incredible values. Crucial in sports is the creation of safe spaces. The first step towards any change is ‘meaningful bonding’. There are many projects on gender equality and GBV, but we need to give girls and woman equal access to sports. We see that often, as girls grow up, they drop out of sports.”

Participant: “We organised an event (this happens in the context of highly male-dominated sport) where we wanted to put the spotlight on creating a safe space for girls, as we noticed that there was a high drop-out of girls. The event was girls-only and the girls indicated that they felt safer, that it felt as a relief that they didn’t have to fight for their place. In mixed groups, boys and men usually take the space. We also need more specific rules to include everybody, for example when giving passes, there should be a rule that all participants should touch the ball. Sometimes small thing can be a driver for change.”

Evert Zinzen: “In education, we should work in both directions. Learn boys and men to share the space and learn girls and woman to take the space.”

An De Kock: “We must be aware that it is not easy to take the space. What if somebody tells you that they don’t want to train with you? What can you do? This is not where the responsibility should be. Often the focus is put on girls, but we also need awareness raising towards boys on their position of power.”

Participants: “From a young age, girls are also taught not to take space. This must change!”

### **Marina Álvarez Estepa - Ex-coach of Atlético de Madrid's Infantil and Head of the Physical Education department of Claret School Madrid, Spain**

Marina Álvarez Estepa shared her insights on the critical role of coaches in creating safe spaces and preventing gender-based violence in sports. She reflected that “The coach plays a big role in the life of the sporter. The coach is also responsible that players can sport in a safe space. GBV in sports is very actual. I remember that in Atlético de Madrid, the parents were shouting to the boys that they could not loose from the girls. In my career I noticed a lot of gender discrimination and it started with my mother, not allowing me to play football. When friends convinced her to let me play, I always felt that when playing football, I should be more a boy than a girl.

Every club should have a policy on GBV, and coaches should have the capacity to educate young players on this topic. The prevention of GBV should be integrated in training sessions. This is the only way to create safe spaces. Coaches are a role model, and they should always have an open and honest communication, but they should also act and give support to their team members. They clearly have a role to prevent GBV.

‘Run like a Girl’ should not be negative, and we need brave persons to change the norms.”



Participant: “Do you see a shift?”

Marina Álvarez Estepa: “I see changes in a positive way. I see a new generation and notice that boys and girls are more interacting with each other on the same level.”

Evert Zinzen: “This also highlights the importance of mixed sports, where boys and girls can get to know each other better and to appreciate each other strengths and complementarity.”

### **José Ignacio Alonso Romero – Director/responsible of Kunina Sports and Education**

José Ignacio Alonso Romero outlined the essential preconditions for tackling gender-based violence in sports and the role of federations, clubs, and coaches. He stated that “There are three preconditions to tackle GBV in sports. First, we must acknowledge that violence against children is happening in the sports culture. Secondly, we must acknowledge that often violence is hidden or normalised and that we cannot talk and act on something we do not see. This is often the case in sports. Thirdly, we need a legal framework and an ethical approach, our duty of care for children is compulsory.”

Federations and sport clubs often have frameworks, but they also must take a big role in defining the rules of the game. Of equal importance is that the game is played in a safe space.

Girls in sports are confronted with more limitations because of violence, on social media, when travelling, ...and often they drop out because of this. This is not only happening in elite clubs, but it is everywhere. 99% of our children is not in an elite club. In sport we focus strongly on separate groups for boys and girls.

As from early childhood and from the start of sport experience we need educational programs to sensitize children on GBV and gender equality. Crucial is also that coaches are well trained and that these topics are part of your learning process in sport training. You also need to translate your language to sport language, so the information is comprehensive and close to the real-life experience.

The prevention of GBV is a joined effort, including everybody who takes care of children and considering the specific power of sports coaches!”

## **Conclusion**

Roméo Matsas concluded the afternoon by thanking the speakers and participants for the rich and powerful messages that touched upon many topics, such as education, bystander intervention, reporting, enabling environment and many others. He also mentioned that, even though we were reaching the closure of the TPS project, it is only starting now. Romeo continued by saying “There are still a lot of challenges ahead and a lot of work to be done. We will continue to make sure that everybody is free to play, free to be how they are and free from violence. There is no place for gender-based violence in sports and we will continue to raise awareness. Thank you all!”

