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D 3.1 REPORT

Work Package 3: [HEPA CAMP - European largest international sports camp with daily trainings in innovative forms of traditional sports in Brežice]

420 participants involved in: 1. self-rescue course; 2. strength, endurance and body control outdoor escape game; 3. stand up paddling and river surfing; 4. “smart” warm up; 5. innovative forms of handball; 6. innovative forms of climbing.

T3.1	Innovative swimming trainings with elements of self-rescuing (Indoor and outdoor water program of Self-rescuing)
T3.2	Strength, endurance and body control outdoor “escape” game
T3.3	Stand up paddling and river surfing: Full-body water workout
T3.4	“Smart” warm up as a prevention from sport injuries
T3.5	Innovative forms of handball: Street handball and Beach handball
T3.6	Innovative forms of climbing: mobile climbing wall in each village

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During summer 2023 and spring 2024 we organized one of the European largest international sports camp = HEPA CAMP, where 334 youth from 8 states were included in various innovative sports.

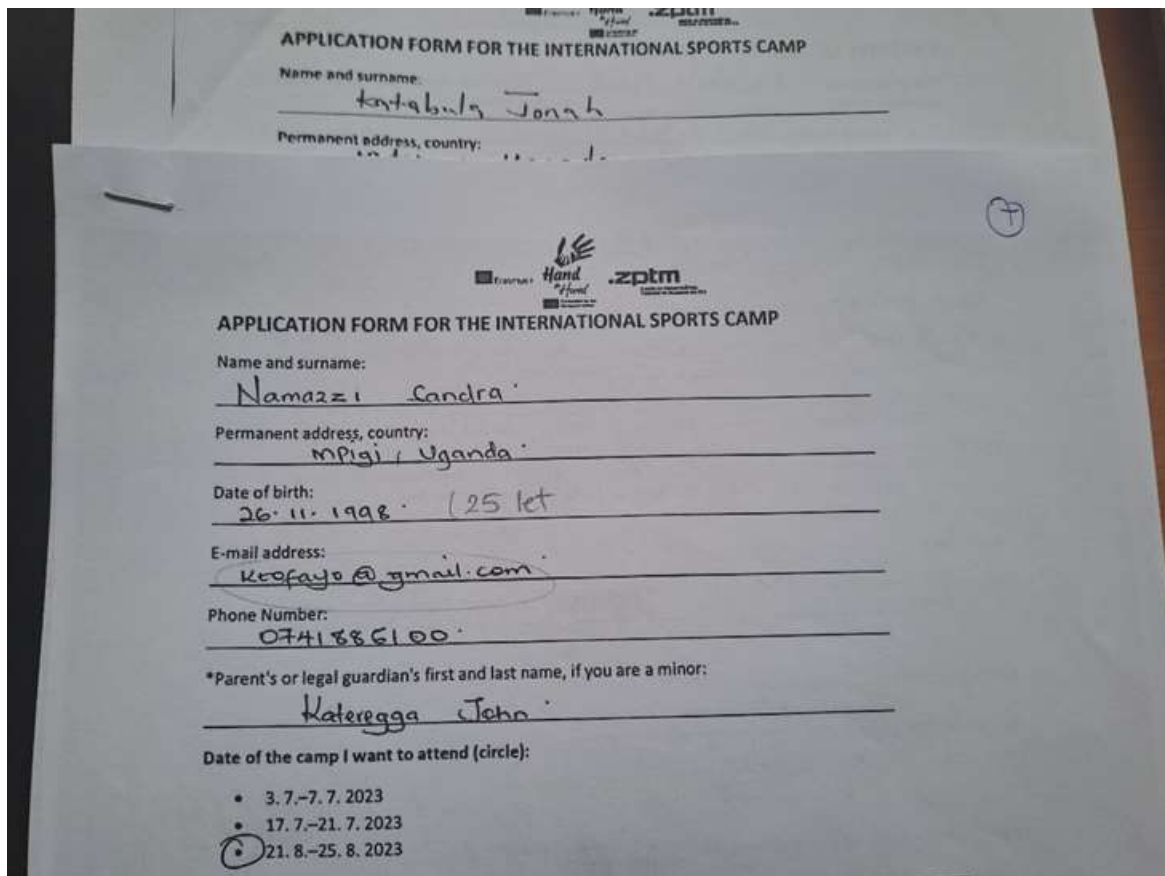
Participants of HEPA CAMP were from 8 states: Hungary, Croatia, Czech Republic, Slovenia, France, Germany, Spain and Turkey.

The turnout was worse than we expected and planned. Despite the full number of applications (we had around 500 applications in total), there were many cancellations at the last minute, which severely reduced our time to acquire new participants. Youth and sports organizations as well as individuals cancelled. Despite the fact that the activities of the Erasmus+ programs are free, which we definitely support, we suggest that in the future a symbolic, minimal participation fee would be charged, especially from organizations. In our case great interest was shown from both organizations and individuals, but the step between interest and actual participation was missing, which means that the motivational model that were prepared as part of the project will be useful.

