



Good practice handbook, No. 3

Disability sport in Europe

Disability sport in Europe

Learning from experience

Matthias Gütt

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Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport (EPAS)

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Foreword

Since the 1960s, the Council of Europe has developed recommendations and resolutions¹ guaranteeing full participation of disabled persons into social and sporting life.

The challenge is a considerable one: that everyone – both able-bodied and disabled – be allowed to benefit from the advantages of practising sport. For those with motor, intellectual, mental or sensory disabilities, practising sport not only covers the therapeutic and medical intentions generally defined as treatment, but also the social and educational aspects.

Sport is a means by which one can get to know oneself better, improve self-esteem and physical condition and is essential to rehabilitation. It allows those with disabilities to reinforce their independence, build and strengthen their social network so that they can, in turn, find a place in society and live with others. Sport also helps to overcome differences in the fight against prejudice, stereo-typing, intolerance and discrimination.

This handbook sends a strong message: improve the current situation of those with disabilities, by analysing and finding good

1. Recommendation No. R(86) 18 on the European Charter on Sport for All: Disabled persons, adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 4 December 1986, Recommendation No. R(92) 13 rev. of the Committee of Ministers to member states on the revised European Sports Charter, adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 24 September 1992 and revised on 16 May 2001, Resolution on principles for policies using sport to promote social cohesion (2/200) from the 9th Conference of European Ministers responsible for Sport, Bratislava 30-31 May 2000.

practices to make accessibility to sporting activities easier for them. In addition, it calls for a unity amongst European citizens to change the perception of disabled people who are admittedly different but equal to able-bodied people. They must be considered as citizens in their own right.

For decades, measures have been taken and systems set up on the one hand, to offer people with disabilities the opportunity to enjoy a sporting life and, on the other, to fight against all forms of discrimination that they encounter in the sporting world. Such actions concern not only access to both grass-roots and elite sports, but also to sporting equipment and they depend on the collaboration of public authorities and the sporting movement. This synergy alone will help break down the barriers which continue to mark the sporting lives of those with disabilities, whether they be amateurs, elite or professional sportsmen and women. It is also necessary if we are to reach the goal of having equal levels of participation when it comes to practising sport and also in technical and administrative coaching.

Progress has definitely been made, but several challenges still need to be conquered. At least 80,000,000 people in the Council of Europe's member states are affected by a disability of one form or another.² These figures are constantly rising due notably to demographic growth, medical developments and the ageing population.

2. This estimate of 10% of the Council of Europe member states' population is in fact lower than the World Health Organisation's current estimate of approximately 15% of the world population. This 10% estimate dates from the 1970s. See WHO's World report on disability 2011, www.who.int/disabilities/world_report/2011/en/

Disabled people are still nowadays confronted with difficulties in their daily sporting activities, including at the highest sporting level. It is not a minor problem, but indeed a problem of society.

The Council of Europe, EPAS and its member states will continue with their efforts in this field to work together against discrimination with regard to disabled people in and through sport.

Stanislas FROSSARD
Executive Secretary
Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport (EPAS)
Directorate General II: Democracy
Directorate of Human Rights and Antidiscrimination
Council of Europe

The Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport (EPAS) seeks to facilitate discussion between various stakeholders, such as public authorities, policy-makers, researchers, non governmental organisations, sport clubs and associations in disseminating a collection of handbooks on good practices.

This handbook is the third in a collection of good practices. It addresses the issue of disability sports in Europe focusing on the access of people with disabilities to the practice of sport. The

first part assesses the development of disability sport and the challenges faced by those involved. The second focuses on best practices and positive experiences from across Europe via the use of case studies.

This activity is wholly in keeping with the remit of the EPAS, which is to foster the sharing of experiences and develop standards that will help to unlock the potential of sport, not least as an instrument for promoting the Council of Europe's core values.

I. Introduction

“The governments of [the Council of Europe’s] member states should [...] take the necessary steps to ensure that all relevant public authorities and private organisations are aware of the sporting and recreational wants and needs, including in education, of all disabled persons [...]”.