## **Annex 1**

- PowerPoint DEVELOPMENT AND EVALUATION OF A GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE PREVENTION JOURNEY. Dra. Tiphaine Clerincx (speaker) Prof. Hebe Schailleé (speaker) Prof. Inge Derom & Prof. Evert Zinzen.

# DEVELOPMENT AND EVALUATION OF A GENDER- BASED VIOLENCE PREVENTION JOURNEY

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Dra. Tiphaine Clerincx (speaker)  
Prof. Hebe Schailleé (speaker)  
Prof. Inge Derom & Prof. Evert Zinzen

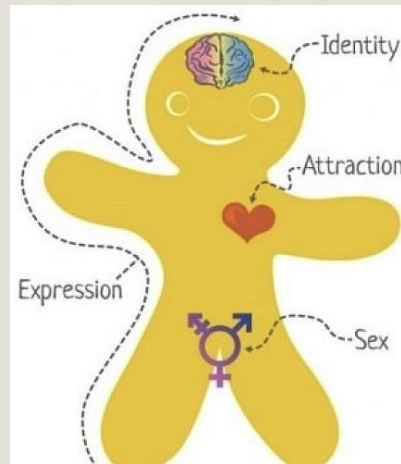


# Why developing a GBV prevention intervention?

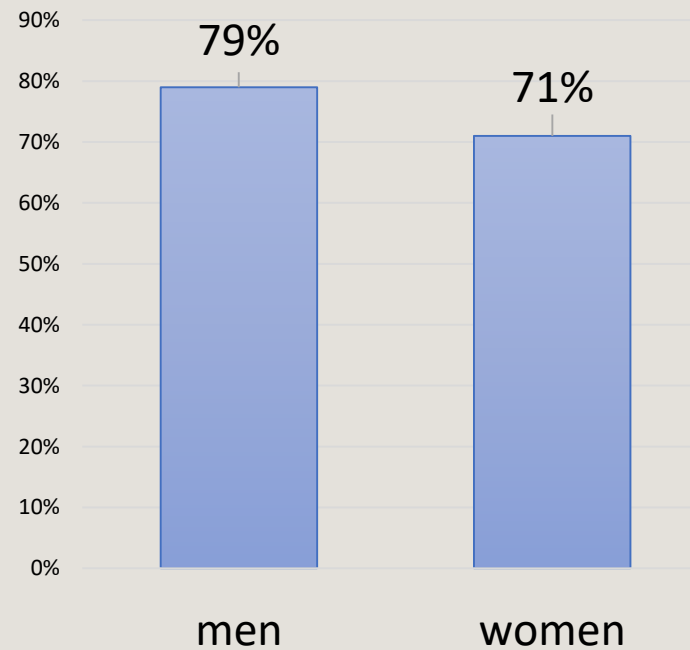
## WHAT IS GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE?

**Interpersonal violence** targeting an individual's **biological sex, gender identity, or gender expression** (Rogers et al., 2023)

- *psychological violence*
- *physical violence*
- *sexual violence*
- *neglect*



## PREVALENCE OF INTERPERSONAL VIOLENENCE



(Hartill et al., 2021)



(Vertommen et al., 2016)

# Intervention mapping approach

(Bartholomew et al., 2016)

