

Manual for Social Inclusion in Karate



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ENDORSEMENT

The current Manual is one of the few recent publications touching upon the topic of social inclusion and sport. It presents a combination of literature review, preliminary analysis and synthesis of authors rich professional experiences and expertise in the field addressed.

The manual focusses on the potential of one particular martial art such as karate to act as a vehicle for social integration of young persons in risk from two countries: Bulgaria and North Macedonia.

The manual represents both a vision for the role of karate coaches in the process of attracting and supporting young athletes from disadvantaged societal groups and practical guideline for coaches to utilize the training sessions as an opportunity for nurturing not only their sports skills, but also the right mindset for being successful also in life.

The authors of the publications tried to present in a concise manner their vision for the new role of the karate coach as an “inclusive coach”, who pursues creating a welcoming and positive learning atmosphere for all. Furthermore, the manual presents a concrete list of social skills and attitudes that each inclusive coach should develop to be successful in managing diversity in one’s training practice.

The three modules with practical activities and guidelines for coaches present a valuable starting point for accomplishing outlined vision.

The manual holds a strong transferability potential from sport to the education field. It can provide valuable insights for the school education systems of Bulgaria and North Macedonia, which are shaping their models for achieving and sustaining inclusive educational models.

Lachezar Afrikanov, PhD

January 2023

PURPOSE OF THE MANUAL

The Survival Karate Partnership (TAKEN) Project is a 16-month initiative implemented in the period between May 2022 to August 2023. The project is financed under the KA2 Small-scale Partnerships in the field of sport of the Erasmus+ Programme. The partnership consists of three (3) organisations from two (2) different European countries. It comprises of experienced organisations with complementary expertise in the field of sports, coaching, pedagogy, social innovation, curricula and training materials design, and teacher trainings. Partner organisations involved in the elaboration of the present Manual for Karate Coaches and project implementation, in general, are the following:

1. Karate Club Samurai, Dobrich, Bulgaria – project coordinator
2. Modern Education Foundation, Sofia, Bulgaria
3. Karate Club Metalurg, Skopje, North Macedonia

The TAKEN project involves two neighbouring Balkan countries which explore the opportunities the sport of karate offers to tackle discrimination based on racial or ethnic origin and encourage inclusion in society through sports. The participating organisations regard the sport of karate as a valuable instrument which contributes to social integration, not assimilation. By involving two neighbouring Balkan countries we encourage the intercultural dialogues among states which face similar yet different social integration challenges derived from the diverse ethnic minorities living within their borders.

We share the perception that sustainable integration of ethnic minorities is a prerequisite for a peaceful society. We believe that through the sport of karate, youngsters from ethnic minorities more easily become recognised members of society. The objective of the participating organisations is to promote the karate sport as valuable instrument for the development of personal and social skills, and skills for learning and promoting tolerance, solidarity, inclusion among youngsters from ethnic minorities, aged between 8 and 16. The sport of karate is recognised as a popular and relevant approach to social integration in civil society.

With the Manual we will encourage inclusion and diversity in sport. We will equip coaches with contemporary and relevant competences related to their work with youngsters who face socio-economic difficulties, and thus we will contribute to the fight of any form of discrimination and will promote equality in sport in general.

The purpose of the current **Manual for Karate Coaches** is to support the coaches in their work with young karate athletes from ethnic backgrounds. With the Manual we provide an easily accessible source of information on the problems of discrimination within the field of sports, namely within karate but also, we provide a comprehensive training material on inclusive coaching. The Manual equips karate coaches with the following:

- ✓ Relevant competences to further improve the integration of minorities
- ✓ Contemporary competences related to their work with youngsters who face socio-economic difficulties
- ✓ Improved self-confidence related to coaching athletes from ethnic backgrounds
- ✓ Improved competences related to motivating athletes from ethnic minorities to train karate
- ✓ Overall competences related to social inclusion.

The Manual is an up-to-date source of information to foster the role of karate coaches in building an inclusive karate community where all young athletes have access to welcoming, safe environments to strive for their desired goals in sport and society.

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WHAT IS SOCIAL INCLUSION?

Introduction

According to the academic works in the field social sciences, social inclusion is a rather complex and diversified process. In sociology, the term “social integration” is used to describe the process of bringing together minority groups, a definition which includes a wide list of groups such as refugees, migrants, religious minorities, ethnic minorities and many more, with the purpose of integrating them into mainstream society. These represent the target audience of the present project as well. Diverse types of challenges prevent the target audiences addressed by the present initiative from participating in the society on an equal footing.

