Report on results about needs analysis

Task 1.2 -STAR Project

CENTRO UNIVERSITARIO SPORTIVO TORINO

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INTRODUCTION

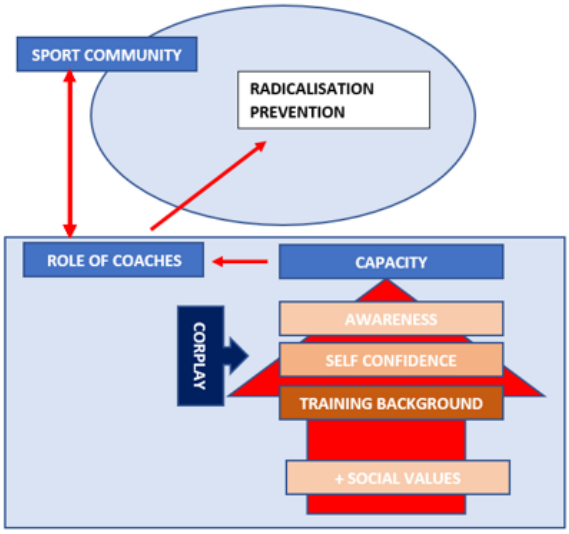
The current report sums up the main results achieved through STAR preparatory research phases (T1.2), concerning the needs analysis propaedeutic to the syllabus' realisation (T1.3). In particular, T1.2 foresees the development of a preliminary analysis, investigating the degree of knowledge/awareness among sport operators about radicalisation and violence within youngsters. In the scope of STAR project, WP1 is a crucial work package, intended to prepare the training material, addressed to sport operators, and clarifying themes to be addressed throughout project capacity building activities, namely the International School and Study Visits foreseen in WP2.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Sport environment can be conceived as communities of practice, enabling pro-social attitudes within youngsters (Mutz Baur, 2009; Edwards 2013, Gentile et al. 2018). Given that radicalisation process is a complex process and prevention measures address the possible prodromes of radicalisation[1], STAR Project theoretical background underpins that:

i) the raising awareness about social exclusion and radicalisation among coaches may affect positively the youngsters' behaviours and attitudes.

Fig. 1 – Main STAR assumptions on coaches' role



Source: STAR Project, elaborated by LINKS

Based on CORPLAY Project (590354-EPP-1-2017-1-EL-SPO-SCP), T1.2 intends to reconstruct the relevant mechanisms implied in coaches' process of awareness, knowledge and reaction against violent episodes and radicalisation within youngsters. In order to map social mechanisms and dynamics associated to the interrelation between coaches and aggressions, the current analysis refers to three fundamental steps: *i)* recognition about violence/presence of radicalisation components; *ii)* self-confidence in tackling the episode; *iii)* available instruments to address the situation (Fig. 1). Moreover, STAR Project adds to CORPLAY Project social values in sport to control the previous dimensions, referring to Khan al. (2012).

[1] According to radicalisation pyramid developed by Declerck (2018), violent attitudes/episodes within youngsters may be considered as behaviours at-risk of radicalisation.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Radicalisation and violence are complex phenomena, depending on several socioeconomic factors, such as social stratification, education, enculturation processes. Conversely, the current analysis aims to map coaches' learning needs about their awareness on radicalisation prevention, by investigating both their knowledge gaps and capacity to structure societal networks able to preserve youngsters against violence.

STAR Project intends to address prodromes that can lead to radicalisation, such as violent and discriminatory episodes, then research questions are declined according to this purpose.