European Charter on Sport for All: Disabled Persons, 1986

The political background regarding the equal treatment of all European citizens, including providing people with disabilities an unconstrained access to sports, has been on the agenda since the early 1990s, and without doubt since then the different disability sport sectors and countries in Europe have developed and gained considerable experience. Nonetheless, the European Disability Forum states that today still “one out of two disabled persons has never participated in leisure or sport activities”³. Studies prove that lack of information often creates barriers to participation and both people with and without disabilities often lack access to information on disability conditions and especially to positive role models from the sector. Bearing in mind that the aim of the Council of Europe is to achieve greater unity between its members and that the Council of Europe’s EPAS aims to promote sport, to emphasise its positive values and to encourage dialogue between public authorities, sports federations and NGOs, this handbook’s objective is to provide

3. This chapter is based on a number of academic sources and reference works. In order to make the handbook more readable and accessible for non-academics, we will not use the academic system of citation consistently. All sources consulted can be found in the references section at the end of the handbook.

a practicable overview of certain disability sport conditions and existing good practices.

The perspective of the book

It is widely believed that dissemination of and learning from experience prevents the reinvention of the wheel and therefore supports evidence-based development. In this regard, this handbook was designed to provide a functional tool supporting the diverse stakeholders interested in sharing information and learning from each other. It is expected to be a useful tool for practitioners, both newcomers and professionals from inside and outside the disability sport sector, by finding a fine balance between providing core information from a general European perspective, while also providing case studies from different countries, fields and sports. This handbook provides a practical source of knowledge and selected examples on how different stakeholders seek to overcome specific problems in their country, sector or field, in order to raise participation in and facilitate the development of the disability sport sector in the European regions.

This handbook does not cover all details and concepts related to disability sport, nor can it include and evaluate all the different kinds and varieties of disability sports and related practices. But it strongly seeks to attach value to collecting and exchanging experience in the field of disability sport through taking a first step forward. It has been built on the profound expertise of various individuals and organisations from the disability sport sector in Europe, who gave evidence and insight about their experiences, supplemented with evidence from existing studies and publications. These selected case

studies will support learning and help open the door to a broader European dimension of disability sport with further trans-national and trans-sectoral co-operation, and a more aligned and evidence-based development in the future.

Terminology

In regards to the proper use of terminology, it is clear that there are considerable debates as to the different terms related to this sector (Howe, 2011), and that translations and terminology might differ in each European country (Brunel University, 2002). However, for the purposes of this handbook, it has been decided to leave the inconsistent terminology, as it does not detract from the idea of learning from and by the experiences provided. For reasons of readability references to persons are generally not gender-specific.

The structure of the book

After a brief introduction about selected conditions of the sector at European level, including a brief overview of organisations and European-wide policies, the handbook refers to the concept of “learning from experience”. Then, the single case studies are detailed. For better guidance, the chapters are split into five topics which are marked in different colours:



In these sections, the related case studies are briefly described with reference to the main organisation(s) involved, the main topic covered, a short description of the case study, any specific comments, for example, regarding innovation or implementation, and the contact details for further information.

II. Disability sport in Europe

The term “disability” describes a complex phenomenon and multi-dimensional experience, reflecting an interaction between the characteristics of one’s body and of the society in which one lives. Approaches to measuring disability vary across countries, and statistical data on disabled people varies according to the different sources. Since the 1970s, estimates have suggested a figure of around 10% of the global population, but the world-wide number of people with disabilities is growing: the World Health Organization (WHO) refers in its *World Report on Disability 2011* to around 785 million (15.6%) persons aged 15 years and older world-wide living with some form of disability, with about 110 million of them experiencing considerable difficulties in functioning. The WHO Global Burden of Disease project even estimates a figure of around 975 million (19.4%) persons with a disability (see WHO GBD 2011 at www.who.int), including around 190 million (3.8%) with a severe disability.