Within the context of the TAKEN project, and the historical features that have shaped the ethnic landscape of both participating countries (Bulgaria and North Macedonia), these are groups within a given culture, context and history who are at risk of discrimination for different reasons such as individual characteristics, ethnicity, geographic background and religious belief. Being affiliated or belonging to these groups, who are also referred to as people with fewer opportunities, raises the risk of inequality of access to education, basic social services such as health for example, justice, employment and protection. The purpose of social inclusion, or integration, is to establish effective mechanisms that lead to improved overall quality of life for all persons, regardless of their social status in society.

The process of integration embodies the availability of all rights, services, opportunities but also, obligations which arise from participation in an established society. It is a continuous process which requires the participants in it to collaborate actively and grow together. There are several ingredients which are necessary to aid the process of social integration:

- ✓ Confluence
- ✓ Communication
- ✓ Identification of differences
- ✓ Acceptance
- ✓ Finding common ground
- ✓ Taking on common responsibilities

Social inclusion is a multidimensional construct that can be defined as the extent to which individuals participate in a variety of social relationships and develop a sense of communality and identification with one’s social roles (Holt-Lunstad and Uchino, 2015; Brissette et al., 2000). Social inclusion is the process of creating just and

equitable systems that facilitate people's choices and opportunities to engage in a wide range of social and democratic activities, including sport and recreation (Ponic, 2007).

Sport and Social Inclusion

Sport is an aspiration, a sense of self. It is an impetus and an attraction to the desire to face challenges and at the same time to challenge yourself. It gives a step forward to big dreams and ignites that little spark inside us that burns away every fear and shame, every failure. That spark that ignites excitement, courage and aspiration to the highest heights. You don't have to have the Olympic spirit, but the spirit of friendship, solidarity and fair play to become an integral part of a community.

Sport aims to foster active social inclusion, maximum development of the potential of each child, and it creates opportunities for positive interaction and communication. Because sport teaches us discipline, forms in us qualities such as self-respect and respect for others, tolerance and responsibility, concentration and ability to deal with life's challenges, striving for victory and adequate acceptance of losses. Sport and competition are more than the pursuit of victory – they are a call for friendship, a helping hand, and an opportunity to encounter differences that leave an indelible mark.

By nature, sport is defined as a social action that takes place in the form of a game as a competition between two or more individuals. The diversity of each individual in a group is understood as a stimulus and enrichment for learning and development processes of the whole group (INEDU project, 2020).

In sports, the term social inclusion gained importance in the late 1990s (Pegg & Compton, 2004). Since then, sport has been recognized as an effective and adequate instrument for social inclusion in mainstream society, and a powerful tool for positive social change. Changes in the facilitation and organization of sports activities can enhance an inclusive sport practice, which is expected to facilitate social inclusion in broader society in the long term. Sport is regarded as an appropriate medium for social inclusion because mutual experiences allow athletes to get to know each other better and come closer together. In sports, language is less important for communication as it is in other social activities. Experiencing feelings and emotions arising from victories and defeats contribute to establishing a sense of belonging.

As recognized by the participating organisations, the karate coaches and the young athletes from minority backgrounds who were addressed during the preliminary needs analysis, several obstacles for successful social integration exist. More or less all of these are related to the inequality of social opportunities of minorities. More concretely, based on findings, young athletes from ethnic origin sometimes lack the necessary skills that contribute to their overall social well-being and perception. Typically, these skills are related to intra-personal and interpersonal communication, determination, perseverance, confidence, leadership, citizenship, goal-orientation, motivation, and personal satisfaction (Donnelly & Coakley, 2002).

In addition, young athletes occasionally face challenges such as intolerance, racial abuse, bullying, stereotyping, humiliation, lack of fair play and harassment. These obstacles inevitable lead to social exclusion. In order to overcome the identified obstacles, foster the development of the lacking skills outlined above, and facilitate the social inclusion process in sport, the TAKEN partnership aims to ensure participation in karate activities as a valuable and positive psycho-educational experience for the young athletes, promoting social integration.