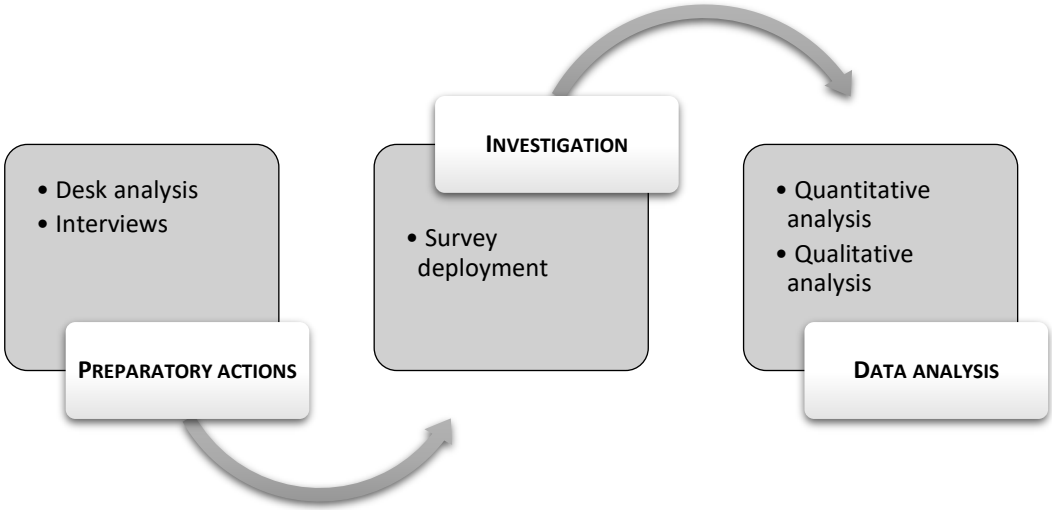
Research questions

- Is the exposition to violent episodes correlated with specific cultural definitions?
- Which are the main actors that sport operators consider cooperating? Do coaches consider themselves as educators?

METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

In order to address properly the research questions, a quali-quantitative approach has been deployed, intended to map adequately sport operators' needs and linking them with aggression episodes. Then, the research study was divided in three main phases (Fig. 2).

Figure 2 – Research framework and stages



Source: STAR Project, elaborated by LINKS Foundation

Firstly, a desk analysis on radicalisation and violence prevention has been carried out in order to identify item dimensions and some already validated research instruments. After, five interviews have been addressed to main information keepers with the intention: *i)* to explore qualitatively the above-mentioned steps identified in CORPLAY Project, and then operationalising and adjusting conceptualisations in variables to be included in the questionnaire; *ii)* understanding the validity of research instruments identified during the desk research. Secondly, after interviews analysis a set of items have been proposed to CUS Torino and discussed in apposite meetings. The survey was proposed in English and Italian in order to reach the wider sample as possible, with the support of sport associations expressing their interest in STAR Project. The questionnaire proposed a various set of items, some of them already validated from psychometric perspective and usable in EU context and some new items re-elaborated on previous tools. Finally, according to research needs explored during the coordination meetings with CUS Torino, the questionnaire was spread in two sections, a quantitative section, including main psychometric items, and a further qualitative section, where respondents were

invited to fill with short sentences, aimed to enrich information gathered. Quantitative data analysis has been carried out by R Software (R i386 4.0.3) whereas qualitative information has been elaborated through QDA Miner 4 Lite.

RESULTS FROM DATA ANALYSIS

A survey composed by a number of 32 quantitative and qualitative questions was proposed to the Italian coaches working at CUS Torino and to the European sport associations supporting the STAR project. The survey was submitted through google forms and composed by the following sections:

- Personal data and number of years of professional experience
- Section 1: personal experience on radicalization and social exclusion
- Section 2: perceived preparation
- Section 3: social value of sport
- Section 4: qualitative survey and information on coaches' experiences

INFORMATION BACKGROUND

The STAR training needs analysis was addressed to EU wide sample of coaches and sport operators, covering five countries, and reaching 135 respondents (Tab. 1). Overall, about 34% of respondents declare to have witnessed at least one episode of violence among individuals they coach.

