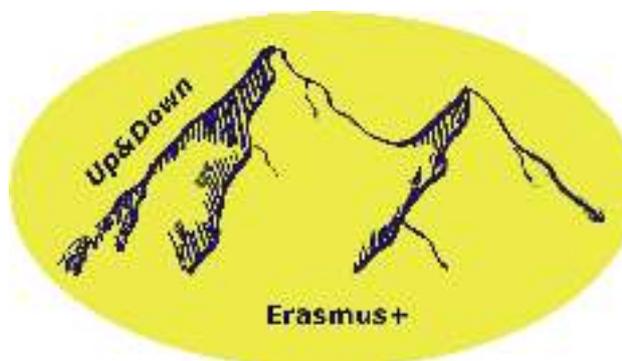


Up and down! Four season activity in the mountains: skimo and trail running

Erasmus+ Sports Project, 2018-2019

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Both **ski touring** (backcountry skiing, where both uphill and downhill travel is made on skis without the use of any motorized equipment, e.g. without the use of lifts, also called **ski alpinism and ski mountaineering or skimo**) and **trail running** have become more and more popular in the recent years all over Europe. However -especially in non-Alpine and small countries- the necessary background knowledge in health and safety is often missing, and while the two sports are highly complementary, yet cheap outdoor activities, and provide an all year round healthy cardio lifestyle, usually they are still not encouraged strongly enough together. Thus the main focus of the current project is to formulate the necessary steps to increase partaking and the number of voluntary activities in these sports, raise health and safety awareness and the knowledge on their health-enhancing effects, and to start developing a network of European organizations focusing on these sports.

In the following ski touring, ski mountaineering, ski alpinism and trail running together will be referred to as "Skimo sports".

More specifically the main objectives of the current project are:

1. to share good practices and work out new methods on:
 1. **how to increase the number of people acquainted** with outdoor cardio sports, with a special emphasis on ski touring and trail running, as healthy, cheap, environmentally friendly and complementary outdoor sports not requiring any designated maintained areas;
 2. **how to increase awareness on mountain safety:** on one side with a special emphasis on ski touring and ski associated hazards, e.g. avalanche awareness, winter mountain weather, winter mountain first aid and rescue skills, team psychology, safety for freeriders, etc. On the other side on general mountain hazards concerning trail runners, e.g. weather, first aid and rescue skills, orientation. Associated with these is the question if and how could this kind of safety awareness be extended to further interested parties, e.g. to people leaving the groomed slopes only occasionally, or to trekkers and hikers;
 3. how to **make people more willing** to visit necessary **courses, training sessions, to practice** and to promote lifelong learning;
 4. **how to increase the appreciation** of the health and environmental benefits of **outdoor cardio sports and promote a healthy lifestyle;**
 5. how to **involve young people** into Skimo sports;
 6. how to **involve people from social layers** who have no access to these sports;
 7. how to **increase the willingness to volunteer in associated activities**, e.g. competition organising, practice session, trail cleaning activities, environmental activities;
 8. **competition organizing practices** and how to motivate people to take part in such competitions;
 9. how to **improve and maintain cooperation with stakeholders**, e.g. rescue bodies, official sport organizations, race directors.
2. to enhance networking between the Project Partners, associated bodies and other relevant associations to found the basis of a network of associations across Europe with the main

focus on ski touring, trail running and all their associated sports in order to establish a tradition of working together and sharing good practices in the future.

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Partners:

Icelandic Alpine Club
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Mountaineering Section of the Mountaineering and climbing club Ljubljana-Matica (MCCLM,
Alpinistični odsek Planinskega društva Ljubljana-Matica; <http://www.pd-ljmatica.si/>)

Transnational Meeting on improving safety in the mountains in winter

18. 03. -23. 03. 2018, Komna hut, Slovenia

We are successfully over the first Transnational Meeting, and it was huge success! At first we were quite afraid, as we have never done anything like this before, but thanks to our great Slovenian hosts and all the participants, it was a real great experience!