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KARATE AS AN EFFICIENT TOOL FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION

“The ultimate aim of karate lies neither in victory, nor defeat, but in the perfection of the character of its participants” Gichin Funakoshi, 9th Dan Grand Master (1868–1957)

As outlined in the previous Chapter, social inequality is a complex problem. To tackle this, karate can play an important part in creating and strengthening social ties by connecting athletes from diverse geographic, ethnic and cultural boundaries. Our specific objective is to enhance the provision of the sport karate as an instrument for development of personal and social skills as well as competences for learning and encouraging tolerance, solidarity and inclusion.

We have identified the karate as potentially relevant instrument to achieve our objectives because of the essence of the sport and the values it represents and promotes. By practicing karate, youngsters acquire competences such as continuous self-improvement, the value of loyalty, discipline and self-control, respect and confidence. All these are transferable skills which shape one's behaviour and perception of the surrounding social environment. Thus, practicing karate conveys values of solidarity, diversity, inclusiveness and cultural and social awareness among young athletes.

If we look into the nature of karate, we realize it is a Japanese martial art, that is using all parts of the body for purpose of self-defence. The word “Karate” in Japanese means “empty hand”. The beginning of the Karate dates back to the 16th century in ancient Japan. In the very beginning it was practiced and developed by Gichin Funakoshi, and later its values and concepts were passed from one generation to another.

Karate is a martial art that originated in Okinawa, Japan. It is known for its sharp, precise movements and powerful, explosive techniques. Karate practitioners, or karateka, train to develop their physical strength, speed, and coordination, as well as their mental focus and discipline.

The goal of karate is to defend oneself against attackers while using as little force as possible, and to ultimately achieve self-perfection through rigorous training and dedication.

What value does it teach?

Karate is a martial art that emphasizes on discipline, respect, and self-control. The principles of karate training include humility, sincerity, and perseverance, and these values are taught to practitioners at all levels of the training process. Karate also emphasizes on the importance of hard work and dedication, as well as the importance of pursuing self-improvement and personal growth.

In addition to these values, karate teaches practitioners to be confident and self-assured, but also to be mindful and respectful of others. These values are considered essential for achieving success in karate and in social life.

Karate training can help develop a number of important skills, knowledge, and social competences in athletes. Some of the key skills that karate can help develop include physical strength and coordination, as well as mental focus and discipline. Karate training also involves learning a variety of techniques and strategies, which can help athletes develop a deep understanding of the art and improve their overall knowledge and proficiency.

In terms of social competences, karate training can help athletes develop confidence and self-assurance, as well as discipline and respect for others. Training in a group setting, as is often the case in karate, can also help athletes develop teamwork and collaboration skills, as well as the ability to communicate and work effectively with others. Overall, karate training can help athletes develop a wide range of important skills, knowledge, and social competences that can benefit them both in their martial arts practice and in other areas of their lives.

The values, skills, and knowledge that athletes develop through karate training can be useful for their social integration in a number of ways. For example, the discipline, respect, and self-control that karate emphasizes can help athletes **interact with others in a positive and constructive manner**. The confidence and self-assurance that karate training can help develop can also make athletes **more comfortable in social situations and more able to assert themselves in group settings**.

In addition, the physical strength and coordination that karate training can help develop can make athletes more capable in a wide range of physical activities, which can in turn help them participate more fully in social events and activities.

Finally, the **teamwork and collaboration skills** that athletes can develop through karate training can help them work effectively with others and contribute to group efforts, which can be valuable for their **social integration**. Overall, the values, skills,

and knowledge that athletes develop through karate training can be useful for their social integration and can help them lead more fulfilling and successful lives.



THE ROLE OF THE KARATE COACH IN THE PROCESS

In karate, the effects of integration have to be pursued carefully, have to be organized through a systemic and continuous approach, and require specially educated coaches.

The karate coach as a key figure in the young athlete's life

The role of a karate coach in the life of a young athlete can be quite significant. A karate coach can help young athletes develop the physical strength, coordination, and mental focus that are necessary for success in the sport. The coach can also help athletes learn the techniques and strategies of karate, and can provide guidance and support as athletes work to improve their skills.

In addition to teaching the technical aspects of the sport, **a karate coach can also play a crucial role in helping young athletes develop the values and mindset** that are essential for success in karate and in life in general. For example, a karate coach can help athletes develop discipline, respect, and self-control, and can teach them the importance of hard work, dedication, and perseverance. The coach can also help athletes develop confidence, self-assurance, and a positive mindset, which can be crucial for their success in karate and in other areas of their lives.

Overall, the role of a karate coach in the life of a young athlete can be very important, and can help athletes develop the skills, knowledge, and values that are necessary for success in the sport and in life.