However, the biggest dropout was at the camps in August, when we had quite many applications from Slovenia. In one camp, the dropout rate was 75% in the five days

before the first day of camp. Unfortunately, Slovenia was completely affected by severe floods and so only a few applicants came. Many of the applicants did not have access to electricity for a long time, so we did not know until the last minute what the participation would be like. Nevertheless, we held the camp, young people from medium-affected areas also came, but in low numbers. Even later, there were cancellations, as many were forced to stay at home due to the severe destruction of houses and other personal property. We also experienced a large number of refusals to participate from applicants from Uganda and third countries, as the vast majority were refused visas.

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APPLICATION FORM FOR THE INTERNATIONAL SPORTS CAMP

Name and surname: Kantabuly Jonah

Permanent address, country: ...

APPLICATION FORM FOR THE INTERNATIONAL SPORTS CAMP

Name and surname: Namazzi Sandra

Permanent address, country: MPigi / Uganda

Date of birth: 26.11.1998 (25 let)

E-mail address: keofayo@gmail.com

Phone Number: 0741886100

*Parent's or legal guardian's first and last name, if you are a minor: Kateregga John

Date of the camp I want to attend (circle):

- 3.7.-7.7.2023
- 17.7.-21.7.2023
- 21.8.-25.8.2023

Overall as already written in Mentor's report, it was most effective when we invited youth to the camps personally or when there was someone in the participants' environment who acted as an "informant", a multiplier. Therefore, despite the fact that we had a big dropout rate, as written above, we have reached a number of 356 individuals, who were either actively involved as attendees in all HEPA CAMP activities or were participants in promotion events, information events or were involved with the activities of individual activities carried out by individual partners of the project.

For 2024, the HEPA CAMP project saw a significant shift in participation, with applications mostly from regional youth, and as a result we were not faced with cancellations to the extent of the previous year. Despite the global interest and diversity of applicants from different countries, the inclusion of local and regional youth



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proved to have many advantages that are crucial for the success and sustainability of the project.

Why the involvement of local and regional youth is important?

- Local participants reduce the need for long travel arrangements and logistical complexity, leading to lower costs and less likelihood of cancellations due to logistical complications.
- Local youth have fewer barriers to participation (such as visa requirements, high travel costs or cultural differences), increasing the likelihood that they will actually participate and reducing the dropout rate.
- By focusing on local youth, the project better contributes to the sustainable development of the community, as the skills, knowledge and experience gained at the camps are directly transferred back to the local environment.
- Programs such as HEPA CAMP enable local youth to develop their athletic and social skills in a supportive, familiar environment, encouraging their long-term engagement in sport and community.
- Involving local youth strengthens a sense of belonging and community identity. This not only increases social cohesion, but also encourages young people to remain active members of their communities.

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In 2024, we offered weekly HEPA CAMP experiences to regional high schools. They decided to involve entire generations of students in innovative sports challenges, so they decided to participate daily.

For these reasons, 2024 was more successful for the HEPA CAMP project in terms of participation and reduced cancellations. We suggest that these findings be taken into account when planning future iterations of the project, with an emphasis on even greater involvement of regional youth, which could lead to more stable and sustained participation.

We are pleased and proud of our achievements with the HEPA CAMP project, where we gathered 334 participants, reaching an 80% success rate. In addition, 319 participants took part in HEPA promotional events, information and individual activities of local sports partners, from several countries: Slovenia, Egypt, Serbia and Poland. We are confident that we will achieve our target of 420 participants through the sustainability of the project, particularly with the planned "Summer of Opportunities" camp. This summer, in collaboration with the Brežice Health Centre, we will launch this camp, set to take place from August 5 to August 9, 2024, at the MC Hostel. This initiative is aimed at young people aged 15 to 17.

This activity with refundable fee will offer a comprehensive program at the MC Hostel in Brežice, accommodating participants in six-bed rooms. Scheduled from Monday to Friday, starting each day at 8:00 am, the "Summer of Opportunities" camp will feature a variety of group, sports, and educational activities all focused on health promotion, including awareness of healthy eating and other health-promoting practices. Employees of the Institute for Entrepreneurship, Tourism and Youth Brežice and the



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Brežice Health Strengthening Centre will conduct the program, with coordination and support provided by youth workers from MC Brežice. Furthermore, pediatricians and personal physicians will refer participants to the camp, ensuring further health support and safety for all attendees. Through these efforts, we aim to solidify the project's sustainability and reach our participant target.

This outcome is a direct result of the project, as with the help of a motivational model for youth sports engagement, best practices from Finland, and based on the executed project activities and intermediate results, we have come to propose that the Brežice Health Centre take on a key role in the enhancement and development of preventive programs. This approach will be implemented as part of the "Summer of Opportunities", which will offer young participants a multitude of activities aimed at promoting a healthy lifestyle, improving physical fitness, and developing personal competencies through sports and educational workshops. The invaluable contribution of pediatricians and personal physicians who refer youth to us will be crucial.

This comprehensive approach will enable the Brežice Health Centre to actively contribute to the health and well-being of young people in the local community, strengthen their skills for healthy living, and encourage their long-term involvement in preventive health programs. We have concluded that this is the most important enduring result of the project.