1

## **Needs assessment**

> Context analysis

2

## **Determining objectives**

> Theoretical blueprint

3

## **Determining content and methodologies**

> Design first draft of a theory- & evidence-based intervention

4

## **Program production**

> Feasibility assessment

5

## **Implementation**

> Four universities and one college

6

## **Evaluation**

> Effectivity assessment



**Analysis of 257 pins from the Safer Cities Platform**



**Systematic literature review of academic literature**



**Narrative review of non-academic literature**



**Conducting and analyzing 11 focus groups**

# Approaches

**1**

**Needs assessment**

**2**

**Determine objectives**

**3**

**Content and methodologies**

**4**

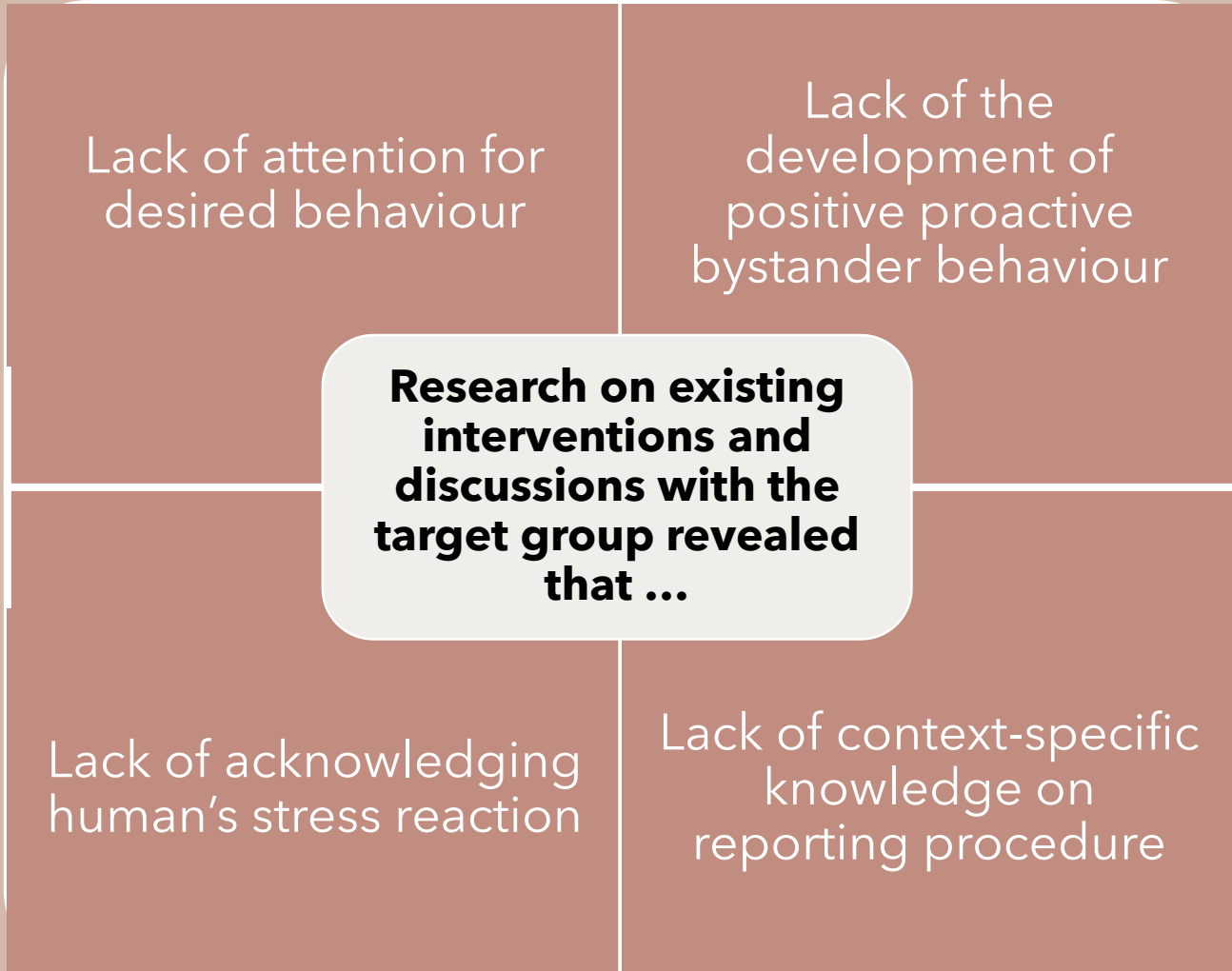
**Program production**

**5**

**Implementation**

**6**

**Evaluation**



# Identified gaps

1

**Needs assessment**

2

**Determine objectives**

3

**Content and methodologies**

4

**Program production**

5

**Implementation**

6

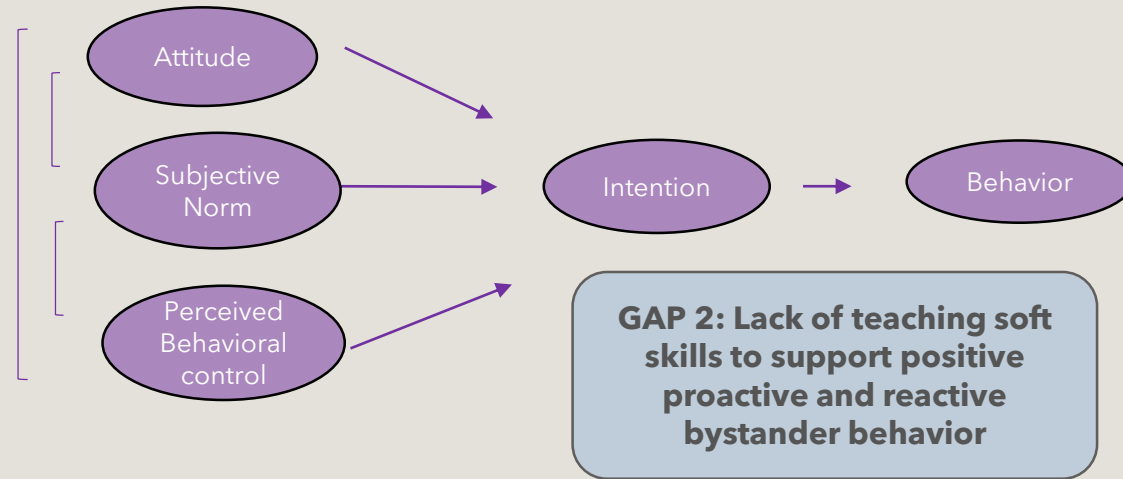
**Evaluation**



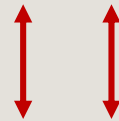
# Theoretical blueprint

- 1 Needs assessment
- 2 Determine objectives
- 3 Content and methodologies
- 4 Program production
- 5 Implementation
- 6 Evaluation

## THEORY OF PLANNED BEHAVIOUR (Ajzen, 1991)

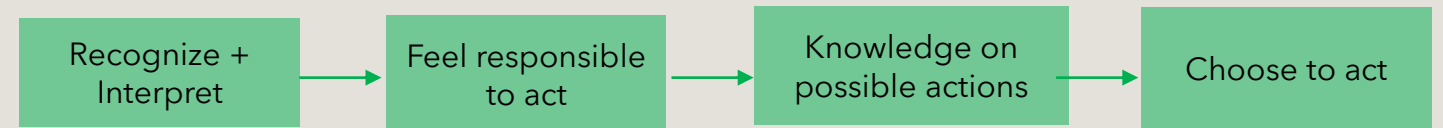


## WINDOW OF TOLERANCE (Siegel, 1999)



**GAP 3: Lack of acknowledging human's stress reaction**

## STAGES OF BYSTANDER BEHAVIOUR (Latané & Darley, 1970)



**GAP 4: Context-specific knowledge and meaning of reporting procedure**

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# Content of the TPS-prevention journey

**Session 1:  
Curiosity**

**SESSION 2:  
Mentalization**

**SESSION 3  
Non-violent  
communication**

**SESSION 4  
Emotional  
regulation**

**SESSION 5  
Problem-solving**