In the European Union (EU), there is an estimated number of around 80 million disabled people, i.e. 15% of the entire population. People with reduced mobility are estimated to represent more than 40% of the population in Europe (European Disability Forum 2011). In Europe’s largest country, the Russian Federation, sources vary from an estimated 13 to 15 million disabled people up to a rate of 16.4% of the total population of approximately 143 million (Sharapova, 2010). Considering a higher risk of disability at older ages and a global increase in chronic health conditions, such as diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, and mental disorders, which will influence the nature and prevalence of disability, the number of people facing disabilities may

even increase (WHO, World report on disability 2011). This implies that European countries will face further challenges regarding disability in the future.

I. Definitions

• Concepts of disability

There is no common definition of “disability” throughout Europe, and legal definitions of disability have been an issue of much debate. Definitions vary from country to country, and some of the countries even use varied definitions of disability in their different legal instruments. The expression “disability” itself is often used as an umbrella term, covering different types of impairments, activity limitations, participation restrictions or even accessibility barriers. The main characteristics of disability can be described as “the permanent or long-term physical, mental or sensory impairment of the person’s functional capacity, which differentiates a person from other persons of their age and is a consequence of an injury or illness that existed at birth, arose thereafter or can be expected to arise” (WHO, 2011: Disabilities).

Definitions of disability generally fall into one of two main models: the individual, medical perspective – the “medical model” – and the “social model” which considers persons as disabled by society rather than by their bodies (Olivier, 1990). In the recent past, a paradigm shift from the medical to the social model has been promoted. But “on their own, neither model is adequate, although both are partially valid” (WHO, 2002). There is a need for a balanced approach, considering all different aspects of disability, as it is neither purely medical nor purely social. In 1992, the Council of Europe was already

emphasising various obstacles of disability: a “disability is a restriction caused by physical, psychological, sensory, social, cultural, legal or other obstacles that prevent disabled people from becoming integrated and taking part in family life and the community on the same footing as everyone else (...). It includes all impairments and incapacities linked with motor, visual, hearing, mental/cognitive and psychological disorders, and all restrictions resulting from the presence of several of these conditions in one person.” (Parliamentary Assembly Recommendation 1185).

Working towards a more aligned language and model for disability, in 2002 the WHO developed the so-called “bio-psycho-social model” of disability. Since then, the WHO’s International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF) has assisted not only by providing a framework for interdisciplinary research in disability and for making results of such research more comparable, but also for its function as a planning and policy tool for decision-makers. Through the ICF, the WHO has marked a paradigm shift in the way disability is understood and measured. Before, “disability has been seen as an unrelated entity, either as a medical issue of bodily impairments such as blindness and deafness or as an imposed restriction on the individual that hinders him/her from taking part in daily life activities. ICF has brought these concepts into a comprehensive whole of multiple dimensions of human functioning synthesizing biological, psychological, social and environmental aspects.” (Kostanjsek, 2011). The way in which and process of how “disability” was and is defined and perceived may explain how sport for people with a disability has developed.

• Development of disability sport

Sport for persons or athletes with a disability has existed for more than 100 years, but is as it exists in its modern form, a relatively recent phenomenon. Sports clubs for deaf people have existed since 1888 and the International Committee of Sports for the Deaf (CISS) was founded back in 1924. In the same year, the first games for athletes with a disability, known as The Silent Games, were organised with 148 athletes participating. Deaf sport was and is often “distinguished from other groups of people with disabilities and in some countries deaf people prefer not to label deafness as a disability” (International Platform on Sport and Development, 2011). But, following the same rules, the need for separate games for deaf athletes is evident as “deaf athletes are distinguished from all others in their special communication needs on the sports field, as well as in the social interaction that is an equally vital part of the games” (International Committee of Sports for the Deaf, 2011).

