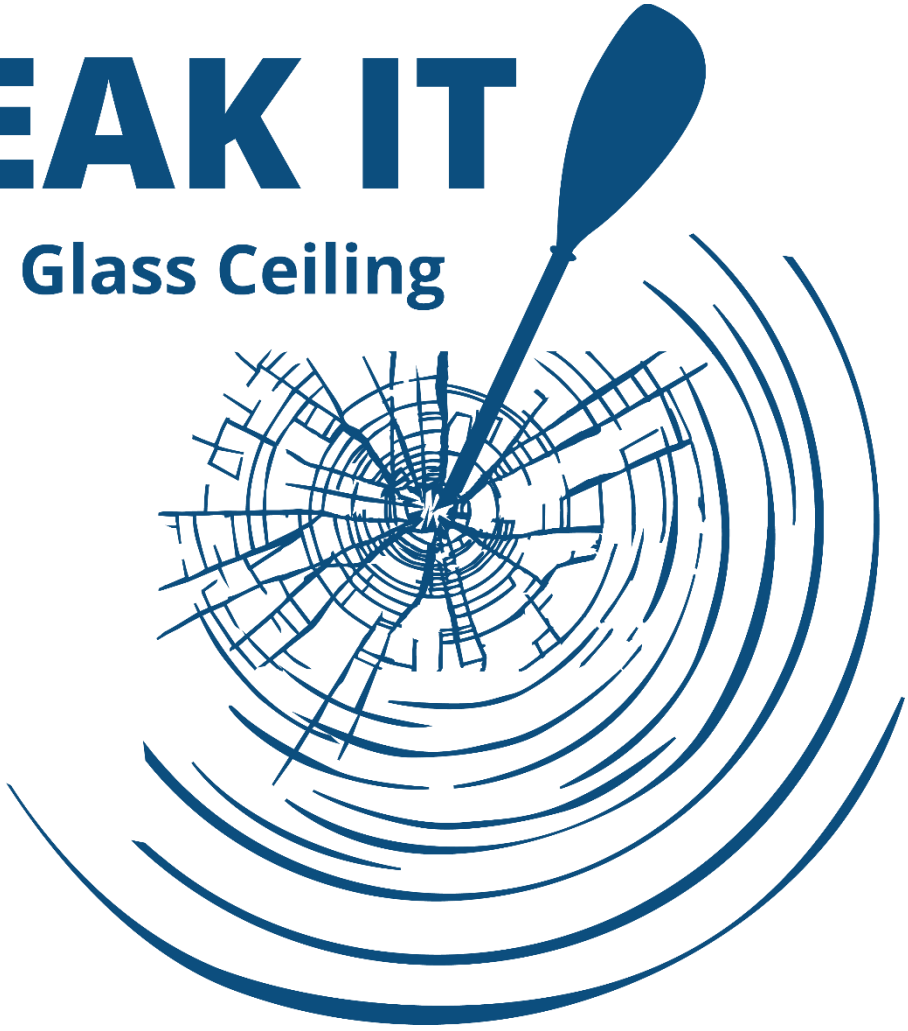
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BREAK IT

The Blue Glass Ceiling



Erasmus+ Sport mobilitetsprojekt 2024-2025

Genom det blå glastaket – fler kvinnor på avancerad nivå inom paddling

Project details

Applicant organisation	Svenska Kanotförbundet
Applicant organisation OID	E10321552
Project code	2024-1-SE02-KA182-SPO-000227432
Project title	Genom det blå glastaket - fler kvinnor på avancerad nivå inom paddling
Action type	Mobility of sport staff [KA182-SPO]
Field	Sport
Project start date	01/06/2024
Project end date	30/11/2025
Grant awarded	28 666,00 €



One effect of the project was that courses for women were organized by the project participants. A very popular course was Kvinnor som går mot rött. The participants trained at advanced level with the project participants and instructors Karin Åmossa and Karin Geissler. Photo: Karin Åmossa

Project summary

BACKGROUND

The Swedish Canoe Federation conducted an inventory of gender distribution among instructor trainers, assessors, leaders and individual canoeists at different skills levels. On introduction and beginner levels, there were no significant gap between numbers of women and men. When looking at intermediate and advanced level, it was a different picture, and the gap grew wider the higher the level. The gap between women and men was significant, with women being underrepresented.

Two workshops at paddlers' gatherings with focus on gender imbalance preceeded the project. The participants' views indicated that going forward with a project was needed and justified.

There are no tangible explanations to the gender gap. The project aims to make women come forward and develop as paddlers and instructors. It can be argued that women are officially welcome everywhere and no one (consciously) treats women and men different on trainings and courses, so

they should not need “special treatment” or gender separate groups. Although, when asking women, their response about separate training groups was a unison “yes”: Women wanted and appreciated activities arranged by women for women.

Objectives and achievements

The purpose of the project was to

- long term: raise the number of women with personal skills on intermediate and advanced levels
- long term: raise the number of women instructors and assessors on intermediate and advanced levels
- raise awareness about the gender gap within the instructor and assessor cadre
- making visible the competent and skilled women paddlers that inspire other women – role models
- support the project participants to develop personal and instructor skills
- networking with Swedish, Danish and Irish women paddlers
- learn more about paddling camps for women
- learn more about Ireland’s project Bridge the Gap

The project aimed to be a stepping stone to change gender imbalance among instructors and assessors. The journey to become instructor and assessor on high levels is long and requires time and great commitment, so it was not realistic to reach this goal for all participants within the project period.