The main goal of the meeting was to learn and share experiences on how to increase safety in the mountains in the winter. Bringing together people from countries with such different Alpine traditions, like Iceland, Hungary and Slovenia proved to be a really great way to learn. This way we had the chance to really gain a deep understanding of and discuss on the similarities and differences on our mountaineering education systems (with respect to winter), our methods in training and winter mountain safety, and learn new techniques and tricks from each other.

Some of the topics of the Meeting were: increasing avalanche awareness; snow layer structure analysis (including sharing the data through open source databases e.g. at Lawis.at); correct route choice and tour planning; winter orientation; avalanche rescue techniques; correct ski techniques; appropriate gear; winter mountain weather; winter mountain first aid; winter mountain self rescue techniques; rescue techniques of official rescue bodies; cooperation with rescue bodies; group psychology; organizing competitions (e.g. skimo competitions) in the winter and their safety

aspects; how to increase awareness and educate people not closely related to the above sports (e.g. people leaving the slopes for occasional freeriding, practicing snow shoeing, etc.).

One of the highlights of the meeting were 2 lectures, one on Avalanches by Miha Pavšek from the Anton Melik Geographical Institute in Slovenia, and one by Matija Volontar from the Slovenian Mountain Rescue Services on mountain rescue procedures. Next to these we had a big number of other activities, like round table discussion to discuss the education system for winter mountain activities in each country, a great lecture from Luka Starzar on winter mountaineering, discussions of cold weather first aid, group psychology and route finding. Thanks to the great setting during the days we had the chance to train together on avalanche rescue and snow pit analysis on the two foggy days, and route finding, winter orienteering, proper ski techniques in all terrain, and group dynamics on the rest of the week.

Thanks to all for participating, to our great hosts from the Matica club to make it happen, and of course to Erasmus+ Sport for funding!



Transnational Meeting on Increasing participation in Skimo sports and promoting a healthy lifestyle

07. 08. – 13. 08. 2019, Aggtelek, Hungary

Originally the Meeting had been planned to take place in the Börzsöny mountains in Hungary, because it's a great place to do some trail running. But because a lot of people notified us that they would prefer July/August instead of the end of June due to their exams, we moved the Meeting to the beginning of August to Aggtelek, where the Aggtelek Cup amateur climbing competition is taking place. We choose Aggtelek as trail running is also great around there, it's easily accessible from Budapest by car, and anyone interested could also join the climbing in their free time. This also meant that instead of the June heatwave we hit the August one. This made any activities during the day less comfortable (we even had to cancel some group runs due to that), but resulted in nice evenings after the workshops spent around the open fire chatting with all the participants till late at night. We honestly feel that once again the meeting ended in a great success, with lots of opportunities and ideas discussed and friendships built.

The main goal of the meeting was to discuss and share our experiences in the topics: increase partaking in ski touring, ski mountaineering and ski alpinism in their countries, and if there is a theoretical limit to the number of people involved in these sports (e.g. from the safety or environmental protection point of view); increase partaking in trail running and if there is a theoretical limit to the number of people involved in this sport (e.g. from the environmental protection point of view); involving young people into Skimo sports; social inclusion and gender equality in Skimo sports, social aspects of Skimo sports (e.g. friendships and community building aspects); financial aspects of Skimo sports; possible funding opportunities for Skimo sports; the importance of networking in Skimo sports; health issues and benefits related to ski touring and trail running; ski touring and trail running as complementary all year round cardio sports; promoting healthy lifestyle through Skimo sports; physical training methods, techniques and systems for ski touring and trail running; trail running as a perfect basis training for ski touring; increase partaking in ski mountaineering and trail running competitions; competition organizing; increasing the number of voluntary activities in Skimo sports; environmental protection issues related to Skimo sports. The main events of the meeting were round table like discussions. These were always led by one of our members with well directed questions, this way all the participants could share their opinions and experiences on the topics. It turned out to be a great way to share experiences and promote discussions. Other than that we had a number of outdoor activities, including trail running, climbing and caving. During these we shared our experiences, with a special emphasis on the different training methods that are used in each country. We also gave a short lecture to our guests on the situation of Hungarian mountaineering and related education. As we got a really good mix of participants with very varied multi-sport backgrounds, including climbers, trail runners, kayakers, ski mountaineers, guides and outdoor coaches and people from volunteer rescue services, it turned out to be a really fruitful meeting.