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Usually, we started the camp with the participants with group get-to-know activities, including Walk and talk, which is aimed at getting to know each other more deeply. The groups connected at different speeds, the last group did it significantly later than the others. We continued with questionnaires intended for project research, which we also repeated on the last day of the camp. During the sports activities that we carried out in accordance with the project plan, a mentor Anja accompanied them. Some groups needed her monitoring less, others more, to which she adapted during the camps. Participants from correctional institutions and those with behavioral problems needed more support, while the group with many athletes and musicians needed the least amount of support.

Sporting activities were also accompanied by various supporting activities, which we adjusted according to what was happening in the city of Brežice. A mentor Anja played the Mission Impossible game twice with each group, at the beginning and at the end of the week. Participants had to perform as many different interactive tasks as possible in the shortest possible time or in the time that the contractor makes available to them. The groups responded differently, but their success was much better after they participated in sports activities that required more teamwork. Among other things, we attended a concert and other events in the town of Brežice, and on the last evening we also took them on a tour of the town of Brežice. They had that evening off, and it went differently for different groups.

We also carried out an evaluation of the camps. The participants most appreciated that the sports activities were performed by professional athletes. The participants



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asked them questions during and after the activity (they were warmly invited to do so) and thus gained additional knowledge. Rowing was the activity they rated best, while handball was rated the worst. They did not give a reason for this, except for the participants who played beach handball - they said that they did not fully understand the rules, especially those that are different from indoor handball. Nevertheless, they enjoyed the activity and it bonded them a lot.

They highlighted the excessive use of the Slovenian language as a major weakness of the camp. In the camps, where there was a large gap between the number of participants from abroad and from Slovenia, the participants testified that the use of the Slovenian language was greater and that the participants from abroad felt excluded and confused at times. Otherwise, we had the rule "Bora, Bora", i.e., a safe word that we use when other participants or trainers forget to speak in English, but unfortunately the participants did not use the safe word even once.

Regarding the program, accommodation, food and support, they were satisfied and grateful to have attended the camp. In the evaluation, they pointed out that all the sports activities were interesting and innovative, and that they experienced a wonderful week that will remain in their memory.

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In 2024, regional participants opted for day-only activities without overnight stays, a shift that led to less emphasis on youth work, yet without diminishing the level of sporting engagement. This adjustment proved beneficial in several ways. By focusing on day activities, we maximized the use of local facilities and resources, which not only streamlined logistical arrangements but also allowed participants to maintain their daily routines. This flexibility likely enhanced participation from local attendees who might have been unable to commit to overnight stays due to personal obligations or preferences.

Moreover, this format allowed us to concentrate our efforts on enriching the sporting experience, ensuring that each session was packed with high-energy, inclusive activities that catered to the diverse interests and abilities of our participants. The absence of overnight accommodations did not detract from the sportsmanship or the intensity of the activities. Instead, it provided a focused and dynamic environment where participants could engage fully with the sports and return home refreshed each day, possibly leading to increased daily energy and enthusiasm.

Overall, the adaptation to day activities in 2024 underscored our ability to remain flexible and responsive to the needs of our participants, ensuring that the camp remained a vibrant and accessible platform for promoting sports and teamwork among the youth of the region. This approach not only maintained the spirit of the camp but also reinforced our commitment to inclusivity and adaptability, key elements that contribute to the lasting impact and success of our initiatives.

T3.1 Innovative swimming trainings with elements of self-rescuing (Indoor and outdoor water program of Self-rescuing)

Our method proved to be the right approach, since the young people had no knowledge in this area and all the techniques were completely new to them, so they were willing to know how to act in situations that can help save their lives. Young people are the most appropriate because we can still train them for a life and they can be good teachers when they are becoming parents. With our program of implementing swimming self-rescuing trainings, we developed the right way to prevent possible injuries, accidents and deaths. With new elements of swimming trainings and self-rescue techniques we want them to see how they will act in open water and if they will try to use some of techniques in Games without borders.

There were a little more practical hours than planned. Because we were practicing in swimming pool and we want that all young people also know how to act if they find themselves in open water. Because of that reason we repeated the program in 2023 one more time in the river, except that they no longer learned techniques. So, we really took a step in the right direction here.

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The work method was as follows:

First, in a theoretical approach, we explained the participants what we will learn. We explained to them all swimming techniques, new ways of swimming training and the importance of safe swimming. In addition, we presented them with individual elements on examples, when to use it and in which situations to use individual techniques.

After that we explained to them the importance of self-rescuing in water. Mostly in open water, because there is very important to know all the elements, because there we can't rely on lifeguards, like in swimming pools, because there aren't any.

After all the theoretical part was done, we moved into the water.

We first tested each individual's swimming skills separately. Despite the fact that everyone was given a questionnaire before the start, where they had to declare whether they are swimmers or not, we checked them individually in the water, so that we had information about their knowledge. With this, we determined the levels and classified them into groups based on prior knowledge.



At this point coaches showed them each exercises separately. Then we trained and performed each exercise until the overall exercise was won and after that we moved on to the next exercise.

