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Europe, get the ball rolling: Investigating sports culture for athletes, coaches and support staff across European sport

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You are invited to participate in the research project identified above. This project is led by Dr Kotryna Fraser in the School of Environmental and Life Sciences at the University of Newcastle (Australia), and conducted in collaboration with Asmin Tuğçe Yurtsever (Leiden University), Iulia Maria Buzea and Alexandra Gabriela Traşcă (Babeş-Bolyai University, Romania), Lydia Fandridaki (Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece), Dina Shukhova and Milena Wilbrandt as part of European Federation of Psychology Students' Association's (EFPSA) Research Programme.

Why is the research being done?

Female participation in sport has been an ongoing debate for decades with more and more initiatives rolled out to help girls and women to engage with sport. An increased number of people participating and working in sport sectors across Europe is a promising sign (e.g., a 3.2% growth between 2013 and 2018; Statistics Explained, June 2019). However, male involvement in the sport sector is still higher in most countries (i.e., approx. 160.6 thousand more males than females were employed in sport across Europe in 2017; Statista, November, 2018). There also is some evidence to show that players, coaches and support staff have different experiences, feelings and obstacles in playing, coaching or working in sport settings based on their gender identity, sexuality or ethnicity. Interestingly, these experiences can also vary from sport to sport and from country to country. Therefore, the aim of this study is to compare players/athletes, coaches and support staff to better understand their sporting experience across Europe.

Who can participate in the research?

We are seeking players/athletes, coaches or support staff (e.g., physiologists or psychologists) working in sport who are at least 18 years of age, fluent in English, and who have access to the Internet to participate. You must meet the following criteria to be eligible to take part in this research:

- As a *player/athlete*, you must have been training regularly in a structured practice for at least 3 years and compete at local, regional, national or international competitions/leagues prior to the COVID-19 pandemic started.
- As a *coach*, you must have completed at least an entry level coaching qualification in your sport in the country you work/worked at on paid or voluntary bases in the last 10 years.
- As *support staff*, you must have completed relevant professional accreditation or have been undergoing supervised experience to be able to practice in sport if it is relevant in your country and/or discipline (e.g., BASES in the UK).

Participants of any gender identity, sexuality, ethnicity, and/or nationality are welcome to take part in this study.

What will you be asked to do?

If you agree to take part in this study, you will be asked to complete an online survey anonymously. The survey will take you approximately 15 minutes to complete.

What choice do you have?

Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary. If you wish to withdraw, you can do so without providing any reason simply by exiting the survey before it is complete. All incomplete data will be removed and destroyed securely. Since the survey is anonymous, it is not possible to withdraw your data after the survey is complete as your data cannot be matched to you for withdrawal.

What are the risks and benefits of participating?

There is a slight possibility that you might experience some emotional distress during the survey. You can withdraw your participation at any time by simply closing your web browser before the survey is complete. If, while completing or after completion of the survey, you experience any emotional distress, embarrassment, or anxiety, you may find contact details of local counselling services here: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_suicide_crisis_lines. Alternatively, please contact the project principal investigator Dr Kotryna Fraser on +61 (02) 4913 8773 or kotryna.fraser@newcastle.edu.au.

This research is designed to understand at least one of the key mechanisms by which sports culture can impact particular demographic groups, and recommend strategies for dealing with this impact. Your participation may result in guidelines to governing sports bodies and clubs to guide the retention of players/athletes, coaches and support staff and promoting positive sport experience. Although this research has the potential to impact future sporting practices and participation, there are no potential benefits to you from taking part in this research.

How will your privacy be protected?

Data will be retained securely for a minimum period of 5 years from completion of the research and managed/stored in accordance with the University's Research Data and Materials Management Guideline (see <https://policies.newcastle.edu.au/document/view-current.php?id=72>) or any successor Guideline, and applicable University of Newcastle policy provisions (as amended from time to time). All electronic data will be stored on a password-protected file on a password-protected laptop, and all paper records will be stored in a locked filing cabinet.

Consistent with the ACRCR and the University of Newcastle's Research Data and Materials Management Guideline, other researchers will be provided with access to the non-identifiable research data upon request and allowed to analyse the data. The de-identified research data and primary materials may be made available in online public data repositories (e.g., Open Science Framework) that can be accessed by other researchers for further research. This further research may include research questions beyond those stated in the Information Statement.

How will the information collected be used?

Results of this study will be used for EFPSA's Research Programme and presented during the Annual Congress in 2021. The collected data will also be used as pilot for other research projects and may result in several scientific publications, conference presentations and/or media communications. A summary report may be produced to individual participants and sport clubs if requested. Individual participants will not be identified in any reports arising from the project. Non-identifiable data may also be shared with other parties to encourage scientific scrutiny, and to contribute to further research and public knowledge. You can also receive a summary of findings if you wish to do so. You can download this information from the UoN staff profile of Dr Kotryna Fraser (<https://www.newcastle.edu.au/profile/kotryna-fraser>).

What do you need to do to participate?

If you would like to participate in the online survey, please click on the link provided here: <https://tinyurl.com/europeansportsurvey>

Further information

If you would like further information, please contact Dr Kotryna Fraser (Kotryna.Fraser@newcastle.edu.au). Thank you for considering this invitation.

Dr Kotryna Fraser

Associate Lecturer, School of Environmental and Life Sciences



Complaints about this research

This project has been approved by the University's Human Research Ethics Committee, Approval No. H-2020-0006.

Should you have concerns about your rights as a participant in this research, or you have a complaint about the manner in which the research is conducted, it may be given to the researcher, or, if an independent person is preferred, to the Human Research Ethics Officer, Research & Innovation Services, The University of Newcastle, University Drive, Callaghan NSW 2308, Australia, telephone (02) 4921 6333, email Human-Ethics@newcastle.edu.au.