***Positive Proactive Bystander Behavior***

Students learn the importance of gender-based violence prevention

Students learn desired behavior that supports a safe sport climate

Students know how to react and communicate when witnessing mild gender-based violence

Students comprehend their (para)sympathic nervous system reactions and that of others

***Positive Reactive Bystander Behavior***


Students know where, when and how to turn to the point of contact of their university and elsewhere

# Sport Plus Approach

- **Sport** is the **primary activity**
- Sport is used as an **experiential learning environment** to foster **individual developmental outcomes**







**CONTEXT ANALYSIS ON**  
**GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE**  
THE TRANSFORMATIVE POWER OF SPORT FOR AND BY STUDENTS (TPS)

<https://saso.research.vub.be/>



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# Intervention mapping approach

(Bartholomew et al., 2016)

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# Initial implementation

## Case study

- University of Liège in Belgium
- 10 Bachelor students in Physical Education (2<sup>nd</sup> year)
- Implementation on campus between October and December 2023

## Research participants

- 1 Facilitator per session (n = 1)
- 1 Observer per session (n = 3)
- Facilitator and observers were employees of Plan International Belgium



	<b>Reach</b>	<b>Dosage</b>	<b>Fidelity</b>	<b>Acceptability</b>
Logbook for facilitator	X	X	X	
Observation notes from observers	X	X	X	
In-depth interview with facilitator and observers				X
Focus group with facilitator and observers				X



# Indicators

# Results

# Redesign

## Reach

- Engagement was reported to be the lowest during the first session (e.g., sceptical, reluctant and shy)

- Less plenary discussions
- Focus on how the exercises relate to students' desired future careers