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All the time, we encouraged the participants to ask questions developing together what they were least successful at or what they were afraid of.

We have learned them six self-rescue techniques that they can use in different situations. In particular, we trained them to react in the event of falling into the water, fatigue while swimming, if they get a cramp while swimming, to swim with a backpack or need to carry something to dry land, and simply to swim on their back if they get tired or want to swim longer distances. We also taught them the correct water polo kicking technique for all kinds of assistance and survival on the surface of the water. But for doing it all that we trained them with innovative swimming trainings where we were teaching them through fun and various different practices, because otherwise swimming can be really monotonous.

The exercises were divided into two parts, where after the end of each part the participants were given one hour of free swimming. Here, it was interesting to observe that even during this time they were still repeating the exercises.

IMPRESSIONS

Participants

Participants did not know any of the techniques that were presented to them and they also learned them through the program. They were doing it and learned with great interest and enthusiasm. They were especially interested in the fact that each of us has their own buoyancy, which can often be crucial in individual situations. Three

participants had zero buoyancy, which means that they have to make a special effort to keep their bodies above water. Only one participant had buoyancy of 5 as the maximum.



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Ours:

We managed to realize a whole program. Due to weather conditions, the camp was mostly held in the swimming pool. The participants were no less disadvantaged because of this. With this, we upgraded the project as such, so that they learned in a safer environment and also tried how it works doing self-rescue techniques in the river.

For fun and a reward, we organized for them Games without limits, with blindfolded swimming and leading another person, a thermal formula-toboggan race and group water games, as well as carrying loads on water.

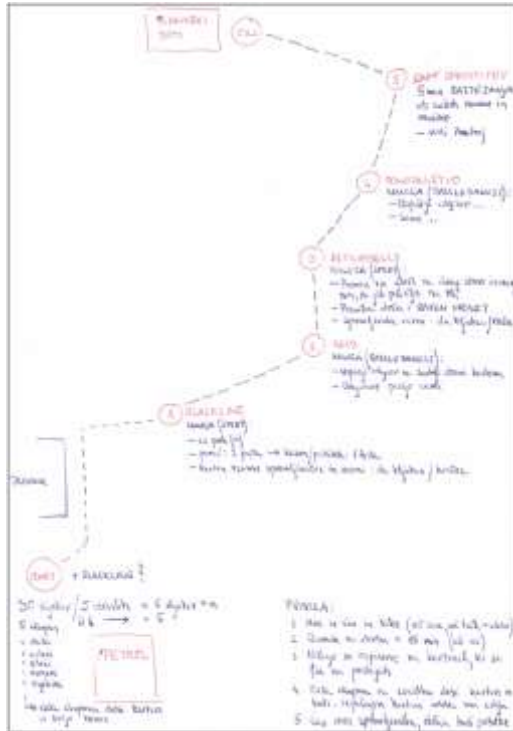
All participants took home vital knowledge and learned new swimming and self-rescue techniques so that they will be able to independently carry out swimming training in the pool and outdoors. We managed to realize a whole program. Due to weather conditions, the camp was mostly held in the swimming pool.



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P.S.: Among all the participants there was one candidate who could not swim at the beginning. She managed to learn to swim in one day and even mastered two self-rescue techniques. She was so grateful. We consider this a very big success, especially if we take into account the fact that drowning is the second leading cause of death among young people. If we have helped to save one more life, our task has been successfully completed. Of course, we will try to provide knowledge even after the end of the project as part of our activities.

T3.2 Strength, endurance and body control outdoor “escape” game



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Physical challenges:

Such as hiking, balance and endurance, which test the physical fitness of the participants.

Puzzles and Brain Teasers:

The mysteries that must be solved to progress through the game encourage teamwork and logical thinking.

Interaction with nature:

The game is set on the hill of Sv. Vid, which allows participants to enjoy nature and learn something about the local environment.

Limited time:

Each group has a limited time to complete the game, which adds an element of competition and urgency.

The game is designed to encourage physical activity, thinking and learning in a fun and dynamic way. It is intended for all age groups and fitness levels, as the challenges can be adjusted according to the group. The goal is for participants not only to enjoy the game, but also to develop their skills and learn the value of teamwork and physical activity in nature.

The "Outdoor Escape Adventure on St. Vid" was an innovative escape game designed to integrate physical and mental challenges, held at the park at MC Brežice and on St. Vid hill. The game was meticulously developed, starting with a thorough mapping of the terrain to ensure that the natural features were used to enhance the game's physical challenges, such as hiking, balance, and endurance tests. These challenges were strategically interwoven with puzzles and brain teasers that required critical thinking and teamwork to solve, promoting both physical fitness and mental agility among participants.





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A series of strength, endurance, and body control exercises were also developed and tailored specifically to fit the rugged terrain of the park and hill, adding an extra layer of engagement through the physical activities.

The game plot involved each group receiving a map and a list of tasks to complete within a limited time frame, adding a sense of urgency and competition to the event. This dynamic setup was tested with a select group before being opened to other interested participants. The diverse group dynamics added a rich layer of interaction as participants from various backgrounds and fitness levels came together to tackle the challenges.