In 1944, a new approach, heralded by Dr. Ludwig Guttmann, introduced the idea of sport as an important part of the remedial treatment and total rehabilitation of persons with a disability. Rehabilitation sport evolved rather quickly into recreational sport and the next step to competitive sport took only a matter of some years. In 1948, the first competition for athletes in wheelchairs – the Stoke Mandeville Games – was introduced. In 1960, the first Paralympic Games were held directly following the Olympic Games in Rome, and included 400 athletes from 23 countries, whilst the first Paralympic Winter Games took place in 1976. Today, the Paralympic Games are elite sporting events for athletes with a disability, governed by the International Paralympic Committee (IPC), the global governing body of the Paralympic Movement.

Sport for persons with intellectual disabilities began to be organised in the 1960s through the Special Olympics movement. Nowadays, the Special Olympics World Summer and Winter Games are organised as large participative sporting events following a “sport for all” approach. In parallel, since 1986, the International Sports Federation for Persons with Intellectual Disability (INAS) has supported elite competition for para-athletes with an intellectual disability.

Since their early beginnings, various disability sports and multi-disability sport competitions have been developed and run under the umbrella of the different disability-orientated international organisations created. Nonetheless, for a long time, disability sport or sport for the disabled was unfortunately often disregarded, remained peripheral to mainstream sports or was perceived as marginalised sport by the wider public. But in its latest developments, disability sports have gained more and more positive awareness both at grass-roots and elite sport level.

• *Concepts of disability sport*

The practice of sport by persons with disabilities is closely related to their specific disability or impairment and the respective medical taxonomic systems. Therefore, as the term “disability” is a complex phenomenon and multi-dimensional experience, so is the term “disability sport” (DePauw et al, 2005). With heterogenic terms and definitions existing in the different European countries, ranging from elite sport to recreational sport and adapted physical education to rehabilitation sport concepts, defining disability sports is as complex as defining the term “sport”. In 1992, the Council of Europe sought to provide guidance for sport-related legislation and policies of its

member states through its European Sport Charter, proposing “sport as all physical activities, which are carried out in order to express or improve physical fitness and mental wellbeing”.

Some disability sports are mainstream sports only slightly modified to meet the needs of persons with a disability (sometimes referred to as “adapted sport”); others have been specifically created with no equivalent in mainstream sport. In general, disability sport is used as an umbrella term describing sports activities that have been created or developed for the specific benefit of, or are specifically practiced by, people or athletes with disabilities, including opportunities for them to practice sports with or against other people or athletes with disabilities and/or non-disabled people and athletes (Guett et al, 2011). Paralympic sports specifically refer to those sports contested by athletes with disabilities in the Summer and Winter Paralympic Games. Paralympic sports are generally related to elite performance and determined through specific classification systems as a structure for the competitions. Not all sports in the Paralympic movement are part of the Paralympic Games, and in addition to those, persons with a disability do many sports outside the formal sports movement. Besides, new disability sports and events are constantly evolving.

At the organisational level of disability sport, the term “mainstreaming” has been a key focus in Western European countries’ sport policies in recent decades. Mainstreaming refers to the integration and inclusion of athletes with disabilities in mainstream sporting organisations, and “is seen as important if an inclusive society is to be achieved” (Howe, 2011). However,

some researchers have highlighted challenges with this policy direction within disability sport, and so far there is little evidence of its successful implementation in practice. Especially, if true integration instead of assimilation is envisaged, it “may need further dialogue between all agencies to establish which models are most likely to work and what roles these organisations may need to adopt” (Guett et al, 2011).

2. Challenges in disability sport

Disability sport has always been connected to challenges and controversies, due to its complexity and multi-dimensional approach. General challenges in the sector often refer to attitudes towards persons with disabilities in sport, to barriers to inclusion and integration in sport, e.g. regarding mainstreaming, and to accessibility. In particular, accessibility has been declared by many stakeholders in the recent past as an overarching principle for the success of disability sport, since insufficient or inadequate access (either referring to physical access to a sports centre, to attitudinal access, or the need for better access to knowledge) to disability sport provision at all levels and aspects is still a major barrier. In addition, special attention may need to be given to young people and the elderly. Furthermore, as elite sport performance in disability sport develops, related challenges concerning the classification system, doping, ethics and equity issues have to be taken into account.