Table 1 – Aggressions by country

	Belgium	Hungary	Italy	Poland	Slovenia	Total
No	4	1	82	2	0	89
Yes	1	3	32	9	1	**46**
Total	5	4	114	11	1	135

Source: STAR Project, elaborated by LINKS

Italy is the most represented country, followed by Poland, Belgium, Hungary and Slovenia. The sample reveals an unbalanced gender distribution, where females are represented by 36% of respondents (Tab. 2), but further analyses deployed in quantitative data section do not notice any statistically significance difference between distribution of aggressions among males and females.

Table 2 – Gender distribution by country

	Belgium	Hungary	Italy	Poland	Slovenia	Total
F	2	1	45	1	0	49
M	3	3	69	10	1	86
	5	4	114	11	1	135

Source: STAR Project, elaborated by LINKS

Regarding to job experience, expressed on working age in sport, the sample notices a differentiated distribution. Whereas Belgian and Slovenian sport operators are more experienced than other respondents, Italian coaches and Hungarian ones seem to have less experience. Overall, the sample corresponds to the analysis needs designed in T1.2, but the small number of reached respondents force the readers to smooth the final results coming from the current analysis. With particular reference to quantitative results, non-parametric tests have been deployed, and further analysis may confirm the research trends detected. Considering to the quite innovative research field, results coming from T1.2 seem to encourage to structure a more integrated capacity of coaches to address violent episodes and radicalisation, enlarging their social capital and knowledge background.

Table 3 – Job experience by country

	Job experience *(mean age)*
Belgium	17.6
Slovenia	20.0
Poland	14.9
Italy	10.8
Hungary	4.0

Source: STAR Project, elaborated by LINKS

QUANTITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

The quantitative analysis was approached by a logit regression model, estimating the coaches' exposition towards violent episodes within youngsters, according to several cultural and social items (Fig. 3). The choice on operationalising the analysis through a logit regression model is supported by the willing to estimate the odds ratio of violent episodes' occurrence, according to some determinants, explored through the questionnaire. Therefore, the aim of the regression model is to understand the exposure correlation between occurred violent episodes and some factors, described in Figure 3, in order to notice sport operators' training gaps and culture attitudes, to be considered in STAR capacity building activities.

As gender doesn't show any statistically significant difference and considering the particular distribution of the variable in STAR sample, it has been removed from the model, whereas working age was maintained. Then, the model is structured on three conceptual layers where X_2 and X_3 refer to **socio-cultural items**, by which coaches define aggression episodes experienced first-hand or by colleagues. X_4 is **a social value** intended to control discriminatory propension, whereas X_5 and X_6 refer to **perceived importance of acquiring experience** to tackle aggression episodes within youngsters, in order to guide also capacity building activities.

Figure 3 – GLM Regression for needs analysis

$$Y = \alpha + \beta X_1 + \beta X_2 + \beta X_3 + \beta X_4 + \beta X_5 + \beta X_6$$

Y = dichotomic dependent variable where witnessed aggression episodes are codified as 1

α = constant

X_1 = working age in sport

X_2 = in which extent aggression episodes are aimed towards frail individuals

X_3 = in which extent aggression episodes are characterized by discriminatory intention

X_4 = in which extent sport promotes racial equality

X_5 = in which extent acquiring professional experience is important

X_6 = in which extent is important to share best practices

Source: STAR Project, elaborated by LINKS Foundation

The model proposed is statistically significant (Likelihood ratio test = $p < 0.002$), presenting fair data in adjusted-R2 tests (Nagelkerke 0.20, Tjur around 0.17). Both adjusted-R squared measure the model performance. Tjiur test defines the coefficient of determination, claiming the logit model proposed is able to interpret around 17% of aggression episodes within STAR sample. On the other hand, Nagelkerke test interprets a measure of logit robustness and consistency. Although the low performance, the model structure may be considered as fair because of both the low sample population and the restrictive assumptions on which is based on, inasmuch as aggression and radicalisation are wider phenomena and cannot be summarised by sole coaches' action.