The combination of physical activities set in the natural environment of St. Vid Hill, along with engaging mental puzzles, provided a comprehensive experience that was highly appreciated by the participants.

Feedback from participants highlighted their enjoyment of the game, appreciating how it encouraged physical activity and strategic thinking in a fun and collaborative environment. The game offered an enjoyable day out in nature but also helped participants develop valuable skills such as teamwork and problem-solving in real-time. The success of this event underscores the effectiveness of combining exercise with interactive gameplay, and plans are underway to further refine the game by

incorporating more local cultural and historical elements to enrich the educational aspects for future iterations.



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T3.3 Stand up paddling and river surfing: Full-body water workout

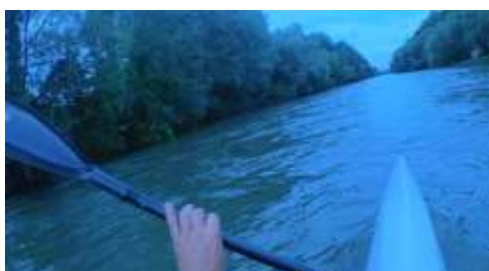
Stand up paddling and inland river surfing are already attractive sports.

First, we would like to thank all the participants, colleagues and partners who contributed to the successful implementation of the development project of an integrated water training program that combines elements of stand-up paddleboarding (SUP) and river surfing, including paddling along the Krka riverbed and paddling in a mobile simulation pool at events, but always in a carefully pre-selected, controlled aquatic environment. The project activities were carried out in accordance with the planned time frame and brought exceptional results and positive experiences for all involved, both the participants of the activity, the test group and the trainers, who thereby gained a lot of experience in working with young people, who are a specific group for engaging in these sports activities.

Description of the activity

During the implementation of the project activities, we focused on the development and implementation of an integrated water training program that combines elements of stand-up paddling (SUP) and river surfing, as well as river paddling in general. As the current water level of domestic flowing waters allows us to more easily implement the methods on larger groups in larger canoes, we focused our activities also in big canoes in the river Krka. Our goal was to create a training program that allows participants to improve their basic fitness and conditioning while learning the techniques of paddling and stand-up paddling. The program included the following key components:

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Selection and assessment of the river Krka sections that are suitable for guided exercise and review of already existing exercise techniques and programs of paddling. First, we carefully researched various river Krka sections and selected those that are suitable for carrying out training activities. We consider factors such as water flow, depth, safety, accessibility and local regulations. The construction of a new bridge in the village of Boršt was unforeseen, but we were still able to carry out the exercises after prior agreement with the contractors, on the planned routes, mostly on the route Cerklje ob Krki - Velike Malence, which is the most suitable route for such activities on

the water. We inspected the riverbed temporarily and recorded part of the route with a 360-degree camera, for an easier analysis of the river area. Due to the floods that hit Brežice in August 2023, we had to adjust part of the activity, as the high flows of the Krka River were not completely safe for standing rowing, but we rowed in safer, large canoes.

We conducted a thorough review of the existing fitness programs for rowing and surfing. This allowed us to gain insight into effective training techniques, injury prevention and the structure of training routines, which we were able to include in our program by reviewing the already existing ones, and we also explored parts that have not yet been developed and which we dealt with more deeply as part of the activities engaged in, in order to result in the development of new training techniques and programs.

Activities for participants before their first entry into the water as prevention and reducing the possibility of danger when engaging in flowing riverbeds.



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We first checked all participants' knowledge of swimming, which is a prerequisite for participating in water sports. Then we inspected the corresponding protective equipment for carrying out the activity (lifejackets, swimming rings for paddles, rescue equipment), got acquainted with different types of paddles (paddle for stand-up paddling, river surfing, canoe and kayak paddle), familiarized participants with the characteristics of the water in our regions and with life by the Krka river. We also gave the participants basic information about the implementation of sports activities on the water.

Warm-up, stretching and cardio



Dynamic exercises to prepare the muscles for exercise and prevent possible injuries when performing sports activities on the water. We mainly focused on warming up the more stressed muscle groups during paddling. We also performed static exercises on the river bank to improve the flexibility of muscles and joints and increased the intensity of the exercise with cardio exercises to improve the cardiovascular system and endurance. During the training itself, we developed new exercises and training routines, which we will implement in our work in the future. We tested the program on a test group of participants. We collected feedback on effectiveness, safety and level of enjoyment during exercise. We used this feedback to make the necessary adjustments and improvements to the exercises and the overall structure of the program.

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Breathing techniques, muscle strengthening exercises, endurance exercises, stability exercises.

Learning correct breathing techniques for better performance during exercise and exercises to strengthen the muscular system, especially the muscles of the trunk, arms, legs and shoulders and exercises to improve muscle endurance during prolonged exertion. Since stability is essential for participation in river sports, we paid a lot of attention to this as well. We found that young people have problems with stability exercises, so the set of exercises was extremely important to us, as we adapted and improved the exercises after testing them with groups.