What the project did aim for was to ignite the dreams and visions for the participants to reach next level. This would be a goal for the women personally, but it would also serve the project’s other goal, to make visible role models for other paddling women. Then the movement will be unleashed.



Karin Geissler, Hanna Olausson och Åsa Franzén together with one of the Irish women who paddled along on the day outside Howth with instructor Eileen Murphy. Foto Eileen Murphy



Anna Andersson at sea. Photo: Eileen Murphy

Implemention of activities

Study visit to women sea kayak camp in Denmark

In the first year, a study visit was undertaken to a camp for women sea kayak paddlers. The camp was provided and administered by the Danish Canoe Federation, and the camp organiser group consisted of women from canoe clubs and commercial paddling businesses. Three women from Sweden took part in the camp visit which was held on the Island of Turø.

Study visit to canoe club and other organisations in Ireland

The second year, a project group was put together with women from sea kayaking and open canoeing. The group was established and got to know each other at preparatory meetings online. In October, the group made a journey to Ireland. The women stayed together and got to know each other better, which was also a goal with the trip. On the programme was to

- visit Kilkenny Canoe Club where among others the Women in sport ambassador (Sport Ireland)
- visits to Canoeing Ireland, sea kayak symposium, outdoor education colleges and meet Bridge the Gap ambassadors

Results and impact of the project

The visit to the women's sea kayak camp in Denmark gave firsthand experience of being part of a women-only kayak event. The interviews with instructors, organisers and participants enlightened us about why they valued the recurring camp. Plans to arrange a similar camp now have a place on the agenda for 2026.



The Denmark Team. Office staff from left to right Åsa Andersson and Katinka Ingves, visited the Danish Qcamp, together with one of SKF's instructor trainers, Hanna Olausson. Far right: Karin Levinsen from the Danish instructor team.

With great skill and enthusiasm, the Ireland group took on their task to be seen, heard and be together in the joint mission to make women seen and acknowledged. They went many paddle lengths to develop own skills and to inspire others to do the same. On individual level, the women and their course participants advanced their skill levels.

Meetings with women paddlers in Denmark and Ireland were developmental and educational. The activities gave insights and other perspectives on how to promote women paddlers. The travels gave good contacts for future networking and maybe new projects. Their experiences were forwarded in meetings to the Swedish Canoe Federation

The project raised attention and appreciation from start among paddlers who take part of information from the Swedish Canoe Federation. An open webinar on the theme glass ceiling within sport were held. Articles were published on website and social media.

Types of activities and participant profiles


Anna Andersson, havskajak


Karin Geissler, havskajak


Karin Åmossa, havskajak


Åsa Franzén, havskajak


Lovisa Larsson, kanadensare


Malin Olin, kanadensare


Hanna Olausson, kanadensare

The Ireland team. The project participants were selected to represent sea kayak and open canoe, as well as different geographical locations. What they had in common was an interest in empowering women in paddling, being an instructor and in that role being able to spread knowledge and influence other women, and a desire to develop themselves further.


Katinka Ingves, SKF kansli


Åsa Andersson, SKF kansli


Hanna Olausson, SKF utbildare

The three Denmark travellers: Katinka Ingves and Åsa Andersson from the Swedish Canoe Federation office and instructor trainer Hanna Olausson.

Ideas for organising a camp for women paddlers was being discussed internally in the Swedish Canoe Federation. This had never been done before, and to get more knowledge and ideas, a study visit to a women's sea kayak camp seemed fit. We were looking for thoughts on the necessity for a camp like that, and was interested in finding out more about the reasons, background and the practicalities, the views from the paddling community about a women-only camp.

Ireland's initiative, Bridge the Gap, came from the NGB Canoeing Ireland, and we wanted the federational perspective. That is why we booked a visit to Canoeing Ireland to meet the woman who stood behind the Brigde the Gap project. As NGB in Sweden, we valued to get voices from both NGB and local paddlers for a complementary picture.

Study visits to local canoe club and meeting with local club members aimed to give the group a chance to meet active women paddlers, who shared the same context of paddling and activities as themselves.

Some of the project participants are professionally paddling and outdoor skills instructors at adult education colleges, and that is why we aimed for visits at equivalent educational institutions. The activities were chosen to give participants time to experience how paddling is taught in another country, and to get a chance to talk to both students and instructors.



Lovisa Larsson teaches safety and rescues to adult students in Sweden, and through the project she experienced adult education on a programme for outdoor guides. Photo: Malin Olin

The target group for the project were adult women, with experience from instructing and assessing paddling skills. We wanted individuals who were independent and managed on their own, with background support from the federation (project coordinators). It was clearly expressed that project participants were expected to take responsibility to take active part in creating the project and be part of the design of the programme.

The stated and explicit goal of the project was to raise the number of women on advanced levels. That meant that prerequisites were to have a certain level of personal skills and experience as leader and instructor. After an open application process, ten women who were on the right skills level, were willingly to share their experiences publicly and who had an interest in promoting gender balance within the paddling community, were chosen to be in the project.

We aimed to get women from three paddling disciplines: sea kayaking, open canoeing and whitewater paddling. Another goal was to achieve a geographical spread among the participants. This seemed possible at first, but some time into the project the group was recreated due to personal reasons. In the end, seven sea kayaking instructors and three open canoeing instructors constituted the group. Two of those belonged to the federation's office, where they hold positions as development officers for recreational paddling. However, all of the participants masters both disciplines more or less.