## Dosage

- The sessions concluded sooner than expected (i.e., min: 1h30 vs max 1h45)

- Additional exercises for both sport plus sessions of the GBV prevention journey

## Fidelity

- Role-playing exercises did not resonate with the students

- The methodology used in session 3 on non-violent communication has been revised

## Acceptability

- Insufficient theoretical and practical depth

- Include additional information and practical examples into the manual to enable more in-depth group discussions

# Intervention mapping approach

(Bartholomew et al., 2016)

1

## Needs assessment

> Context analysis

2

## Determining objectives

> Theoretical blueprint

3

## Determining content and methodologies

> Design first draft of a theory- & evidence-based intervention

4

## Program production

> Feasibility assessment

5

## Implementation

> Four universities and one college

6

## Evaluation

> Effectivity assessment

# Participants of the GBV prevention journey

Higher Education Institute	PE students (n)	Implementation
Université de Liège	10	Oct - Dec 2023
Vrije Universiteit Brussel	52	Nov - Apr 2024
Erasmushogeschool Brussel	7	Dec - Mar 2024
European Universidad de Madrid	6	Mar - Apr 2024
Universidad de Valencia	16	Apr 2024
Universidad de Sevilla	4	Feb - Mar 2024



# Intervention mapping approach

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# Effectivity Assessment

Knowledge on GBV

Positive proactive bystander behavior: Active listening

Positive reactive bystander behavior: Ability to  
intervene

# Indicators

Knowledge

Declarative

Contextual

Active listening

Attitude

Subjective norm

Perceived  
behavioral control

Ability to  
intervene

Attitude

Subjective norm

Perceived  
behavioral control

# Indicators

## Attitude

- Student's feelings, thoughts, and predispositions toward GBV.

## Intentional behavior

- Student's perception of whether significant others—such as family, friends, peers, or societal groups— would approve or disapprove of a particular behavior (e.g., positive reactive bystander behavior)

## Perceived behavioral control

- Student's perception of how easy or difficult a specific behavior would be, based on their confidence in having the resources, abilities, or opportunities to carry it out.

# Preliminary Results



## Knowledge

- Declarative knowledge was limited
- Contextual knowledge was assimilated

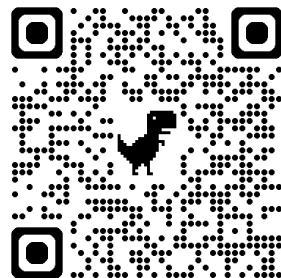


## Attitude and intentional behavior

- Positive attitude regarding bystander behavior
- Increased sense of responsibility to intervene

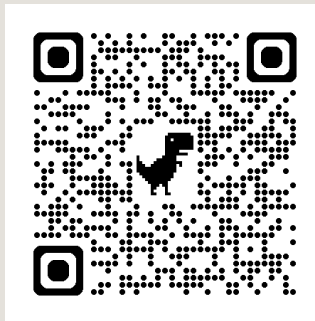
# Activity guide for teachers in higher education

- **Title:** Guide for implementing an intervention trajectory aimed at preventing gender-based violence
- **Target group:** Teachers in higher education
- **End users :** 18+ undergraduate PE students
- **Languages:** Dutch, French, English, Spanish



# Online learning modules

- **E-learning:** General introduction of the GBV prevention journey, separate module for each session
- **Languages (subtitles):** Dutch, French, English, Spanish

A screenshot of a YouTube video player. The video title is "TRANSFORMATIVE POWER OF SPORT FOR AND BY STUDENTS" with the subtitle "A gender-based violence prevention journey". The video features logos for VUB, the European Union, and PLAN INTERNATIONAL. The video player interface includes a search bar, play/pause buttons, a progress bar showing 0:14 / 51:00, and a description area with the text "TPS project E learning ENG" and "Sport & Society VUB 12 abonnés". There are also buttons for "Abonné", "0" likes, "Partager", and "Télécharger".