Summer Exercises

When the program was tested, we organized regular practices throughout the summer season. The exercises were adapted to different levels of physical fitness and allowed the participants continuous training and socializing.



Big summer events in the city as a showcase of summer water exercise
We held several summer events where we presented various paddling techniques. The presentation was made with paddling simulators and a mobile pool in which visitors could try paddling in the middle of the old city centre. It is an extremely interesting and attractive activity that has attracted a lot of interest among visitors.

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More than 600 people tried these activities during summer events.

Methods of work

We used a combination of individual and group work in the training sessions. The training program was structured in a way that each training included everything from the activities listed above.

Our trainers are experts in the field of paddling and they provided precise, expertly given instructions and demonstrations of the exercises and watched over the correct execution of the participants. We also used video analytics to show participants their progress and advise them on improvements. We have innovated new sport practices by creating exercises tailored to the unique requirements of our program. These exercises focused on improving stability, agility and strength specific to the river environment.

Impressions of the participants and our own observations during the implementation of the activity



The participants were enthusiastic about the concept of a holistic training program that combined physical fitness and a practical test of paddling in different ways. Some participants already had experience with stand-up board and canoes, while others experienced it for the first time. All expressed satisfaction with how the program combined fun and challenge and improved their fitness. They say that they overcame their various fears of water sports and were surprised at themselves that they enjoyed rowing so much, while doing a lot of good for their health.

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Participants saw improvements in their balance, strength, endurance and river paddling techniques. Some pointed out that the breathing techniques significantly

improved their performance on the water. Some also highlighted how they relaxed and connected with nature and water during exercise.

We are extremely proud of the achieved results. The received feedback from the participants confirmed that we have successfully combined professional knowledge with a passion for water sports and exercise. The program created a positive community experience that brought diverse individuals together in a common goal orientation.



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Our Conclusions: The implementation of this activities brought positive results and experiences for all participants. The training program successfully combined fitness with stand-up paddling and river surfing, creating an engaging, fun and effective experience for all who took part. The project laid the foundation for possible further expansion and improvement of the program. Our conclusion is also that young people still do not do enough water sports with paddles. However, with a little innovative approach, interest in these sports has grown significantly.



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T3.4 “Smart” warm up as a prevention from sport injuries



Smart warm-up is a method of preparing the body for physical activity or exercise with a focus on increased effectiveness, safety, and workout performance. The purpose of a smart warm-up is to prepare the muscles, joints, cardiovascular system, and the entire body for the movements that will be followed by more intense exercise. Rather than simply warming up without a plan, smart warm-up involves specific steps that ensure optimal body preparation. Key features of a smart warm-up include: Progression, Dynamic Exercises, Activation Exercises, Functional Movements, Maintaining Breath, Adaptation to Workout Plan. Smart warm-up not only reduces the risk of injuries and improves workout effectiveness but also enhances your physical readiness and enables better performance during the workout.



Training methods of smart warm up

Here are some methods of smart warm-up which was included in our training.

General Warm-Up: It started with light cardiovascular warm-up, such as walking or jogging in place. This increased the heart rate, blood circulation, and body temperature, preparing the muscles for further movement.



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Dynamic Stretching Exercises: Instead of static stretching, where you held a stretched position, dynamic stretching exercises were used. These were movements that mimicked the motions you'd perform during the workout. For instance, high knees, arm circles, and jumping jacks. This helped improve the range of motion and awakened muscle groups.

Activation Exercises: Exercises that targeted specific muscle groups you'd be using during the workout were included. This helped activate those muscles and established a stronger connection between the mind and muscles. For example, if you were doing squats, activation exercises for the quadriceps could be included.

Functional Movements: Movements that simulated actions you'd perform during the workout were incorporated. If you were preparing for weightlifting, functional movements that mimicked those actions without additional load were included.



Advanced Warm-Up: For experienced athletes and enthusiasts, more specific warm-up elements, such as high-intensity interval training (HIIT) techniques or technical drills, could also be included.

Didn't Forget About Breathing: During the warm-up, the focus was also on breathing. Deep breathing helped increase oxygen flow to the muscles and enhanced physical readiness.

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Adjusted According to Training Day: Warm-up methods were adjusted based on the type of workout planned for the day. For example, for strength training, the focus could be on warming up the muscles that would be most engaged during weightlifting.

Impressions of participants and own impressions

The camp introduced participants to a range of dynamic and tailored warm-up methods that not only prepared them physically but also mentally for their subsequent activities. The camp's emphasis on gradual progression ensured that everyone could adapt at their own pace, promoting a sense of accomplishment. One of the highlights was the introduction of different warm-up routines, each targeting specific muscle groups and movement patterns. Participants found these routines engaging and effective in enhancing their overall physical readiness. The variety of exercises kept the experience engaging and motivating throughout. The integration of functional movements, mobility exercises, and breathing techniques within the warm-up routines left a lasting impact on the participants. Many expressed how these methods helped them feel more connected to their bodies and better equipped for the subsequent training sessions.