The open canoe participants, from left to right Lovisa Larsson, Hanna Olausson, Malin Olin, and far right instructor Patrick McCormack. Photo: Lovisa Larsson

PRESENTATION OF THE PROJECT PARTICIPANTS

Anna Andersson

Active member of Linköping's Kanotklubb and Brokind's IF kayak section. In the Linköping club she is active in the leadership group and holds courses and leads tours. Paddles sea kayak in lakes and archipelagos, happily and often. Interested in outdoor activities where paddling is in focus. Inspiring and teaching others to paddle contributes to a lot of joy, as does further developing herself both as a paddler and leader.

Hanna Olausson

Hanna is one of the Canoe Federation's instructor trainers for GSRT, Sea Kayak Leader 1, Open Canoe Leader 1 and assessor for Paddelpasset for both kayak and open canoe. Hanna has a university

degree from Norway in Outdoor Life, Cultural and Nature Guidance. Hanna is passionate about high quality education and courses, and through her company Naturtid, she shares her solid knowledge with both new and experienced paddlers. In the project, open canoe is Hanna's vessel, but she is just as happy to paddle sea kayak.

Katinka Ingves

Katinka is one of the employees who participated in the project. Her role as development officer for courses, awards and recreational paddling includes organizing camps and training. Katinka mostly paddles sea kayak, but also sits in the open canoe from time to time.

Karin Geissler

Karin is based in Brunnsviken's Kanotklubb in Stockholm where she is in charge of the sea kayak section. Karin is also part of the Instructor Team for Friluftsfrämjandet Mälardalen. Karin is mostly seen in her sea kayak, but she is also keen to develop as open canoe paddler. Coaching and leadership are areas that interest Karin and which she wants to constantly develop. One of Karin's hopes for the project to bring is to highlight and make visible all the talented, courageous female paddlers she meets, and inspire them to develop both personal skills but also to become leaders and role models.

Karin Åmossa

Karin is active as a leader and instructor in Örnsberg's Kanotsällskap in Stockholm. When it comes to Karin's specialties, one is more stationary and the other is the opposite: Greenland roll and long expedition paddling. As the holder of record points in the Greenland roll women's class, Karin is a role model. She sees the project as an opportunity to work on something that she finds fun and important together with others. She wants to use her knowledge and experience to lift more women up to the highest levels in paddling. Karin wants to continue developing herself as a leader and coach, and she wants to contribute to helping other women develop.

Lovisa Larsson

Lovisa likes relaxed enjopy-nature trips, but even more she likes developing and challenging paddling that develops the canoeist. She misses sisters in canoeing at higher levels, and wants to contribute to more women learning, listening and supporting each other to get there. In the beautiful nature of Tiveden, Lovisa paddles her wooden canoe, and lets others experience paddling through her company Traceless in Tiveden. Lovisa likes to use film and images to convey knowledge and inspiration. Her clear goal for herself is to feel safe at level 4 and handle the canoe in the rapids, so that she can take other women there.

Malin Olin

Malin is originally a sea kayaker, but through her British leadership training she also discovered open canoe paddling. One of Malin's goals in the project is to learn more about open canoe paddling in rapid environment. Malin paddles in Karlstad and is active in Karlstad long-distance paddlers, but has also been active in Karlstad's Paddlarklubb and Friluftsfrämjandet. Education and pedagogy are a great interest, and she prefers to work with experiential learning in all forms.

Åsa Franzén

Åsa from Skåne is the southernmost participant. She is an active paddler in the Kanotföreningen Öresund in Malmö and a kayak leader in Friluftsfrämjandet Veberöd outside Lund. Raised by and on

the sea in Bohuslän, she is always looking forward to the next adventure. Big and small. Driven by learning and teaching, and in addition to taking on challenges herself, having the opportunity to see other paddlers of different ages and with different conditions grow. Åsa wants to see more women challenge their limits, develop technically and take their place as leaders at an advanced level within the various disciplines of paddling, and she is thinking about how the paddling community can communicate and plan to make that journey feel attractive and possible.

Åsa Andersson

Åsa is employed by the Swedish Canoe Federation and is development officer for sustainability, recreational paddling and approved canoe centers. Åsa mostly paddles sea kayak on the West Coast around Hunnebostrand where she lives. She has acquired an open canoe and has become interested in learning more double blade paddling.



The Loughshinny group, Hanna Olausson, Lovisa Larsson, Malin Olin, Karin Åmossa and Anna Andersson, paddling with Eileen Murphy and women from the East Coast Sea Kayaking Club. Photo: Eileen Murphy

Format and content of the activities

The study visit to the women's sea kayak camp was the best chosen form to learn more about the camp and its being. Three of the project members, including the federation employees who would be the ones arranging a similar camp, were attending the camp as participants. We had acquired information about the Danish Canoe Federation's long-standing tradition of arranging a sea kayak camp for women. It was a good background, but the deeper understanding of its motivation and the reasons, feelings and atmosphere were not so easy to get a grip on through digital meetings and written text.

At the camp we would meet both organisers and participants, both first-timers and those who had been at several camps. Being on site for the whole camp, offered many opportunities to talk to the women at the camp. It was a very relaxed and informal atmosphere, and women were happy to talk to us. At the welcome dinner, we were presented and held a short speak about the project and our presence at the camp. This facilitated the talks later during the weekend, as everyone knew our reasons for being there. It was practical that we could meet both organisers and participants in the same weekend in the same place.

Due to the nature of recreational paddling, we opted for making visits to different stakeholders during the visit to Ireland. The project aimed to provide participants the opportunity for personal development, paddling skills development, networking, explore another culture and paddling culture, and find out more about Ireland's work to promote women in paddling. Meeting women paddlers and instructors in a variety of contexts were key elements to fulfil the goals.

