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Empowering coaches and trainers in sports to prevent youth  
radicalization and violent extremism

# Preventing Youth Radicalization in Sport: Lessons learnt from Covid-19 pandemic

## 3rd European Seminar

zoom  VIDEO CONFERENCE

### November 24, 2021

### 10:30 – 13:00 CET

Register in advance for this seminar on

[www.safezoneproject.eu](http://www.safezoneproject.eu)



Scarce participation in society, marginalization or self-marginalization, and isolation, are generally regarded as **potential risk factors for radicalization and extreme violence**. Sport is increasingly being regarded as a privileged observatory to address youth at risk of radicalization and violence, due to its being built on key-values such as teamwork, cooperation, and fair-play as well as the educational relationship between sport coaches and trainees. Additionally, sport plays a relevant role in the life of many young people - both practically and symbolically - and sport coaches and educators are thus well placed to play a key role in detecting the risks of radicalization among youngsters.

Built on these premises, the project **SAFE ZONE** ([www.safezoneproject.eu](http://www.safezoneproject.eu)) aims to contribute to the prevention of youth radicalization and violent extremism by **increasing the awareness and capacity of sport coaches and educators** to address radicalization and by adopting a multiagency approach in order to consolidate preventive cooperation networks. By adopting such combined approach, the **SAFE ZONE** project intends to develop a **preventive action** aimed at young people in sports.

The **Covid-19 pandemic**, and the subsequent restrictive measures still in force in European countries, have exacerbated the isolation of citizens and adolescents and young people are paying the highest costs. While the youngsters' socialization opportunities have decreased drastically, the sport sector has also been stopped throughout Europe. The prevention strategies and tools aimed at preventing radicalization may thus need to be reconsidered in order to increase their effectiveness in the new post-pandemic scenery.

The 3rd European Seminar **"Preventing Youth Radicalization in Sport: Lessons learnt from Covid-19 pandemic"** will provide an **exchange opportunity between experts of youth sport and education, sport coaches and professionals** from the European countries involved in the **SAFE ZONE** project (Italy, Germany, Portugal and Slovenia).

Starting from the observation of the changes in the youngsters' behavior and relationships in sport that can be ascribed to the Covid-19 pandemic, this seminar will provide an **opportunity to compare** and exchange practices and methods on the risk of radicalization to violence among the young athletes and related prevention strategies.

The event intends to open a wide-ranging debate on this topic, and it will be an opportunity for all participants to raise questions and **share thoughts and practices** with the aim to contribute to the overall prevention system.

## Seminar Agenda

- 10:30 **Welcome and seminar presentation**
- 10:40 **A brief overview of the Safe Zone project, Alessia Mefalopulos, IPRS**
- 10:50 **Youth radicalization in times of pandemic**  
Key-note speech: **Paulo Rocha**, Head of Sport for All Division IPDJ / PPUE21  
Portuguese Mission Sports Working Group Expert, Portugal + **Q&A**
- 11:20 **COFFEE BREAK**
- 11:30 **Roundtable:**  
**Lessons learnt from the pandemic: Preventing youth radicalization - Successful sport stories.**  
  
**Introduction:** **Stefanie Dahl** – Scientific Researcher University Münster, Institute for Sport Science, Director of the Research Network on Child and Adolescents Sports in North Rhine Westphalia, Germany  
  
**Successful sport stories:**
- **Robin Schröder** – Project Director Football3 for all at Rheinflanke GmbH, Cologne, Germany
  - **Manuela Cirfera** – Sport educator from CSI, Italy
  - **Simon Mihelina** – Master of judo, former employee at Maribor Sports Office, Slovenia
  - **Nuno Delgado** – European Champion and Winner of the first olympic medal in judo for Portugal and sport educator at Judo School, Portugal
- Q&A**
- 12:50 **Concluding remarks**
- 13:00 **END OF SEMINAR**

 The seminar will be audio and video recorded.

The SAFE ZONE team represents a mix of research centers, universities and sports organizations in Italy, Germany, Portugal, and Slovenia.



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