HEPA camp provided a unique and valuable experience for the participants. The trainers' expertise and interactive approach contributed significantly to the participants' positive feedback. Overall, the camp achieved its goal of not only improving participants' physical preparation but also fostering a sense of camaraderie and



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enthusiasm among all those who took part. In addition, all the coaches were enthusiastic about the camp, as the participants' response was exceptional. Overall, the HEPA camp exceeded expectations and contributed to an incredibly positive experience for everyone involved.



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T3.5 Innovative forms of handball: Street handball and Beach handball

Participants were introduced to innovative forms of handball that are more suitable for beginners and offer a more enjoyable experience compared to traditional handball. During the HEPA camps, we presented three distinct types of innovative handball formats: beach handball, street handball and handball fitness.

Street Handball: The primary aim of street handball is to encourage people to engage in handball as a recreational activity during their leisure time. It can be played outdoors virtually anywhere, from street pitches to basketball courts and empty parking lots. This game can be played with one goal or two, and it always adheres to fair play rules. Physical contact and dribbling are not allowed. The emphasis is on simplicity, employing minimal rules to ensure that individuals with no prior handball experience can easily join. Anyone can assume the role of a goalkeeper, and goalkeepers also participate in the offensive, providing attackers with numerical advantage. Using a soft ball is preferable for optimal gameplay.



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Beach Handball: Similar to street handball, beach handball varies primarily in its playing surface and the set of playing rules, which can be adjusted for recreational play. Beach handball is an official competitive format recognized by the International Handball Federation (IHF). The sport's popularity has rapidly grown, and Beach Handball is now enjoyed across the globe. In the upcoming year, Beach Handball is set to be featured as a demonstration sport in the 2024 Paris Olympic Games.



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Handball Fitness: Our concept revolves around making handball training accessible to everyone, focusing exclusively on basic drills without requiring advanced tactical or technical knowledge.

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Many individuals seek recreational activities for various reasons, such as improving well-being, weight loss or gaining lean muscle mass. Therefore, we propose a "handball" training regimen encompassing proprioceptive exercises, resistance training, exercises involving a weighted handball, sprinting, coordination and agility drills, and a variety of small-space games. This comprehensive approach caters to diverse fitness goals.

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Training methods of innovative forms of handball

First of all, we engaged in discussions with the participants regarding handball, inquiring whether anyone had prior experience playing or coaching it. Subsequently, we introduced the rules of handball to the HEPA participants, providing an explanation



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of the gameplay. Prior to practicing each innovative variant, we presented them individually. Accredited and licensed trainers actively participated in the exercises, effectively engaging the participants through compelling methods. For each innovative handball format, a distinct court with a specific surface was employed. Beach handball unfolded on a sandy terrain, street handball took place in the heart of the town, during the prominent event in Brežice. Moreover, the concept of handball fitness materialized in a natural setting, encompassing a hike to the Brežice viewpoint, where a variety of strength exercises were undertaken.

Impressions of participants and own impressions

All attendees of the HEPA camps, along with the presentation at the prominent Brežice event, which showcased novel variations of handball, were highly impressed. A number of participants engaged in handball for the first time in any form, and under the guidance of our coaches, they swiftly acquired the skills. The aspect that garnered the greatest enthusiasm was beach handball, which held a unique allure for them, particularly as it was their inaugural experience with the sport. Every coach who took part in the camps and the presentation expressed contentment with the attendees and their advancement across all the different forms of the handball game.



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T3.6 Innovative forms of climbing: mobile climbing wall in each village

Bouldering (boulder = large stone) is a form of free climbing performed on big stone formations or artificial walls in which we do not need protection with a rope, climbing harness, or belay devices. It is a great idea and a special challenge as well to bring bouldering as an outdoor activity to the urban city centres, to city parks or even to the rural areas, to remote villages on the countryside, without the need of disassembling and reassembly of complex boulder walls/reliefs, such as have grown in many urban centres in the last 10-15 years. Our movable boulder wall follows the norms of easy bouldering problems, with a peak height of about three meters. A pillow system under the wall (a system of crash pads) ensures a safe landing or fall. A desire to imitate this wonderful sport that requires only climbing shoes, a bag of chalk and a crash pad, inspired us with the idea of building a movable wall and create boulder problems and routes for a simple climbing practice anywhere and anytime. Bouldering can be a great sport for anyone, regardless of physical capabilities. Anyone can find and try climbing boulders that will suit them regardless of body constitution, physical fitness, age and other factors. On our movable wall the route setting is done in a manner where easy difficulties indicate where to start and advanced difficulties represent a challenge showing that there is always room for progress.

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Construction of a mobile boulder wall

To implement HEPA CAMPS, we first had to make a mobile boulder wall. The construction consisted of phases: construction methodology - design, construction Phase 1 - production of sketches and plans, obtaining certificates of conformity, construction Phase 2 - recalculation of dimensions, optimization, layout, construction of the wall - skeleton of the structure, fixing the skeleton to the structure, construction climbing surfaces, finishing works in the construction, equipping the bluff wall.