Recreational paddling is often not conducted as an everyday training activity, compared to competitional paddling training. Therefore, it would be impossible to aim for a programme at one sole club or organisation, as most recreational paddling activities are carried out typically on weekends or on one of the weekday evenings. That made it necessary to find several places and activities to build up our visit around.

The number of recipient organisations were chosen to give a diverse mix of people to meet, and to represent different levels of organisations.



Hanna Olausson with Irish paddle buddy. Photo: Eileen Murphy

Choosing hosting organisations

Factors that were behind our choice of organisations to visit were partly decided out of earlier contacts and knowledge about good examples. Through the earlier Erasmus project we had contacts in the Irish paddling community. Via the European cooperation around awards and certificates, we knew about the Danish women sea kayak camp. The hosts and stakeholders were selected based on their experience of promoting women activities, their type of events or because of possibility for our group to exchange valuable knowledge and experiences.

The language issue was also of relevance, because we wanted the project participants to be fully able to take part of both meetings, visits and written material relevant for the them to gain as much as possible from the project. Danish is close to Swedish, and English is hard to beat as generally understood language. To get successful results, we needed for our participants to be very active and interactive with people, which meant communication must be functional.

The Danish good example of arranging a camp for women only, made us decide to choose the Danish Canoe Federation for our study visit about women separatistic events. The Danish Canoe Federation has organised the camp for over ten years, and thus have long perspective about this type of event. It was also chosen because of the language, that we can understand each other when taking part in the activities.

The Kilkenny Aqua Canoe club was chosen because we got good contact with the key person, Ms Schofield, who was a member of this specific club. Ms Schofield was recommended to us, by one of our friends from the earlier Erasmus project. Ms Schofield turned out to be unbelievably supportive and inspiring for the visit. She provided us with great support, not only morally and emotionally, but also in practical matters. She was very well suited to host us, as she was also the Women in Sport ambassador (for Sport Ireland).

The other organisations, persons and activities (not officially hosting organisations) we decided to visit were decided by a thoroughly and meticulous search for suitable receiving hosts. One woman instructor was chosen because we knew about her significance in the paddling community, being much respected for her achievements and an inspiration for many women.

We also wanted to give the open canoeing participants a chance to develop their own skills with one of Ireland's most prominent canoe instructors. In this way, we looked at what the project and the participants needed, and step by step filled the calendar with activities. In hindsight, one of the learnings from this project is that it is important not to set up a too intense programme, as the participants must get a chance to rest in between activities, in balance with using the time well.

Participant feedback survey

We tried to split the responsibility for different activities during the stay in Ireland. One participant was responsible for the contact with one host, another participant was responsible for the accommodation in one place etc. That is why not all participants got the direct number to the contact persons in Ireland.

The Participants and project coordinator drew up an individual plan for their goals with the project. Follow up and revision on this plan will be carried out in the months after the project is finished.

Replies regarding preparation		Share of participants
Participants indicating they have received preparation, training or information		100,00 %
Out of the positive answers, replies to a follow-up question about usefulness of the preparation:	Yes, I felt well prepared	88,89 %
	Yes, but I needed more preparation	11,11 %
	No, I did not find it useful	0,00 %
Participants indicating they did not receive any preparation, training or information		0,00 %

	Percentage of positive replies – individual activities
Did you receive contact information of someone at your sending organisation to contact in case of an emergency?	100,00 %
Did you receive contact information of someone at your hosting organisation to contact in case of an emergency?	88,89 %
Before departing, did you know what to expect during your mobility period (what you were going to do and what you are expected to learn)?	88,89 %
Did you sign a learning agreement or a similar document defining the expected learning outcomes of your mobility period?	44,44 %

Sustainable travel

It was difficult to predict the possibilities to travel in an environmentally sustainable way. We assumed that being an island without bridge/tunnel connection, it would be complicated to travel to Ireland by sustainable means. However, two of the participants were strongly opposed to travel by flight, and their efforts to find out how to travel by train and ferry became a positive learning outcome for the whole project and all participants. It was doable and not too difficult, but of course took longer time and a fair amount of research.

We are very pleased to see that 50% of the participants succeeded in traveling in a sustainable way, even though we had not foreseen it. Because of this, we strongly wish that the grant can be reallocated to to cover the increased costs of travel, and that these funds are taken from the pot that we have not used for living expenses.

Management of the project



The women often stayed in flats with access to kitchen. In Kilkenny, some of them stayed in the home of the main contact person, Caroline Schofield and enjoyed her big and warm hospitality as well as exciting discussions. The picture was taken while driving on the West Coast. Photo: Anna Andersson

Coordination the project

Initiator and coordinator of the project were one of the employed staff of the Swedish Canoe Federation, Katinka Ingves. She is development officer for recreational paddling and safety. Katinka worked together with her colleague Åsa Andersson, development officer for sustainability and recreational paddling. Katinka and Åsa were two of the project participants in the study visit to Denmark. They would be in charge of arranging a camp like the one in Denmark.

Katinka was responsible for communication with project applicants, selection process, ongoing communication with participants and planning the programme. Katinka and Åsa set up the preparatory and follow-up meetings, made the individual project plans, delegated tasks to the project participants, initiated contacts with the hosts in Ireland, organised accommodation and managed travel arrangements and car hire. To assure that hosting persons and organisation were of good quality and what we expected, many contacts via email and on TEAMS were performed.

The participants may have perceived the contacts as repetitive sometimes. The reason for reaching out to the participant repeatedly was to keep everyone active and in the loop. Some arrangements were depending on all participants active decisions and approval, and coordinators wanted to keep the process in a democratic and including manner. Written information was shared on a digital platform. The project has been administered and coordinated carefully and properly. In summary, the work effort was considerable, which was expected, but also because participants needed more support with some tasks than foreseen.



