

Newsletter **3**

PAINFREE




**PAIN
FREE**



Co-funded by
the European Union

The PAINFREE project is a two-year Erasmus+ initiative uniting six European organizations to combat back pain through physical activity and sport.

Following the successful development of the PAINFREE educational program in 2024, we are pleased to announce that the international training sessions have been successfully conducted, with a pilot testing in Sofia, Bulgaria in January 2025.

After that, between February and June, the Pilot Courses to test the Training Program were successfully conducted, bringing together 533 participants from across all 6 participating countries (Belgium, Croatia, Italy, France, Bulgaria and Spain), including sport operators, instructors, trainers, and medical experts from all six partner countries to be trained on the innovative methodology developed in the PainFree Project.

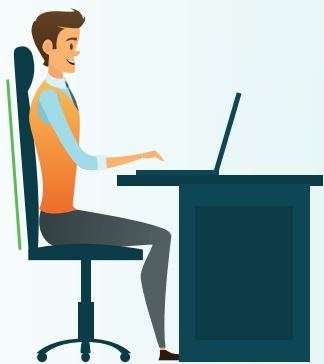
IMPACT AND RESULTS: MEASURING THE SUCCESS OF THE LOCAL PILOT COURSES

The local pilot courses conducted across all six partner countries from February to June 2025 have yielded compelling evidence of the PAINFREE methodology's effectiveness. Out of the 533 training participants who participated in the national training sessions, 487 experienced back pain in the past year.

The pre- and post-intervention assessments revealed significant improvements:

- The percentage of respondents reporting back pain decreased from 55.72% before the training to 42.03% afterward, representing a reduction of nearly 14 percentage points.
- Beyond pain relief, participants also reported enhanced functionality in their daily activities. Problems with climbing stairs decreased from 13% to 10%, while difficulties with tasks such as putting on socks improved from 17% to 11%.

These results demonstrate that the PAINFREE Educational Program and physical activity approach successfully empowers participants to manage and reduce back pain, validating the methodology delivered by our trained professionals across European workplaces.



VOICES FROM THE FIELD: PARTNER EXPERIENCES ACROSS EUROPE

Belgium (EPSI) - Hogeschool VIVES, Roeselare, May 19th, 2025: The European Platform for Sport Innovation transformed a traditional classroom into an "action room" where university students and staff participated in a collective 25-minute workout routine for lower back pain relief, followed by an interactive demonstration of the PAINFREE digital platform. The session concluded with a quiz that rewarded two winners with tickets to EPSI's Annual Conference in Finland, showcasing how the methodology can be successfully implemented in educational environments with minimal resources.



Croatia (FZSRI) - JGL and Adrialab Companies, Rijeka, March-May 2025: The Faculty of Health Studies of the University of Rijeka organized a 12-week exercise program at their gym facilities where approximately fifteen employees from JGL and Adrialab pharmaceutical companies and also employees of Faculty participated in two to three training sessions per week led by physiotherapy students under the supervision of experts. Participants praised the professionalism and enthusiasm of the instructors, reporting not only reduced back pain but also improved overall fitness, energy levels, and a stronger sense of community.



France (AZUR SPORT SANTÉ) - Local interventions, 2025: The Pain Free Pilot Program in France was well received and had a meaningful impact. The sessions not only helped some participants reduce pain but also successfully raised awareness of back-pain prevention, encouraging them to notice, reflect on, and address body signals. This made participants more attentive to postural habits and discomforts—an essential first step toward sustainable prevention and healthier daily practices. The satisfaction survey confirmed that participants had a highly positive experience, with the majority rating the sessions 4 or 5 out of 5. Participants particularly appreciated the practical and interactive approach, the integration of active breaks in the workplace and the engaging trainers.



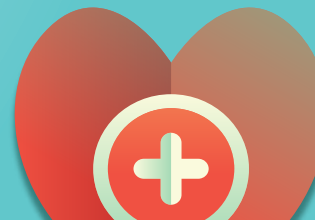
Bulgaria (BG AND SPORTS FOR ALL) - Sofia, Blagoevgrad, Bansko, and Razlog, 2025: Kinesiotherapist and wellness coach Ivelina Dimitrova led six training workshops across four Bulgarian cities, with each location featuring two sessions—the first focused on building trust and demonstrating accessible exercises, and the second confirming the training's effectiveness as participants shared real improvements and increased motivation. The warm and inspiring atmosphere, combined with participants' curiosity and openness to change, created a community that believes in the power of activity and prevention.



Italy (L'ORMA) - Milan and Lodi, May-July 2025: L'ORMA organized free outdoor yoga classes, in meditation centers, and in schools with instructors Lorenza, Antonella, and Maria and organized free postural exercises with Marco. The goal was to conduct sessions focused on spinal mobility, postural awareness, and tension release for approximately 20 participants per session. The practical workshops combined the theoretical knowledge acquired during Sofia's international training with practical yoga sequences targeting the lumbar, cervical, and thoracic areas, with participants reporting immediate and lasting benefits.



Spain (Confederación Sindical Independiente Feticó: The Pain Free training sessions in Spain were conducted in three training groups led by David Rocha, a personal trainer who provided participants with a comprehensive video featuring all exercises recorded and explained in detail. This innovative approach allowed participants to practice and train at home between sessions, ensuring continuity and reinforcing the learning before attending the follow-up workshops, thereby maximizing the program's effectiveness and promoting autonomous self-care habits.



PAINFREE App: YOUR PERSONAL BACK HEALTH COMPANION

An App has also been developed as part of the PAINFREE project. This mobile application is a comprehensive digital tool designed to empower users to take control of their back health. The app provides a personalized training experience, allowing users to customize their exercise sessions based on their specific needs: they can select which area of the back they want to target (lumbar, cervical, or thoracic), control the duration of their workouts, and track their progress over time.

With recorded video demonstrations, clear explanations of each exercise, and flexible programming that adapts to individual schedules and fitness levels, the PAINFREE App extends the impact of the training sessions beyond the classroom and workplace, making evidence-based back pain prevention and management accessible anytime, anywhere. The app is available for free download and represents a long-term result of the project, ensuring that the knowledge and tools developed through PAINFREE continue to benefit users across Europe and beyond long after the project's completion.

Download the Painfree app now from our website:
<https://backpainfree.eu>



For more information about Project results, you can contact partner organizations:



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FINAL CONFERENCE IN MILAN

The PainFree project is coming to an end, from the 3rd to the 5th of December, the project results will be presented at a Final Conference in Milan, which will bring together the national experts and professionals who have participated throughout all phases of the project.

FOLLOW THE PROJECT:



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