The challenges in areas determining the functionality and success of a National Paralympic Committee have been established by the IPC’s Development Committee through the following key categories: leadership, awareness, structure, relationships, funding, technical

knowledge, facilities, sports, and athletes. Analysis of recent trans-European research indicates that – despite different structures and backgrounds – the challenges faced in European countries are mostly comparable, with regards to the need for more educated and trained staff, improved infrastructures and support, and accessibility. These seem to reflect current major barriers in disability sports in relation to participation, events and competition, as well as the workforce.

3. Organisations in disability sport

Brief introductions are given for the following selected players within the disability sport movement in Europe, starting with major umbrella organisations (in alphabetical order).

CEREBRAL PALSY INTERNATIONAL SPORTS AND RECREATION ASSOCIATION	CPISRA
<p>The mission of CPISRA is to promote and develop the means by which people with cerebral palsy or a related neurological condition can have access to opportunities for participation in sport and recreational activities throughout the world. CPISRA seeks to increase the number of national members and promote with and through them the value of sport and recreation.</p> <p>The aims and purposes of CPISRA are to promote the benefits to persons with cerebral palsy and related neurological conditions, and where applicable, to those with other disabilities who may wish to access a particular sport governed by CPISRA to be gained through participation in sports and sporting events. CPISRA encourages and facilitates the organisation and running of more World, National and Regional Games.</p>	
<p>www.cpisra.org</p>	

EUROPEAN PARALYMPIC COMMITTEE**EPC**

EPC was founded in 1991 and adopted its current name in 1999. In 2008 the permanent Office and Headquarters of the EPC was established in Vienna, Austria. Currently, the EPC is composed of 47 National Paralympic Committees and the European branches of four disability-specific International Organisations of Sports for the Disabled.

The EPC's mission is to secure the provision of excellent sporting opportunities for European athletes with a disability as part of the world-wide Paralympic movement. The EPC seeks to boost the participation of citizens with particular needs through sport; this participation goes beyond merely practising sport in the community. The EPC believes sport involves sharing time and space with others, including intercultural dialogue, enhancing unity and promoting respect for diversity amongst their 47 member nations.

www.europaralympic.org

INTERNATIONAL BLIND SPORTS FEDERATION – EUROPEAN CONTINENTAL DELEGATION**IBSA**

Since its foundation in Paris in 1981, IBSA has been in a constant process of evolution to adapt to the ever-changing world of sports for the blind. IBSA is registered as a non-profit making, public interest body, and is full member of the IPC. IBSA is the legitimate representative of sports for the blind.

IBSA provides its movement with a unique identity in order to further develop and promote sports for the blind and visually impaired. It is committed to providing assistance to its national member organisations in all five continents, especially those organisations in developing countries. IBSA believes sport is the ideal means to promote the integration of disabled people in general and the blind in particular.

www.ibsa.es

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF SPORTS FOR THE DEAF**ICSD**

Founded as Comité International des Sports Silencieux (CISS) in France in 1924, the ICSD today gathers 104 national deaf sports federations, as members of this sole worldwide deaf multi-sports representative organisation. The Silent Games, in 1924, were the first games ever for athletes with a disability.

The objects of the ICSD's mission statement are 1) to supervise the organisation of successful Summer and Winter Deaflympics, 2) to promote and contribute to the development of sport opportunities and competitions, from grass-roots to elite level, for deaf athletes, 3) to support and encourage educational, cultural, research and scientific activities that contribute to the development and promotion of the Summer and Winter Deaflympics (both Games are sanctioned by the IPC), 4) to fully enforce a drug-free sport environment for all deaf athletes in conjunction with the World Anti-Doping Agency, and 5) to promote sports for deaf athletes without discrimination for political, religious, economic, disability, gender or ethnic reasons.

www.deaflympics.com

INTERNATIONAL PARALYMPIC COMMITTEE**IPC**

The IPC is the global governing body of the Paralympic Movement. Founded in 1989, the IPC is an international non-profit organisation run by 170 National Paralympic Committees from five regions and four disability-specific international sports federations. The IPC is also represented on several Commissions and Committees of the International Olympic Committee and vice versa. The IPC Headquarters and its management team are located in Bonn, Germany. The vision of the IPC is "to enable paralympic athletes to achieve sporting excellence and inspire and excite the world".