Photo: Karin Geissler



Photo: Eileen Murphy



Anna and Åsa had time for a hike in the beautiful Wickow Mountains. It was a rare moment of pause in the project activities. Photo: Anna Andersson



Photo: Malin Olin

Integrating results in the federations regular work and result of efforts

The project was not even finished when activities were carried out in the spirit of the project aims. As stated in the project plan, some of the goals are long term goals, due to what is required to reach them. The project aimed at providing the stepping stone and be the spark that kicks women onto the track, with project participants as role models and inspirers. The coordinator is also the person assigned in the federation to keep the results and aims of the project alive and established as a continual goal.

The visit to the Danish women's paddling camp resulted in the planning of a similar camp for women during the autumn of 2026. The camp will be smaller, and a pilot event to see if there is interest from the female paddling community to attend. With inspiration from the Danish camp, it will be open for all women paddlers, not only instructors (as our regular leader-instructor camps). The project participants will be asked to hold workshops and sessions, plus give a talk about the Erasmus project and what it meant to them personally. The network for women paddlers will be officially established at the camp in the autumn.

The Irish role model project, *Bridge the Gap*, highlighted the importance of listening to women paddlers what they want, to provide gathering places and training opportunities for women and to make role models visible. When the project participants held women only courses, demand was high, so we listened, and courses for women will continue to be offered to encourage women to advance their paddling skills on intermediate and advanced levels. A course programme under the collective name Break It! Krossa det blå glastaket (Break the blue glass ceiling) will be presented during spring 2026. The first course is already in the calendar.



Photo: Karin Geissler

Providing quality and support to the participants

PRACTICAL AND LOGISTIC ARRANGEMENTS, HEALTH AND SAFETY, QUALITY CHECKS

The two coordinating employees were in charge of the practical arrangements. For the first study visit, two out of three participants were staff at the federation. It was simple to set up the logistics and accommodation. Car was used to transport kayaks and two persons, and the third travelled major part of the distance by train, and then joined the two others and car-pooled the last part of the journey. Information about accommodation was obtained by the local organiser of the camp.

Accommodation in Ireland was chosen from a geographically practical perspective and to fit budget. Accommodation was paid for in advance by the canoe federation, but a few times participants had to book and pay, and were reimbursed afterwards. We took advice from locals about safe and nice areas in Dublin. In general, accommodation was booked to cater for a certain level of comfort, for example, no dormitory sleeping or shared facilities with others (outside the project). Access to kitchen was favoured, which gave the women flexibility. From the project coordinator's view, sharing accommodation also gave time to get to know each other and become a team.

To the greatest extent possible, it was avoided that participants had to spend money in advance or during the travels, although this could not completely be avoided due to practical reasons and regulations. In some cases, money was transferred to participant in advance, to cover greater expenditure.

All practical arrangements were discussed with participants before traveling and agreed upon. Insurance, social and physical health and welfare were also talked about and given advice on. Each participant got a chance to talk about what is important for her wellbeing. No specific quality checks were deemed necessary. The participants own opinions and views governed the way things were organised. Participants were adult and responsible for their own participation and for making the project activities as good as possible.

PREPARATION ACTIVITIES OFFERED TO PARTICIPANTS

Information was dispatched to participants with regular intervals to keep them updated and engaged in the project. The participants were given background information about the project, so as to understand the core of the project and the context. They were presented with statistics and data about the current situation regarding gender imbalance within the instructor, trainer and assessor cadre, in order to understand the motivation for the project, and also to be able to talk about it with people they would meet during the study visit.

A webbinar about the glass ceiling within sports were held, open to the public, and with the purpose of giving the project participants a common understanding of the theoretical basis for the project, and also its name, Through the blue glass ceiling. Blue is included in the name because water, associated with the colour blue, is our element (for paddling).

The participants and coordinator discussed what kind of activities that would benefit the project in three aspects; on federational level, for the participants and for the broader target group women paddlers in general, as well as the whole paddling community. The discussions lay ground for a common understanding and agreement on what was good quality activities, hosts and organisations.

Several online meetings, starting in January, were held to prepare and plan the study trips. Most time was spent on the trip to Ireland, as this was the most comprehensive project activity which involved

the largest number of participants. Meetings were also held with hosting persons in Ireland and participants, to get to know each other before meeting in real life.

General information about Ireland, travel and transport, culture and geography, paddling and Canoeing Ireland (National federation) were talked about, but also available in written form. All documents relevant to participants were shared on a digital platform so everyone could access information and contribute at all times. After the study visit to Ireland was finished, a follow-up meeting was held digitally.

LINGUISTIC SUPPORT

None of the participants felt need to take language training before the travels. They were all more or less fluid in English. They use English in their professions. Danish is not necessary to talk, as Swedish is understood by most Danish people and vice versa. That is why the linguistic support was not taken advantage of.



Hanna och Malin. Photo: Lovisa Larsson

Defining learning outcomes

The first study visit was expected to give experience and knowledge about the characteristics and layup of a women sea kayaking camp. Talking to both organisers and participants was a goal, to get to hear opinions and learn what works and why, how to handle questioning over a women only camp, get an example of programme, and get a feeling for the atmosphere at the camp.