As far as social inclusion is concerned, and our preliminary needs analysis demonstrates, karate coaches are not fully prepared to organise their training activities and offer opportunities for participation to people with diverse ethnic minority backgrounds. Working with people from different ethnic and minority backgrounds can present unique challenges for karate coaches. In order to be effective in this role, coaches need to be knowledgeable about the sport and its principles, and should have a deep understanding of the values and mindset that are essential for success in karate.

They should be prepared to adapt their teaching methods and approach to the needs and abilities of individual athletes, and should be able

to provide support and guidance to athletes as they work to improve their skills and achievements in the sport.

In addition, coaches who work with people from different ethnic and minority backgrounds should be sensitive to the unique experiences and challenges that these athletes may face, and should be prepared to provide extra support and guidance as needed. This may involve providing additional instruction and feedback, or helping athletes overcome any cultural or language barriers that may exist.

Finally, coaches who work with athletes from different ethnic and minority backgrounds should aim to create a welcoming and inclusive environment where all athletes feel valued and respected. By taking a systematic and methodical approach, and by providing support and guidance to athletes as needed, coaches can help athletes from different ethnic and minority backgrounds integrate successfully into the karate community and achieve success in the sport.

Coaches need to have strongly developed intercultural sensitivity skills, and to be trained how to include young athletes belonging to different ethnic or minority group. The coach's approach should be friendly and inclusive to work with people with fewer opportunities especially facing social or/and cultural obstacles.

[Inclusive karate coach](#)

The goal of karate coaches often goes beyond teaching specific skills to helping trainees develop as human beings. The inclusive coach tries to do this within an atmosphere and environment of inclusivity, where everyone is able to take part, learn and have fun.

The role of an inclusive coach is **to create a welcoming and inclusive atmosphere** where all athletes, regardless of their background or abilities, can take part, learn, and have fun. An inclusive coach recognizes the unique experiences and challenges that athletes from different backgrounds may face, and works to provide support and guidance as needed.

In addition to providing support and guidance, an inclusive coach also strives to create an environment where all athletes feel valued and respected. This may involve promoting inclusivity and diversity, and actively working to prevent discrimination or exclusion of any kind.

An inclusive coach also recognizes the importance of helping athletes develop not only as karate practitioners, but also as human beings, and works to promote the values and mindset that are essential for success in karate and in life.

Overall, the role of an inclusive coach is to create a welcoming and inclusive atmosphere where all athletes can learn, grow, and thrive, and to provide support and guidance to help athletes from all backgrounds achieve success in karate and in life. Coach should create a safe learning environment where athletes practice per to peer learning and supportive atmosphere where everyone feels included.

Social skills needed

In training and competitive settings, the coach is the key figure in the athlete's life, under whose guidance athletes develop as valuable members of society. As such, coaches' responsibilities go well beyond demonstrating concrete physical skills and martial arts techniques. It is up to coaches to organize an inclusive environment and atmosphere where all athletes are able to participate, contribute and learn. The coach shares the experience and the lessons learned in practice, encourages, supports and exemplifies.

In order to be a good karate coach, he/she needs to also be a patient mentor, an exemplary leader, a motivated educator, a good facilitator. It is through the interaction with the coach, athletes align with social values and integrates them into their mindset.

It is through interaction with the coach, how the athletes align with social values and responsibilities and integrate them into their mindset.

A good coach-athlete relationship should bear the following characteristics:

- ✓ Empathy (acknowledging and understanding the situation in which the athlete is in);
- ✓ Positive approach and enthusiasm (believing in your methods and demonstrating enthusiasm for the area you work in);
- ✓ Developing capabilities (focusing on giving advice and developing practical life skills and knowledge of an athlete);
- ✓ Inspiring (giving ideas and inspiring to participate actively in training, education, community and society);

- ✓ Valuing opinions as well as proactivity and initiatives;
- ✓ Encouraging discussion, asking questions, and critical thought.

The key to ensuring a quality karate coach-athlete relationship which reflects on the opportunities for social inclusion, is also linked to the coach’s social skills.

