

## Competences Children and Youth gain in Sport for Social Cohesion Programmes

**Goal 10** of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) aims to achieve numerous goals directly related to social cohesion, including to promote universal social, economic and political inclusion, to ensure equal opportunities and to end discrimination. Of course, sport alone cannot create cohesive societies, but it can **contribute to building relationships and understanding** across social, economic, and cultural divides. When applied effectively, sport can teach fundamental principles such as **tolerance, solidarity, cooperation and mutual respect**. Involvement in sport can provide participants with an **opportunity to connect** with other groups and create a shared **identity**. Empowering relationships and networks, sport activities can contribute to a greater sense of identity and feeling of belonging, which can lead to active citizenship outside of the sporting environment.

In the following competence framework, the outlined **social cohesion competences** are streamlined, including specific competences in the areas of **self-competence, social competence, methodological/strategic competence and sport-specific competence**. In line with other theoretical systems and in order to **explain change on an individual level**, we divided the competences into **three levels: Recognising, Assessing and Acting**.<sup>1</sup>

**S4D programmes** which are designed to contribute to selected **SDG 10 targets** should include activities for children and youth in order to enable them to...

... understand the importance of physical activity and sport for their own well-being and healthy development, especially in terms of social and life skills.

... know how to interact with individuals from different backgrounds.

... know how to evaluate their own environment and attitudes with respect to different groups.

... critically reflect on their underlying cultural, social and political norms and how they impact social cohesion.

... reflect on and discuss their attitudes and relationships with other groups.

... feel connected to others within sports and their communities.

.... reflect on ways to contribute within their community.

... apply strategies to develop empathy and challenge pre-conceptions about different groups.

... behave in an open, respectful manner that actively values the contributions of different cultures and groups.

... actively contribute within their community and overall civic life.

The competence framework is considered as a **comprehensive collection** and not all competences are automatically gained by all children and youth. Additionally, not all levels are always represented. Each S4D Programme has to decide on the **selection of competences** that they would like to develop with their beneficiaries. However, the frameworks are a useful presentation of competences that may and could be gained by children and youth taking part in S4D activities.

<sup>1</sup> It was decided to use this model (recognising-assessing-acting) which was developed in the context of “global learning” (KMK & BMZ, 2016), because it fits best into the thematic area of S4D. Similar models include the steps “knowledge-attitude-behaviour” or “connect-improve-transform” (see [Commonwealth, 2019](#), p. 42).

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<b>Self-competence:</b> Children and youth are able to...	<b>Self Confidence and Trust</b> ... know about the social cohesion in their community. ... consider the experiences and backgrounds of the people and structures in their community. ... believe in their own power, abilities, qualities, and judgement to deal with different people and structures.
	<b>Responsibility</b> ... know about different ways to be involved in their community. ... reflect on possibilities to take positive action in their community. ... actively engage in their own community.
	<b>Critical Ability, Conflict Ability</b> ... know about their role in situations of exclusion or conflict. ... reflect before acting in a situation of exclusion or conflict. ... absorb points of criticism, remain receptive and respond appropriately.
	<b>Resilience</b> ... learn from negative experiences and move on. ... reflect on the psychological and social consequences a lack of social cohesion. ... adjust to different levels of social cohesion and find ways to encourage greater social cohesion.
	<b>Goal Orientation</b> ... understand the value of achieving and reaching a goal. ... think of how social cohesion influences their ability to achieve that goal. ... resist distractions and keep track of their personal goals.
	<b>Adaptability</b> ... recognise the ability to adjust themselves to different situations. ... understand that through similar inclusive/exclusive situations they experience on the sport field, they can reflect on the situations they experience in their communities. ... alter their reactions to changed circumstances in an inclusive, respectful manner.
	<b>Creativity</b> ... identify their competences and experiences in order to act inclusively and respectfully. ... understand that exclusion often occurs because of discriminatory attitudes or systems. ... open their minds and create innovative solutions to create inclusion and social cohesion.
<b>Social Competence:</b> Children and youth are able to...	<b>Change of Perspective and Empathy</b> ... anticipate how exclusive behaviour might affect others. ... imagine themselves as part of different groups or in a different role.

	<p>... respect others, even if they are opponents and demonstrate empathy.</p> <p><b>Respect, Fair Play and Tolerance</b>                  ... describe ways to stay tolerant and respect diverse people.                  ... appreciate others regardless of age, sex, family backgrounds and origin.                  ... act respectfully and inclusively in new or challenging situations.</p>
	<p><b>Solidarity</b>                  ... know how to intervene in situations of exclusion.                  ... understand how to avoid or manage exclusion by creating an environment of support and belonging.                  ... help each other and use a diversity of competences collectively.</p>
	<p><b>Communication</b>                  ... learn about their own behaviour in relation to different groups.                  ... reflect about their ability to formulate questions or statements respectfully and inclusively.                  ... practice inclusive communication and active listening skills.</p>
	<p><b>Cooperation</b>                  ... learn about the positive effects of having as strong sense of belonging.                  ... enjoy being in a place where they can cooperate and feel secure.                  ... work together with others respectfully and inclusively, helping others also gain a sense of belonging.</p>
	<p><b>Methodological Competence, Strategic Competence: Children and youth are able to...</b></p>
	<p><b>Critical Thinking</b>                  ... identify inclusive and exclusive behaviours in their environment.                  ... critically reflect their own role, as role models, and how their own behaviour can contribute to inclusion and social cohesion                  ... take necessary actions to build inclusive relationships.</p>
	<p><b>Decision Making</b>                  ... consider all options and weigh positive and negative aspects of each option.                  ... anticipate the different decision options and their outcomes to determine the best option for a particular situation                  ... make respectful, inclusive decisions.</p>
	<p><b>Problem Solving</b>                  ... analyse and correct errors, while retaining control of their own feelings and actions.                  ... define a problem, analyse it and develop strategies to resolve it in a respectful manner.                  ... are able to apply culturally appropriate, inclusive and respectful problem solving strategies.</p>

**Sport-specific Competences<sup>2</sup>**

- Development of general motor competences (speed, endurance, strength, coordination, flexibility)
- Development of basic technical competences (sport-specific): Children and youth are able to...
  - ... run, jump, skip, dribble, pass, shoot, throw, catch etc.
  - ... use different sensory and motor techniques in various ways.
- Development of basic tactical competences: Children and youth are able to...
  - ... explain the structures and strategies of a game.
  - ... act in a planned and target-oriented manner with clever choice of available means and possibilities by the individual, a group or a team.
  - ... know in specific game situations which action leads to success (“game intelligence”).
  - ... act in a creative way and choose various solutions (“game creativity”).
  - ... comprehend communicative and cooperative behaviour of individual team members.

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<sup>2</sup> Baur, J., Bös, K., Conzelmann, A. & Singer, R. (2009). *Handbuch motorische Entwicklung*. Schorndorf.