Much emphasis was laid on individual development and experiences from a qualitative perspective. The participants were expected to learn something they did not know before the project about paddling, about women's conditions, challenges and opportunities in paddling, about being in an

Erasmus project, about the concept *glass ceiling* and what it means. The women were also expected to arrange an activity that supports the overall aim of the project. This was meant to give the participants experience of leading women only activities and reflect on that situation, and as an effect of this task, several more women benefitted from the project activities. These activities were indirectly part of the project, like an expansion, but not financed by EU.

The women also had individual talks with the project coordinator about their participation, and their plans were written down in a development plan. The plans were laid out in a broader perspective than only the study trips. The whole situation and aspirations of the women were taken into account. The women were highly involved in defining learning outcomes together with the project coordinator.

Several conversations over email, telephone and TEAMS were held with the key persons at the hosting organisations. The project was described both in writing and in talk to make the hosting persons understand the overall goal of the project, the background to it and to see how their hosting the women would contribute to the goals. The hosting organisations responded to different parts of the project goals.

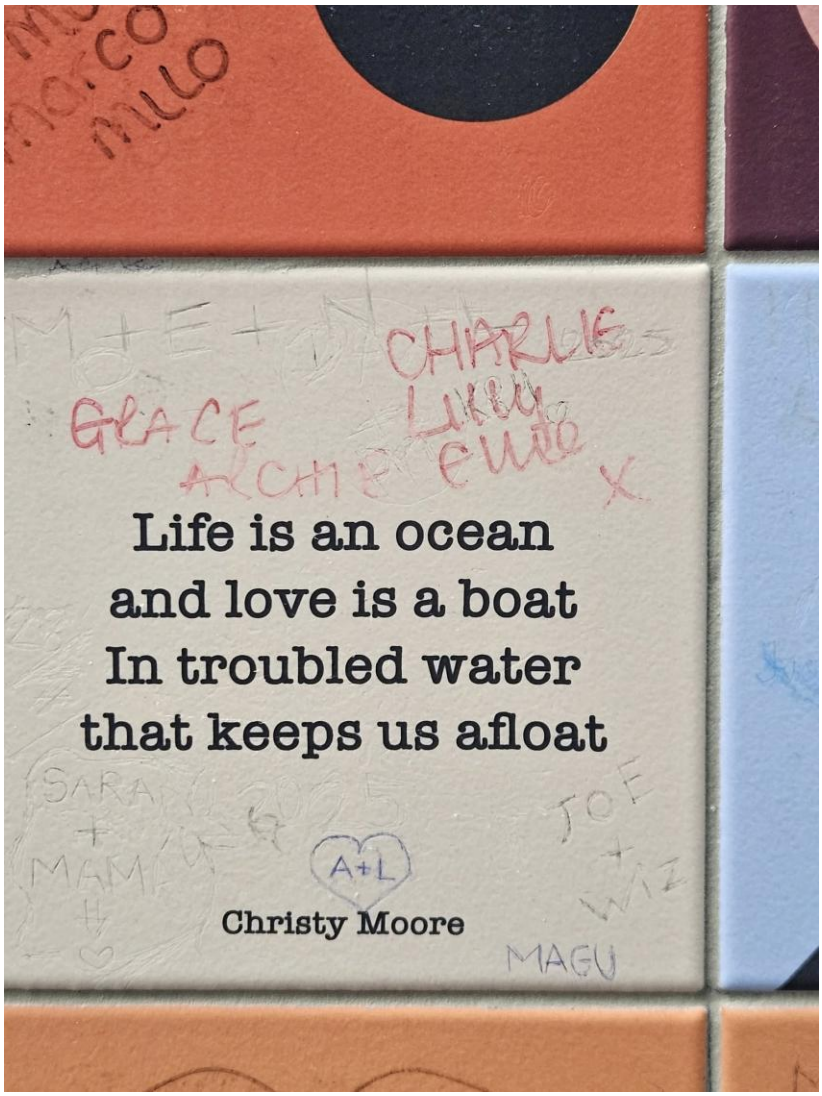


Photo: Karin Geissler

Evaluating participants' learning outcomes

The three participants that visited the camp in Denmark, evaluated their experience and learnings in talks and wrote down learnings to keep for future use. This was done immediately after the visit, also by writing individual evaluations.

The participants in the Ireland study visit were asked to keep notes during the study visit to document the activities and what they experienced, felt and learned. With the notes as starting point, they collected their learning outcomes and sent in to the coordinator after getting back to Sweden.

The most important occasion for evaluating the learning outcomes were during the follow-up meeting, when all participants got together online in a joint talk about their experiences and shared thoughts and reflections. In this meeting, the women evaluated the learning outcomes together, with the coordinator leading the talk. The women talked about their expectations and how they perceived being in the project, what they personally learned skillswise, discussions with the hosting persons about women in the paddling community and how they continuously want to ensure the continuation and spirit of the project aims. The participants also got opportunities to talks with the project coordinator individually.

The coordinator compiled the documentation of learning outcomes and the notes from the follow-up meeting to get an overview of the kind of learnings gained from the study visits.

CERTIFICATION

Participants did not request any certificate of participation in the project. They have all been acknowledged and presented in many ways in articles and social media posts.

Sharing results and knowledge about the programme

The following table summarises replies of participants when asked if they were aware that their mobility was funded by Erasmus+.

The following table summarises replies of participants when asked if they were aware that their mobility was funded by Erasmus+.

Activity Type	Percentage of positive replies
Job shadowing and observation periods	100 % of 9 total answers
Overall	100 % of 9 total answers

MAKING OUR PARTICIPATION IN ERASMUS+ WIDELY KNOWN WITHIN OUR ORGANISATION

Even before the project activities kicked off, the project was talked about on the website, social media, and also among some paddling community groups. Facts and background that were described as the reason for initiating the project raised interest, for example the statistics that showed the gap

between women and men in higher levels of paddling. The different stages of the project were mirrored on the website and social media.