Social skills are horizontal and mean to be able to train, communicate and cooperate effectively in a training and competitive setting with athletes from ethnic minorities. Ideally, karate coaches would have acquired a minimum set of social skills as well as attitudes needed to perform their role better. The list below is not exhaustive and serves only as a starting point on which coaches can build:

Social skills	Attitudes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • effective communication and an appropriate approach to athletes, stimulating training and learning • ability to maintain relationships • recognition of age and individual characteristics of athletes • motivation for activity in the training process • avoiding conflict situations • encouraging teamwork • dealing with conflict situations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • applying a flexible approach when training athletes from ethnic origin • applying an individual approach to training • responsibility for the success of the athlete and for the image of the sports club • taking on additional responsibilities for combining more activities • applying appropriate skills when training athletes with special needs • protection and care for the athletes.

MECHANISMS FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION

The key for karate coaches and other training and even educational staff willing to get involved and contribute to effective social integration of young athletes from ethnic minorities, is to work together, as practice shows that there simply is no one approach that will work in every situation.

Majority of social inclusion mechanisms strive to involve directly the socially excluded individuals and bring to the fore the challenges they face and require intervening. These mechanisms rely heavily on diverse set of participatory approaches (such as brainstorming, focus group sessions, etc.) to issue identification prior to formulating concrete action plans for intervention and later evaluation of implemented strategies.

It is by working through athlete engagement or participatory development approaches that communication and trust are fostered to build relationships that encourage mutual learning and action (Taylor & Frisby, 2010). This requires extra time spent by the karate coaches on working with athletes at risk of social exclusion.

It is highly recommended that those involved in organizing and conducting karate training sessions regularly update their knowledge about social inclusion through research, peer-to-peer exchange, networking, participation in thematic seminars/conferences and any other means in support of development within the field of social inclusion.

Module 1 Identification of differences

In this Module we will provide relevant techniques to support in the task of identifying individual characteristics of athletes coming from ethnic minority backgrounds. We will help you understand better your target group since your role as a coach is to identify challenges based on group needs in relation to social inclusion and identify their training but also learning needs. There is no single universal approach because we are all different and each athlete perceives the world around him/her differently.

As a karate coach you should always keep in mind that training youngsters from diverse ethnic origins is not different from training anyone else.

Good coaching is about telling athletes what to do while respecting differences. All you have to do is simply be a little bit more patient, attentive, emphatic and inventive towards their specific personalities and needs. Having in mind that you are training individuals, with their own personalities and abilities, you should always consider every athlete as unique but also as part of the team.

When coaching athletes from ethnic minority groups it is important to be aware of their personal motivation and the specifics of the social problems they face. In the end, your efforts will result in creating a constructive dialogue between different social groups and you will contribute to an improved integration process among socially and economically disadvantaged groups.

In order to better comprehend why are these young athletes socially excluded and marginalised and how can you support their integration through karate activities and empower them, you are expected to have a clear insight into their profiles, individualities, strengths and weaknesses. Knowing them better allows you to adapt your training approach for the purpose of creating a welcoming training environment suitable for all.

Commonly used methods to collect relevant information about personal characteristics of athletes in risk of social exclusion and the problems they face is through social interaction in the form of an opening informal interview at the very beginning of the training process, ideally prior to the initial training session.

Below is an example of an interview scenario with three types of possible questions you can ask your trainee/athlete

Personal attributes

- ✓ Introduce yourself briefly. Tell me a little about yourself. How would you define yourself?
- ✓ How would you best describe yourself?
- ✓ Do you have trouble with conflicts and differences?
- ✓ Are you comfortable with cooperating with other people in order to achieve a result?
- ✓ What are your strengths and areas of development? Describe three main strengths and three areas for improvement.
- ✓ Do you want to be addressed in any particular way?
- ✓ Do you have friends with backgrounds different from your own? Describe them, and tell where they are from, how you met them, etc.
- ✓ Do you know any specific traditions from other cultures? Describe them.

Family values and traditions

- ✓ What is it like to grow up in your family?
- ✓ Do you have any brothers or sisters?
- ✓ Tell me about some traditions, celebrations or rituals your family participates in.
- ✓ What are some incorrect assumptions people have made about you or your family that have caused problems?
- ✓ Have you ever been treated poorly because of your or your family background?
- ✓ What are things your culture does that help you deal with stress and negative emotions?
- ✓ What do you do in your free time usually?

Sports and education

- ✓ What is the highest degree or level of school you have completed?
- ✓ Why did you choose to train karate in particular?
- ✓ What are your expectations from karate and practicing sports in general?
- ✓ How would you organize yourself to balance your study, family time and training?
- ✓ Would you need any type of assistance before, during and/or after the training sessions?
- ✓ Can you recall a time when a person's cultural background affected your approach to education and/or training?
- ✓ Talk about a time when you were placed on a team and you or someone on that team didn't see eye-to-eye.
- ✓ Describe a time when you needed to study (or train) cooperatively with someone that did not share the same ideas as you.

