



**THEME:**

Building Positive Relations:  
Regional Level Projects

**FUNDING(ERDF+MATCH):**

€1,746,704.56

**MATCH FUNDERS:**

The Executive Office &  
Department of Rural and  
Community Development

**LEAD PARTNER:**

Irish Football Association

**PROJECT PARTNERS:**

Ulster Rugby, Ulster GAA

**Start Date:** 01/09/2017

**End Date:** 28/02/2022



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## SPECIAL EU PROGRAMMES BODY

### Project Case Study: Sport Uniting Communities

'Sport Uniting Communities' project is a cross-border collaboration project which will utilise sport to promote positive relations and cultural diversity between 16,996 individuals of differing backgrounds, particularly across the religious divide, resulting in a change in perception and sustained relationships.

The project will also create a regional pool of volunteers with the skills and capacity to promote positive relations; increase the regular and long-term participation of marginalised groups within sport (young people, older people, women and black/minority ethnic groups); and develop a pool of 45 inclusive and welcoming clubs, resulting in clubs becoming more open, inclusive and welcoming to people from different communities.

*"Sport has the power to bring people together. We have seen the positive effect that football has on communities across Northern Ireland, both in terms of the health benefits of playing the game as well as the shared experience of competing, spectating or volunteering. I am therefore delighted that the Irish FA is working with both Ulster GAA and Ulster Rugby on this ambitious and far-reaching project. With the three sports working together I have no doubt that 'Sport Uniting Communities' will make a lasting impact on Northern Ireland and will make a positive and enduring difference to people across the country."*

*~David J Martin, Irish FA President~*



Young people on the "Sport Uniting Communities" project .



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Research has revealed that sport delivers its most positive impacts on behaviour when it incorporates integrated mentoring, training, volunteering and work experience programmes. Based on this research, the project partners designed a range of activities based on education, training, empowerment and leadership directed to volunteers and clubs.

“Being part of the SUC programme really helped our club. The coaches and inflatables added great value to our community event, the Volunteer Development Day allowed us to put sustainable plans in place for volunteers and the GoldMark scheme offered us the opportunity to reward six of our young volunteers.”

~Maynard Stinson, Banbridge RFC, Volunteer Co-Ordinator~

**Key Project Outputs:**

**Regional level projects that result in meaningful, purposeful and sustained contact between persons from different communities: 1**



Young people on the “Sport Uniting Communities” project .