At canoe federation occasions like assessor gatherings, instructor camps and trainer meetings, representatives mentioned the project. It has raised some critical views and questionings, but most of all it has got a lot of appraisal and positive comments. To make our member clubs and associated canoe rentals aware of the project, information was included in newsletters. The spreading of information was in general aimed at both public and internal recipients.



The host club Kilkenny Aqua Canoe Club posted on facebook when the Swedish group visited.

SHARING RESULTS OF THE PROJECT WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS AND THE PUBLIC

The federation published articles and posts about the project. Main channels were our official website and our Facebook account. The project participants were encouraged to share pictures and stories about their participation in the project. In fact, the spreading of information about the project were part of the conditions to join the project, and we gave information on how to frame the

messages, for example to hashtag Erasmus+. The project is estimated by ourselves to be the most wellknown project run by the federation.

The project attracted the attention of other organisations. For example, the Swedish Climbing Federation asked for a special meeting to know more about the project and our experiences of Erasmus+ projects. When the project was launched, women from other organisations got in touch about participation, which was a sign that the project was known in other organisations (although one of the criteria were to be active in an associated club or one of our instructor trainers). We shared our experiences to other sport federations in national meetings arranged by the National Sport Federation (in meetings about training and sport education).

A short video was filmed with both project participants and non-participant women that aimed to spread information about the project and to highlight women in paddling. The video clip was posted on the 8th of March (International Women's Day). The project was described in newsletters to the member clubs and commercial canoe rentals.

A press release was sent (Via TT) when the project group was taking off for Ireland. In all, this is one of the absolutly strongest and most significant projects that the coordinators have ever undertaken. Its impact on the consciousness of gender issues was raised not only within the federation but also outside. The project was positively spoken of in other organisations and inspired others to plan similar Erasmus projects.

What have you done to publicly acknowledge European Union funding for your project and to make your organisation's participation in Erasmus+ known in your community and in the wider public?

ACKNOWLEDGING EU FUNDING

Articles and posts about the project and its direct activities (study visits) were always described as an Erasmus+ mobility project funded by EU, and its Co-funded logo displayed. It was always mentioned at project presentations. For other measures taken, please see above.



Photo: Eileen Murphy

Participants feedback

General satisfaction

The following table presents the participants' replies to the question 'How satisfied are you with your Erasmus+ mobility experience?'

Activity type	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
Job shadowing and observation periods	100,00 %	0,00 %	0,00 %	0,00 %
Overall	**100,00 %**	**0,00 %**	**0,00 %**	**0,00 %**

The following table presents the participants' replies to the question 'Were you satisfied with the following arrangements for your mobility activity?'

	Share of participants indicating that they were satisfied
Overall organisation of the activity in terms of logistics and practical arrangements	100,00 %
Travel arrangements	100,00 %
Accommodation	100,00 %
Insurance coverage and information about insurance	100,00 %
My questions (or complaints) were addressed in a timely and helpful way	100,00 %

The following table presents the share of participants that agree with the presented statements.

	Percentage of positive replies
The job shadowing/training at the hosting organisation was of good quality and relevant for me.	100,00 %
I felt well received and well integrated at my hosting organisation.	100,00 %
At the hosting organisation, I had a mentor or a similar person who was following my learning progress and results.	44,00 %

COMMENTS ON PARTICIPANTS' FEEDBACK

The study visits were designed in a way that meant visiting several different activities and hosts, for reasons described in the section about format and content of the activities. This entailed that the participants did not have a single person that was a dialogue partner. The activities were not of the nature where participants were being observed or supervised, but instead they were in charge of their own learnings and findings. A thought about the survey response was that the wording, where "mentor" is mentioned, steered the participants thoughts about the answer in a direction that may not have been the intention by the questioner. Mentor may indicate a certain difference in level of knowledge or position, which did not correspond to the spirit and approach of the meetings. The picture of a mentor is also someone who follows over time, and the study visits to many different activities did not support that.

Project objectives and achievements

CHANGES IN GROUP COMPOSITION

At the outset, the aim was to have project participants from three disciplines. The purpose was to ensure that the effects of the project would be widely spread within the paddling community. Due to personal reasons, the two whitewater participants left. This meant that we had two disciplines

represented instead of three. Most important was that the participants had time and motivation to be the driving force of the project goal.

GENDER EQUALITY BENEFITS THE ENTIRE PADDLE SPORT

The entire sport of paddling benefits from, and is perhaps even dependent on, a more even gender distribution, for long-term sustainability. For women's own sake, it is important to ensure opportunities to develop and reach advanced levels. Role models and safe social environments to train difficult water environments are part of the path forward. That was the assumptions for this project.

LEARN ABOUT KAYAK CAMPS FOR WOMEN AND MAKE VISIBLE ROLE MODELS

The main aim of the project was to increase the number of women in leadership roles and women's access to all levels of paddling. The function of the project was to lay way for this goal by studying a camp for women, and share experiences and knowledge with Irish women paddlers.

With great skill and enthusiasm, the project team went many paddle lengths to inspire others by being seen, heard and together in the joint mission. Their voices were heard and reached out far longer than would the Swedish Canoe Federation on its own. Two of the women became assessors on next level, all took personal skills higher, one became appointed leader trainer.

Courses and paddling trips for women were carried out by the project participants. The activities were much appreciated. For many of the approximately 35 women, it was a first-time experience, both of leading and being participant in activities for women. The women became more skilled, and most important got more self-confidence and gained a sense of community.