During the opening informal interview, you can present a description of the karate club and use it as a point of discussion and collect additional information about the athlete. The description covers:

- ✓ An overview of the club, year of establishment, structure, objectives and mission
- ✓ A tour around the training facilities
- ✓ Size of the club including number of coaches, support staff and athletes
- ✓ Different styles of karate practiced within the club
- ✓ Achievements in terms of competitions won, both local, national as well as international if applicable
- ✓ An explanation of the training conditions including expectations, equipment, schedule, dress code and any other responsibilities and entitlements
- ✓ Description of the most successful karate trainees with reference clear reference to his/her personal characteristics
- ✓ Health and safety protocols, including fire and evacuation procedures.

Once differences have been identified, you should focus on effective communication as it holds the key to building a trustful relationship between you and the athlete, which is a key driver of his/her motivation for training, learning and development.



Module 2 Communication

Communication is extremely important when it comes to your work with young people. Understanding cultural norms is an important part of your communication efforts. It is important to avoid making decisions about people based only on their culture or origin.

The cultural norms listed below may apply to most or only some of your audience. As an inclusive karate coach, you are expected to learn about your audience's values and beliefs before applying these communication strategies.

For better group cohesion and in order to create a safe and collaborative environment we propose the method of the so called "**Speed Dating**".

Coaches need to strive to work through all different factors of exclusion and instead of focusing on differences to focus on things that the young people have in common.

In order to establish effective communication, young athletes need to get to know better each other.

Aim of the tool:

- ✓ Stimulate active participation and break any communication barriers
- ✓ Get athletes more and better connected
- ✓ Clear differences between them and create team spirit
- ✓ Find common points between different opinions
- ✓ Prepare participants for a deeper look and discussion on things that matter to them.

How to do it? Just follow the following simple procedure:

First of all, plan enough time for this activity, prior or post the actual training session. Ask the young athletes to form two different circles: one outer and one inner circle. Then each one of them should have a partner. Then ask a question and give them 2 minutes to discuss. Then ask another question and give them 2 more minutes, while inner circle move to the left. Then another question until each one speaks with each partner.

This activity will break the ice and will connect them better and create inclusive environment. The coach should be experienced to ask questions to lead to common understanding and group cohesion that create safe environment where all members are included.

Sample of Speed Dating Questions

- ✓ Share the most interesting thing you did lately
- ✓ Share one thing you are proud of
- ✓ Share something that you are grateful for
- ✓ You have got six months to live what would you do first?
- ✓ If you won the lottery, how would you spend the money?
- ✓ What is the first place you want to visit and why?
- ✓ In which period in the past would you live?
- ✓ Which person or character is inspirational for you?
- ✓ Where do you see yourself in 5 years?
- ✓ What is your hobby?
- ✓ What is the best memory of your life?

After the implementation of this tool, the coach should make a conclusion and debrief.

Module 3 Techniques to attract and retain ethnic minority athletes

In this module we will provide tips how to attract and consequently retain athletes from ethnic minorities. We will also provide an overview of the reasons which hinder the ability of coaches to attract and retain them. As a continuation of the preceding Module, we have identified that poor communication usually leads to the inability neither to attract, nor to retain youngsters from ethnic minority backgrounds. Basically, ineffective communication is the most common obstruction to inclusion.

Considering this, when formulating your approach to **attract** athletes with diverse backgrounds, you have to keep in mind their individual characteristics and respect the differences in order to figure out how best to communicate the opportunity to participate in karate training. In order for you to be inclusive, you are also expected to consider external factors such as the target audience's ability to read and understand written and spoken language.

