

DIGITALLY EMPOWERED REFEREES

Building competence and integrity in Medieval Combat

Erasmus+ Sport | KA182-SPO – Mobility of sport staff

Project number: 2025-2-AT01-KA182-SPO-000367573

Beneficiary: ARMORED COMBAT AUSTRIA (ACA)

Hosting organisation: Dansk Middelalderkampsport Sammenslutning (DMKS), Denmark

The project

Through the Erasmus+ project **“Digitally Empowered Referees – Building Competence and Integrity in the field of Medieval Combat”**, ARMORED COMBAT AUSTRIA explored how referee education, tournament organisation and digital workflows in Medieval Combat can be further developed.

Ten referees, referee trainees and organisational staff participated in a five-day job-shadowing mobility in Denmark. The activity focused on practical refereeing, rule application, tournament administration, digital documentation, communication and safety procedures under real competition conditions. A Preparatory Visit, digital preparation and structured feedback and reflection sessions complemented the mobility.

Our key learnings

1. Referee education requires more than knowledge of the rules.

Quality officiating also depends on clear responsibilities, effective communication, realistic staffing and break schedules, and good cooperation between referees, tournament organisers and technical staff.

2. Digitalisation is more than a software solution.

Digital systems can make processes faster and results available more quickly. However, reliable digitalisation also requires stable infrastructure, clearly assigned technical responsibilities, local backups and offline contingency solutions.

3. Practical learning under real conditions is particularly valuable.

Job shadowing provides opportunities not only to observe good practices, but also to critically analyse challenges. The aim is therefore not to copy another system, but to identify approaches that can be adapted to the organisation’s own context.

4. Officials’ working conditions are part of quality and safety.

Adequate breaks, access to water, suitable rest areas and protection from weather conditions directly affect concentration, decision-making, safety and the long-term retention of volunteer officials.

5. Mentoring and learning objectives need to be clearly visible.

Professional exchange during the mobility was intensive. At the same time, the project showed that named mentors, regular check-ins and clearly identified Learning Agreements can make individual learning progress more structured and visible.

What happens next?

The project results are being integrated into ACA’s **Sport and Competition Regulations**, referee education and digital tournament-management procedures. Together with the **Austrian Medieval Combat Marshal Association (AMCMA)**, existing templates and workflows are being assessed and further adapted to Austrian requirements.

Erasmus+ therefore creates not only international mobility, but concrete impulses for quality, good governance and sustainable organisational development in Medieval Combat.