Table 4 represents coefficients manually parametrised in odds, so the observed results can be directly interpreted towards the dependent variable. Each coefficient can be also interpreted as the weight of single independent variables on the violent episodes' occurrence. Finally, p-values indicate their statistical significance.

Table 4 – Odds & model results

Intercept	**Working age**	**Frailty*** **
0.20	*0.98*	*2.11*
Discriminatory**	**Sports promotes racial equality**	**Professional experience****
0.62	*1.25*	*0.64*
BPs exchange		
1.08		
p-value[2]: **p<0.05; ***p<0.01		

Source: STAR Project, elaborated by LINKS through R software

Regarding to coefficients results, the model shows as statistically significant three variables: frailty (with p-value < 0.01) and discriminatory and importance on professional experience (with p-value <0.05).

Frailty factor is positive correlated with the dependent variable and Table 4 shows that one single adding point in the Likert scale increases by two times the exposure to an aggression episode within youngsters, experienced directly or indirectly by coaches. Conversely, discriminatory and professional experience are negative correlated with the dependent variable, then reducing the exposure to an aggression episode within youngsters.

In other terms, risk exposure with respect to episodes of violence among youngsters seem to increase with the lack of awareness on the part of the coaches. Indeed, the term "frailty" may be too general to define specific situations or requires in any case more explorations in its definitions for avoiding violent episodes among youngsters. Conversely, risk exposure seems to decrease among those coaches who have clear in mind how discriminatory mechanisms may work. Furthermore, for coaches who consider the professional experience acquired during their career to be important, the exposure ratio decreases.

[2] **p-value** shows statistical significance: 0.05 means that there are 5% of possibilities that correlation found result by chance, whereas 0.01 means that this risk is fewer than former one (1%).

QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

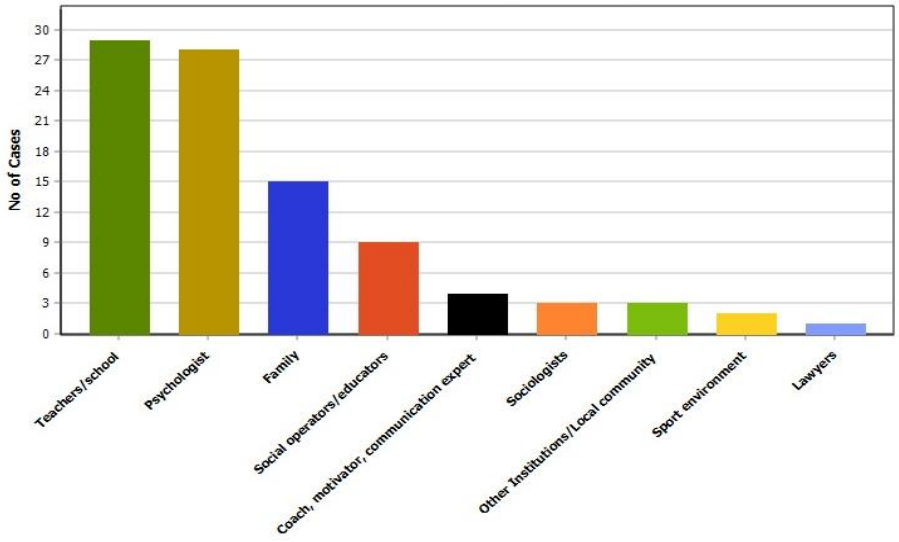
The quantitative investigation was accompanied by an open-ended questions survey, structured on following items, elaborated with CUS Torino:

Figure 4 – Open ended questions survey

If you think it is important to establish relationships **with "other" actors than sports ones**, specify who the "other" actors may be.
If you think **family involvement** is important, what kind of tools do you use?
Did your **professional education** include social, psychological, cultural aspects?
What would you say is the most difficult part of being a Youth Sports Coach: **what are the challenges for you as a youth coach**?
In your role as **coach/trainer**, do you consider yourself as a **role model** and **why**?
Are the **youngsters** discussing personal subjects with you, do they **come to you for advice**?
Can you give **suggestions** about what is needed in order to improve the general situation as a sport coach working with youngster?