Statistics support the argument that written communication, that is designed and disseminated in an accessible and inclusive manner, has the strongest potential to reach relevant target audiences. Below are a few tips how to advertise karate, both in written or/and spoken form, as inclusive martial art in order to attract participants:

✓ **Focus on communicating how karate activities will improve athletes' well-being. Explain how training sessions improve athletes' well-being through social engagement and teamwork and how this leads to reducing stress and anxiety among the participants. Emphasize on how socialising through karate helps increase self-confidence**

✓ **Promote the social benefits of practicing karate. Outline the opportunities training sessions present to build new relationships and friendships, to meet new people, decrease social isolation. In addition, stress on how karate helps improve one's self-determination and helps develop the ability to respect other and follow agreed rules. Explain that by adhering to accepted ethical sports standards, young athletes learn how to demonstrate socially acceptable behaviour. Do not forget to emphasize that karate teaches respect, courtesy and politeness. It encourages mutual concessions and promotes a sense of justice.**

✓ **Advocate the psychological benefits of practicing karate. Emphasize on how it increases confidence and self-esteem, independence, motivation and ability for decision-making. Explain that karate develops persistence which**

helps young athletes to focus on their goals, stay committed to achieving them and learn not to be afraid of failure. Popularize the understanding that karate, and martial arts in general, enhance athletes' ability to control their emotions and behaviour and as research shows people with strong self-control have better health, relationships, finances, and careers.

To make sure the above messages reach the relevant target audiences, you should consider what the most appropriate channels of communication are. In the era of digital communication, the easiest access to youngsters is through social media. When elaborating your message, think how to communicate it in a way that is appropriate for all in order to ensure that your promotional announcement reaches the widest possible target audience.

Considering your aim is to attract athletes irrespective of their ethnic origin, it would be suitable to use inclusive images showing people from diverse backgrounds practicing karate and images which show how young athletes socialize and enjoy training sessions together.

When it comes to retaining young athletes that have already been successfully attracted to practicing karate, motivation is the key.

To ensure youngsters from ethnic backgrounds continue training you should motivate them to acquire new skills for a long period of time. In order for you to be a good motivator, you should be highly motivated yourself as you are their role model.

You could implement various positive methods but first and foremost you should be able to communicate with the trainees in a way that is easy to comprehend and is also attractive to them. Below we have outlined several tips to facilitate your practice, motivate the trainees in the best possible way and avoid drop-outs.

These tips will help you create an inclusive training environment where all athletes feel safe and are predisposed to building social relationships:

✓ **Avoid overestimating as well as underestimating their accomplishments. The reason for this is that it might have a negative effect on their self-esteem and motivation. Be honest with them about what they did well and what needs to be improved in terms of technical skills and attitude.**

✓ Praise the trainees only when they really deserve it. This approach will boost their competitive spirit and ambition to progress. It will also increase their sense of equality among the group.

✓ Keep in mind that young athletes from ethnic minority backgrounds tend to be more timid and more insecure in a new setting. Build their confidence and develop their potential by adapting training activities and tasks according to their technical level. If necessary, spend some extra hours helping them progress and encourage them constantly.

✓ By using the interview scenario template provided in the first Module of the manual, identify their strengths and use these for external to the training process activities. For example, in light of the above recommendation to use social media to promote the values of karate, the club itself and attract new trainees, and having in mind that youngsters are well aware of social media functionalities, you could delegate to your minority athletes to write and share posts. Another type of activity in which you might engage them is to ask them to take pictures of their fellow athletes during competitions and/or even at training sessions. Use this photo material for communication purposes. This way you will facilitate their integration in the club more easily.

✓ Involve all your athletes, irrespective of their background and ethnic origin in organizational activities when hosting competitions for example. This will encourage teamwork and will develop a sense of belonging to the group and to the club. Encourage them when they have performed well their organizational tasks.

✓ Build their confidence by allowing them to lead the warm-up exercises for example. Another appropriate activity would be to appoint them as a referee during a practice training match. Exercise control in order to avoid negative effects, however, allow the right amount of autonomy.

✓ Think of a way to encourage athletes' achievements at the club. This of course is valid for all trainees. For example, a trainee who has achieved a significant result at a competition, let's say has won a gold medal at national level, could be exempted from his/her monthly fee or the fee could be reduced. Whatever the approach or a system to promote athletes' results you decide to implement, make sure to communicate it well in advance to all trainees as well as their parents.

✓ Cooperate in a respectful manner with parents since youngsters from ethnic minorities tend to have a very strong relationship with them. Allow parents to have access to the training facilities and whenever they wish invite

them to attend training sessions. Make them feel welcome. Respect the core principles of communication ethics to build trust. Be an active listener, demonstrate understanding and provide support. Contact them regularly to provide feedback about the progress their child makes.

Please note that the instructions and advice provided in the Manual for Karate Coaches are for your convenience only. In the end of the day, it is your personal professional observations that are key to your role as inclusive karate coach.