To our great happiness our Icelandic friends even managed to get some nice results in the climbing competition, congrats to that ?!

One interesting and great networking aspect of the meeting was, that all the meals were prepared with the help of all participants! This is something we will definitely keep as a tradition for the Icelandic meeting!



Transnational meeting on Improving safety in the mountains all year around

27. 04. – 04. 05. 2019, Ytri Vik, Iceland

We are now back from the 3rd Meeting of our Erasmus+ Up&Down. This Meeting has exceeded all our expectations. The setting, the organisation and group of participants turned out to be wonderful.

A big number of the people already knew each other from the previous meetings, that made the whole week even more easy going and without any problems.

The main goal of this meeting was to discuss how could safety be improved for people traveling into the mountains all year around. The topics that came into spotlight were: increase partaking in ski touring, ski mountaineering and ski alpinism, and if there is a theoretical limit to the number of people involved in these sports (e.g. from the safety or environmental protection point of view); involving young people into Skimo sports; gender equality in Skimo sports; social aspects of Skimo sports (e.g. friendships and community building aspects); financial aspects of Skimo sports; possible funding opportunities for Skimo sports; the importance of networking in Skimo sports; health issues and benefits related to ski touring and trail running; ski touring and trail running as complementary all year round cardio sports; physical training methods, techniques and systems for ski touring and trail running; trail running as a perfect basis training for ski touring; increase partaking in ski mountaineering and trail running competitions; competition organizing; increasing the number of voluntary activities in Skimo sports; environmental protection issues related to Skimo sports. Once again the mixture of participants and country background made for some really interesting discussions. We had guides, doctors, club leaders, mountaineering aspirants, competitive races and coaches in the group with a multitude of sports background in outdoor activities. The workshops were mostly in the form of round table discussion around a set topic. Next to that during the days, whenever the weather permitted we had trainings on avalanche safety, route finding and group dynamics. Here we had the chance to training together and learn from our Icelandic host on their own methods, e.g. in beacon testing or terrain scouting. Furthermore as the weather and snow layering, grain size and patters are very different from Alpine terrain, the Meeting proved to a great opportunity for everyone to increase their knowledge and experience in avalanche safety. We also had extensive discussions on the topic of the increasing number of tourist in Iceland, related to how much they lack the experience in moving in mountainous or rough terrain, the accidents relating to this and possible solution.

Once again we kept the tradition that the evening meal was prepared together by all participants, making networking even more easy.

At the end of the meeting we, the project leaders sat together to discuss our main conclusions from the meetings, and agreed on the following: it really helps if there are group building activities next to the training and theoretical activities, like cooking together, as these are great opportunities for the participants to socialize freely, outside of the scope of the project. Also we found that for any training activities it's very important to have a leader, even if the activity is well known by the participants. And even though all participants had a really good background in the above topics, lectures given by outsiders really help in identifying the weaknesses even the most experienced outdoor people have. Also it was heavily noted that round table like discussion a great way to targetedly share experiences, gain new knowledge and discuss on possible new protocols and methods. Furthermore as we all felt that the Meetings were a great success, we have agreed on keeping in touch, and looking for future opportunities in working together.

We would like once more thank the Erasmus+ for funding this great opportunity, and we sincerely hope that the knew knowledge, experience and networks the participants brought home will be of use to the whole mountaineering and outdoor community!