Source: STAR Project

Figure 5 – Other actors than sports ones identified by respondents



Source: STAR Project, elaborated by LINKS through QDA Miner 4 Lite

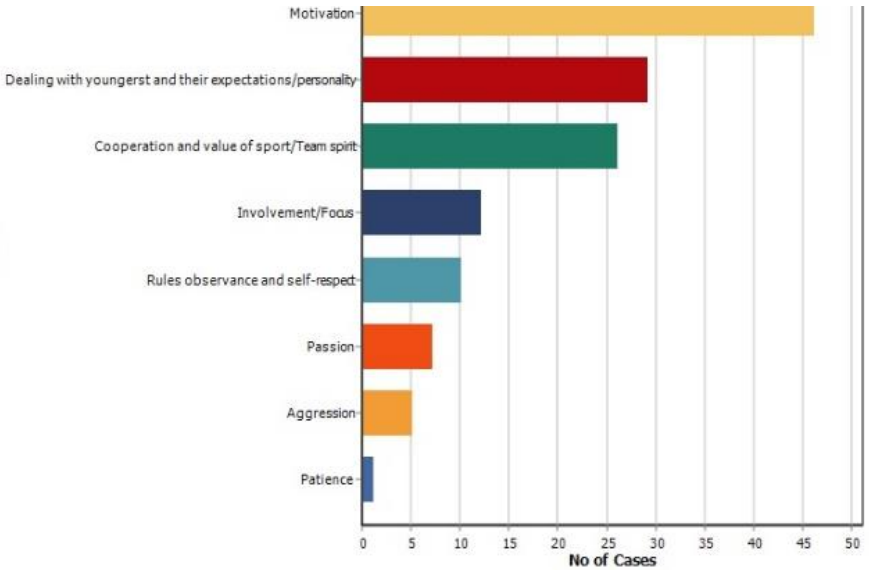
Source: STAR Project, elaborated by LINKS through QDA Miner 4 Lite

Qualitative analysis highlights several insights to be appreciated in next capacity building activities, concerning sport community, environment and challenges.

Regarding the question about the composition of sport communities, and the other actors with whom establishing relationships in order to provide more effective actions on violence prevention, around 60 sport operators suggest the fruitful cooperation with teachers and school, and psychologists, whereas 15 respondents notice the importance of relationships with youngsters' families In other words, coaches and sport operators show a clear need and preference for the first two categories, considering secondarily families and educators support (Fig. 5).

The **main challenge** identified as a youth coach are related to improve **youngsters' motivation** in participating in sports and then their fully emotive involvement. Indeed, 46 respondents notice motivation issues among youngsters they coach, actually a possible risky factor related to sports dropouts. The other main two challenges observed by respondents regard the **dealing with young people** with different age and expectations (29 answers), and the creation of a proper sport environment, transferring **sport and cooperative values** (26 cases), favouring rules and self-respect (Fig. 6).