The 35 course participants make up a good base for building a future female talent pool, from where new women instructors and leaders will be born. It was exactly this we wanted to achieve; ordinary paddling women got inspired to develop as paddlers and met awesome women instructors and became part of a female community. That enables a future where these women can feel that they have a natural place in the higher levels.

LEARNINGS FROM DENMARK

One of the greatest benefits from visiting the Danish Qcamp was to experience first-hand being on a camp for women. The visit made the importance of the camp tangible. ”Both instructors and participants felt safe and dared to try new things and be challenged and encouraged by each other. It became clear to me that this is a way that can make more women want to develop their paddling. In the long run, this means that more women reach a higher level”, said one project participant.

The popularity of Qcamp showed the need for a place for women to meet, train together, talk and laugh together. The camp participants expressed a strong shared view that they perceived a difference when paddling and training with women. They all enjoyed paddling in mixed groups, yet loved to be on Qcamp sensing it was prestigeless, relaxed, generous and responsive, a time when all questions could be asked. Some of the camp participants said it was crucial to them that it was a women separatistic camp, or they would not have tried some of the things in the programme.



Åsa Andersson, Katinka Ingves and Hanna Olausson with Danish instructor Karin Levinsen. Photo: Åsa Andersson



Liselotte Bæk Teglev (far left) was one of the organisers of Qcamp.

To summarize the visit, the three project participants felt that a similar camp in Sweden would fill a gap. Having said that, we are convinced that courses and camps in general are of good quality and safe and fun for both women and men, in both Denmark and Sweden. Despite that, there seem to linger a longing for spaces where women do not have to relate to men.

The camp was educational from a personal leadership and skills perspective. We learned about the importance of selecting instructors that share the opinion that the camp carries a bigger purpose than just learning skills. Plans to arrange a similar camp now have a place on this year's (2026) agenda.



Traditional shot, every year, a group photo is taken of the participants and instructors.

LEARNINGS FROM IRELAND

The project participants gained confidence, shared experiences and knowledge, learned personal technical as well as leadership skills, like paddling in tidal waters. They found new friends to network with around women's paddling. The visit to different places in Ireland gave a widened understanding of Irish culture, coastal nature and fauna in general, and Irish paddling community culture in particular. The meeting and activities with Irish paddlers, increased knowledge and ideas about how and why women appreciate learning together with other women. Visiting our host club meant new paddling experiences. Conversations gave a widened picture of how women paddlers experienced and related to Bridge the Gap initiative.

Visits to different stakeholders and events were developmental and educational for the group. Their experiences were forwarded in meetings to the Swedish Canoe Federation. The paddling days with one of Ireland's most well-known female paddler were interesting and brought complimentary information to the complex task of promoting women and perspectives on gender specific activities.

At a national kayak symposium, two project participants contributed with a workshop in Greenland roll, gave a speech about paddling in the North and a roundtable talk about gender equality in paddling.



Karin Åmossa had the audience's full attention when speaking about paddling the rough Norwegian coast, at the ISKA (Irish Sea Kayak Symposium) In Mulranny. Photo: Anna Andersson



With the storm raging outside, Karin Åmossa and Anna held the Greenland rolling workshop indoors in the warm waters of the pool. Photo: Anna Andersson

RAISE AWARENESS WITHIN THE INSTRUCTOR CADRE

The project raised attention from start among paddlers who take part of information from the Swedish Canoe Federation. When project activities started it caused discussions and appreciation. At every occasion where paddlers meet, we talked about the project and its background.

To sum up the project, we became certain about the need to keep gender issues highlighted. The gains from the project were irreplaceable. The women got a deeper understanding for the need for promoting women explicitly.



Hanna on whitewater at Kilkenny Aqua Canoe Club. Photo: Malin Olin



Our host club, Kilkenny Aqua Canoe Club, showed fantastic Irish hospitality. The Swedish group experienced a warm welcome and were invited to an exciting and educational day on the river.



Lovisa and Hanna about to command the river. Photo: Malin Olin



Malin taking a swim. The open canoe group took part of a course for adult students with prominent instructor Patrick McCormack. Photo: Lovisa Larsson



Anna Andersson, Åsa Franzén and Karin Geissler having a talk with Susan Honan, one of the most active Bridge the Gap ambassadors. Photo: Anna Andersson

Links

Call for project participants

https://kanot.com/utbildning/nyheter-utbildning/utbildning/2024-11-19-vill-du-vara-med-och-krossa-det-bla-glastaket

Webpage for the project

https://kanot.com/forbundet/centrala-projekt/genom-det-bla-glastaket---erasmusprojekt

Pressmeddelande

https://via.tt.se/pressmeddelande/4068798/sju-kvinnor-redo-att-krossa-det-bla-glastaket?publisherId=3237117&lang=sv

Presentation of project participants (original group)

https://kanot.com/utbildning/nyheter-utbildning/utbildning/2025-01-31-nu-tar-vi-sats-for-att-na-hogre-----genom-det-bla-glastaket?fbclid=IwY2xjawPUiAZleHRuA2FlbQIxMQBzcnRjBmFwcF9pZBAyMjIwMzkxNzg4MjAwODkyAAEeAPSyPE-NealMsns6ilGzXI4GcpyIKK_rgo0zBPqN7t8ADBMA3SQ-AXt5-eI_aem_1pFKDpoiVUsOAKdzFdHkiA

Kilkenny Aqua Canoe Club (host organisation) Facebook post about visit from Swedish group

https://www.facebook.com/profile/100063684004731/search/?q=swedish