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The progress is also one of the main challenges we faced during implementation of the activity and the answer how to bring bouldering closer to the young people. They need to be challenged in such a way that they will not give up and take the time to climb the boulder. Each boulder (or a climbing route) consists of climbing holds of the same colour, has a marked beginning and top, and the holds follow each other in a meaningful sequence, that needs to be unraveled. The complexity of the sequence determines the difficulty of the boulder. On our climbing wall problems are connected to each other by meaningful transitions and flow into each other to form a climbing route we called a boulder course, leading from the beginning of the first boulder on



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one side of the wall, around the wall and ends with the top hold of the last boulder on the other side of the wall. Climbers can freely choose the sequence of holds of different colours, change combinations of movements, using techniques to save strength and endurance as effectively as possible. The boulder is successfully climbed with a stable posture at the top. Attempt to climb to the top usually ends with a triumphant jump on the soft pillows underneath. For training balance and stability, we combined the activity of bouldering with another related activity – a slacklining. Both activities encourage coordination, motor skills, and the desire to successfully solve a challenge through fun, simplicity, and perhaps most importantly, spending time outside.

Work methods in bouldering training

As expected, most of the participants met the boulder wall for the first time, if not the first time, none of them were regular visitors to bouldering centres, or even climbers of natural boulders. That's why our goal was to set up training in such a way that the participants first of all would have fun, would feel safe and feel the activity as relaxation and socializing. The challenge is to frame the exercise in a non-complex way to preserve the narrative of climbing as a joy, but still maintaining a moderate level of difficulty. It is a challenge for us not to leave the participants indifferent after the exercise, but to make them they set themselves a serious goal. With thoughtful placement of boulders and routes, climbing involves the usage of all muscles, with an emphasis on upper body and finger strength. Fingers are a particularly specific part of the body, which is the most exposed during climbing and therefore a rigid set of tendons and ligaments for beginners. In order to eliminate the lack of this element, we used larger holds of a friendlier and lighter shapes and added more footholds. During climbing, we adjusted the locations and size of the footholds, based on the suggestions of the participants and on our own experience, with the aim of achieving the most fluid climbing possible. The goal of exercise is not only a display of physical abilities, but also a psychological state, in the sense of creating the seeds of connection brain-body, where the climbers are asked to find the easiest and most logical solution at the moment of decision before making the next move. They need to find the way to the top of the boulder and realize it. The course of the exercise was planned in such a way that all participants first tested the easiest boulder course (one colour) and optionally using footholds of all colours. This was followed by climbing boulder courses of various difficulties using only one colour and climbing boulders until the desired (total) fatigue. We represented climbing as a social sport where people encourage each other, help each other with advices and share the joy after a successfully climbed challenge. Music was played in the background during the whole activity.



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Impressions of participants and own impressions

Despite the trend and rapid development (especially on artificial walls) in the last 20 years, climbing is still fairly marginal sport. As expected, the participants were enthusiastic, of course some more than others, but there were interesting debates with the most heated ones about what to do or how to perform the movement in some sequence of grips holds. They liked the fact that the boulder itself led them to advanced thinking, some even so far that they were only satisfied when they managed to climb it. Most participants also tried climbing shoes and magnesium, so this aspect was also interesting. They liked the relaxed atmosphere, the discussions about world famous climbers, chatting between resting and finally enjoying the activity in the park in the shade on a nice summer day.

Trainers:

- It was interesting to adjust the location of footholds according to the beginner's technique.
- We were happy to give interesting advices during climbing and observing their implementation.
- Demanding performance of the exercise (route setting) due to the inequality of the participants in terms of abilities.
- The expected drop in concentration due to the specifics of the sport and consequent fatigue.

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- A physically demanding sport requires hardened skin, which is why some quit early because of blisters.
- Wonderful ambience and scene (outdoor, afternoon, music, ...).



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In the event of adverse weather conditions and on days when there was a high turnout of day participants, we also conducted the activity on the large climbing wall located in the Večnamenska športna dvorana Brežice (the multi-purpose sports hall in Brežice). This alternate venue offered several advantages. Firstly, the indoor environment provided a controlled setting that was unaffected by weather, ensuring that the climbing activities could continue without interruption. This consistency was crucial for maintaining participant engagement and allowed for a smoother progression in the training schedules.

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Moreover, the large wall at Večnamenska športna dvorana Brežice offered more extensive climbing routes and varied difficulty levels, which enabled all participants to test and challenge themselves regardless of their skill level. This variety enriched their experience, offering them a broader scope of climbing challenges and techniques to learn. Additionally, the spacious setup at the sports hall accommodated more climbers at once, facilitating a more communal and interactive climbing environment. This was particularly beneficial for fostering social interactions and camaraderie among participants, which are essential aspects of the climbing culture.

Furthermore, the presence of more advanced climbing facilities allowed participants to experience aspects of climbing that are closer to professional standards, providing them a glimpse into what more structured and competitive climbing could look like. This motivated them and also broadened their understanding of the sport, encouraging deeper involvement and potentially sparking interest in pursuing climbing more seriously.

Overall, the use of the large climbing wall at Večnamenska športna dvorana Brežice on days with bad weather or high participant numbers was a strategic and beneficial adaptation that enhanced the overall effectiveness and enjoyment of the climbing activities.