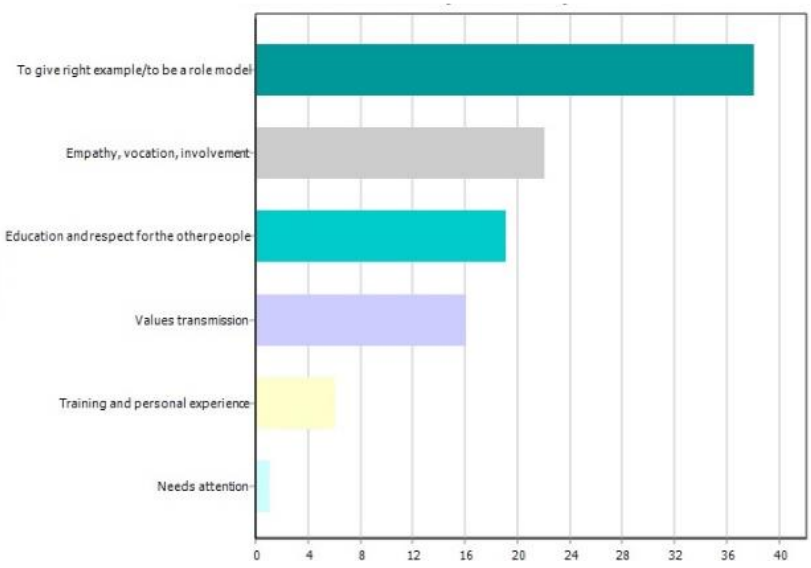
Figure 6 - The main challenges identified by the respondents as a youth coach



Source: STAR Project, elaborated by LINKS throuah QDA Miner 4 Lite

Figure 7 shows the distribution of motivations given by respondents on their role model for youngsters. 38 coaches are aware about the role on giving the "**right example**", especially considering their function of conveying behavioural aspects, self-perceived as "correct". However, 25 respondents recognise their role on youngsters in transferring **education** and **respect** for other people and **values transmission**, so showing a more complete recognition of their role on youngsters (Fig. 7).

Figure 7 - Why the respondents consider themselves as a role model



Source: STAR Project, elaborated by LINKS through QDA Miner 4 Lite

RECOMMENDATIONS

According to the evidence shown in Table 4, data analysis notice at least three main points on which syllabus may refer to. Firstly, socio-cultural definitions used by coaches to approach aggression episodes must be considered as crucial in identifying properly situations and intrinsic dynamics. In practical terms, training programme may include some focus on discrimination dynamics as well as social frailty in order to increase coaches' capability to understand aggression episodes and then activating more adequate mitigation measures.

Furthermore, valuing the experiences acquired by coaches in training programs has a positive and useful impact on avoiding such episodes of violence among young people. In fact, the perceived importance of professional experience notices a negative correlation with the exposure to aggression episodes, and this component may impact considerably on self-efficacy and self-confidence in addressing violent behaviours within youngsters. For this reason, T1.3 may consider including several moments where coaches and sport operators are invited to share their experiences and cumulate professional know-how.

Regarding to the second part of the need analysis, it is important to underline the importance of professional education and cooperation with other actors than the sport ones to be able to reduce behaviours at risk of radicalisation. Respondents recognise the importance of cooperating in particular with schools and psychologists, and secondly with families and educators. The experience and professional updates together with complementary competences for coaches are all recognised as precious tools to better dealing with youngers and their expectations. On the other hand, coaches often play as a role model for them, inasmuch as able to transmit cooperation and inclusion values and passion towards sports.

Table 5 – Recommendations summary

AWARENESS & SOCIO-CULTURAL BACKGROUND:

- **Possible cultural biases**: importance of have proper **socio-cultural definitions** and **categories** for defining violence and at-risk behaviours among youngsters;
- **Discrimination**: importance to know what discrimination is, which are social and individual mechanisms that lead to discriminatory episodes, as prodromes of radicalisation.

TYPE OF TRAINING:

- **Peer-to-peer learning**: training programme may include specific insights but also shared professional experiences, encouraging peer-to-peer learning.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:

- Creation of **cooperative** & **multi-actor sports communities**: recognition of roles played by other actors in supporting violence and radicalisation prevention within youngsters, such as school, psychologists, educators and families.

SPORT ENVIRONMENT AND ROLE OF COACH:

- **Coaches' empowerment in relating** themselves with youngsters, creating a supportive, cooperative environment;
- **Sports values transmission**: recognition of their role beyond of favouring simply sports performances.

Source: STAR Project, elaborated by LINKS

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