YouTube <sup>BE</sup> Rechercher

**TRANSFORMATIVE POWER OF SPORT FOR AND BY STUDENTS**  
A gender-based violence prevention journey

VUB Funded by the European Union

Disclaimer: Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the authors only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

0:14 / 51:00

**TPS project E learning ENG**

Sport & Society VUB  
12 abonnés

Abonné

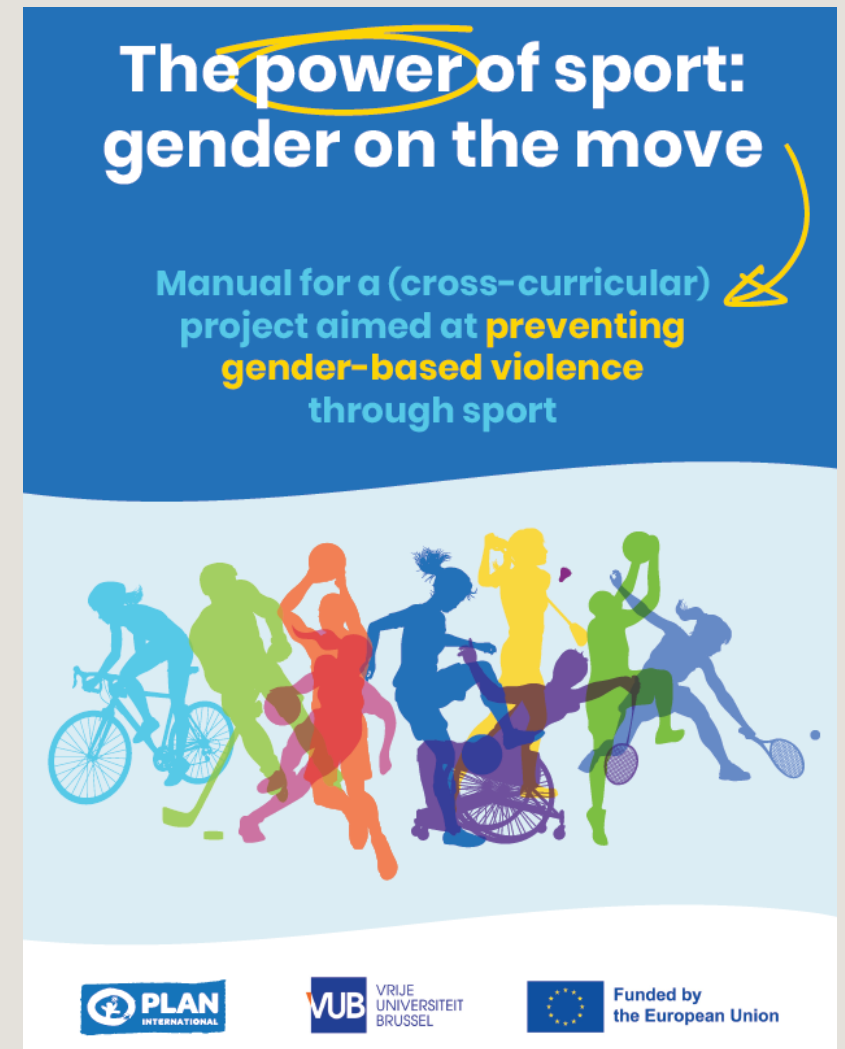
0

Partager

Télécharger

# Manual for teachers in secondary education

- **Title:** Manual for a (cross-curricular) project aimed at preventing GBV through sport
- **Target group:** Educational tool for physical education teachers or sports coaches
- **End users:** Youth between 14-18 years old
- **Languages:** Dutch, French, English



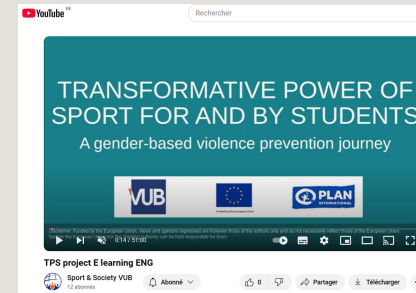


# Differences among the educational outputs

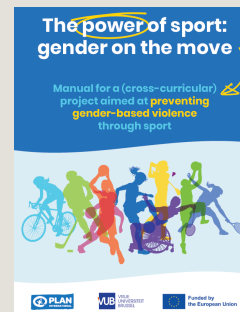
## Positive Proactive Bystander Behavior

## Positive Reactive Bystander Behavior

- Undergraduate PE students enrolled in professional/academic educational program (i.e., 18+ years old)



- Secondary school students or sport participants in sport clubs aged between 14-18 years



1. Target group
2. Content

# THANK YOU

website



Contact details: [tiphaine.clerincx@vub.be](mailto:tiphaine.clerincx@vub.be)

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