The IPC organises the Summer and Winter Paralympic Games, and serves as the International Federation for nine sports, for which it supervises and co-ordinates the World Championships and other competitions. The IPC is committed to enabling Paralympic athletes to achieve sporting excellence and to developing sport. In regard to implementation in other countries, it is important that there is an easy means by which visitors to the site can determine their own potential sport and event classification; also that the club database is kept properly up to date, for all persons with a disability ranging from beginner to elite level. The IPC aims to promote the Paralympic values, which include courage, determination, inspiration and equality.

www.paralympic.org

INTERNATIONAL SPORTS FEDERATION FOR PARA-ATHLETES WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES

INAS

INAS is an international charity and the recognised International Federation for athletes with an intellectual disability. It is a global organisation that promotes inclusion through sport and is a full member of the IPC. INAS was formed in 1985 and has grown to a membership of more than 50 nations across the world, representing many thousands of athletes with an intellectual disability.

INAS manages an annual programme of more than 15 Regional and World Championship competitions working closely with the International Federations for sport, maintaining regional and world records/rankings, and managing the eligibility and classification process for athletes with an

www.inas.org

intellectual disability. Every four years it hosts the INAS Global Games – a ten-day celebration of sport for elite athletes with an intellectual disability which includes World Championships in seven sports.

www.inas.org

INTERNATIONAL WHEELCHAIR & AMPUTEE SPORTS FEDERATION

IWAS

The IWAS – a merger of the International Stoke Mandeville Wheelchair Sports Federation (ISMWSF) and the International Sports Organisation for the Disabled (ISOD) – works in concert with, and complementary to, the IPC and its sports, as well as other International Federations since its inception in 1952.

As a multi-sport governing body, IWAS focuses on the goals of the Paralympic movement, and as such it provides distinct athlete pathways through provision of IWAS Games programmes, at both World and Junior level, as recognised steps towards Paralympic Games qualification across a variety of sports. IWAS develops sports to Paralympic programme standard and thus provides the IPC with the resources to include those sports at the Paralympic Games under its sports' rules and regulations.

www.iwasf.com

SPECIAL OLYMPICS – EUROPE/EURASIA

SOEE

The mission of SOEE is to play an active role in supporting the development of 58 National Special Olympics Programmes in Western Europe, Eastern Europe and Central Asia. SOEE's vision is to establish Special Olympics as a leading, well-recognised movement, financially strong and capable of using its influence to change attitudes and access resources for programmes that make a positive impact on the lives of people with intellectual disabilities in the region.

Through its work, SOEE assists these National Programmes to become better known, better funded and more successful in both expanding and improving sports opportunities and other initiatives for individuals with intellectual disabilities. Special Olympics National Programmes provide year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympics-type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities, giving them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy and participate in a sharing of gifts, skills and friendship with their families, other Special Olympics athletes and the community.

www.specialolympics.org

The following are International Disability Sport Federations recognised by the IPC as the sole world-wide representative of a sport for athletes with a disability that has been granted the status as a Paralympic Sport:

International Association for Disabled Sailing	IFDS	Sailing	www.sailing.org/disabled
International Wheelchair Basketball Federation	IWBF	Wheelchair Basketball	www.iwbf.org
International Wheelchair Rugby Federation	IWRF	Wheelchair Rugby	www.iwrf.com
World Organisation Volleyball for Disabled	WOVD	Volleyball	www.wovd.info

The following are International Mainstream Sport Federations recognised by the IPC as the sole world-wide representative of a sport for athletes with a disability that has been granted the status as a Paralympic Sport:

Fédération Equestre Internationale	FEI	Para-Equestrian	www.horse-sport.org
International Cycling Union	UCI	Para-Cycling	www.uci.ch
International Rowing Federation	FISA	Para-Rowing	www.world-rowing.com
International Table Tennis Federation	ITTF	Para-Table Tennis	www.ittf.com
International Tennis Federation	ITF	Wheelchair Tennis	www.itftennis.com
World Archery (former FITA Fédération Internationale de Tir à l'Arc)	WA/FITA	Para-Archery	www.archery.org
World Curling Federation	WCF	Wheelchair Curling	www.worldcurling.org

These federations exercise technical jurisdiction and guidance over the competition and training venues of its respective sport during the Paralympic Games.

Other Disability Sport Federations include:

European Disabled Golf Association	EDGA	Handi-Golf	www.edgagolf.com
Fédération Internationale de Powerchair Football Association	FIPFA	Powerchair Football	www.fipfa.org
World Amputee Football Federation	WAFF	Amputee Soccer	www.worldamputeefootball.com

Finally, the following is another interesting stakeholder:

EUROPEAN FEDERATION OF ADAPTED PHYSICAL ACTIVITY	EUFAPA
<p>EUFAPA is a European organisation concerned with the promotion and dissemination of experiences, results and findings in the fields of adapted physical activity and sport science, and their practical application to the benefit of individuals across their life span. EUFAPA's mission is to promote, facilitate, and co-ordinate European co-operation in research, professional preparation, service delivery and advocacy of Adapted Physical Activity for individuals with disabilities. Adapted Physical Activity includes, but is not limited to, physical education, sport, recreation, and rehabilitation.</p>	
www.eufapa.eu	

4. European policy stakeholders and policies in disability sport

“The relationship between European policy-making and sport is gaining momentum due to the growing convergence between sport and

other social areas of activity, the unflagging importance of political players for the organisation of sport and the tangible evidence that sport is becoming ever more important at European level” (Groll et al, 2009). In the recent past, policy development and recognition in decision-making processes relating to persons with disabilities and sport has also increased. And – in selected areas – disability sport could benefit even more from a wider political presence and influence; whether it is related to disability or sport politics. Nonetheless, it might be noted that disability sport has rarely been the focus of any sustained or clearly defined political and policy commitment so far.

However, recent trans-national research on disability sport policy in Europe indicates “that there is – in the main – government interest in, and support for, the development of sport for disabled people”; only “the level of policy details and extent to which policy is implemented varies significantly” (Thomas, 2011). In this regard, “sector specific policy to prioritise the approach to fundamental issues inherent within disability sport at a European level is recommended. [...] The structure of such policy would require consultation with the sector through key stakeholders to ensure that policy is applicable. [...] [As any] regulation is, by its very nature, sensitive [, any] [...] process by which a policy on disability sport is pursued would have to be managed carefully” (Guett et al, 2011).

In the following paragraphs, certain policy stakeholders and existing European-wide policies with relevance for disability and sport are briefly presented through selected initiatives.

The **Council of Europe** has promoted the integration of people with disabilities since 1959, through its Partial Agreement in the Social and Public Health Field at the outset, followed by the two-fold

activities carried out by the former Directorate General of Social Cohesion: on the one hand elaborating and promoting European standards, policies, practices and tools in disability, and on the other hand supporting non-discrimination and equal opportunities with the perspective of reducing inequality and building confidence in a common and secure future for all.

The Council of Europe's action regarding the integration of people with disabilities and their right to independence, social integration and participation in the life of the community is based on Article 15 of the revised European Social Charter of 1996:

“With a view to ensuring to persons with disabilities, irrespective of age and the nature and origin of their disabilities, the effective exercise of the right to independence, social integration and participation in the life of the community, the Parties undertake, in particular:

1. to take the necessary measures to provide persons with disabilities with guidance, education and vocational training in the framework of general schemes wherever possible or, where this is not possible, through specialised bodies, public or private;
2. to promote their access to employment through all measures tending to encourage employers to hire and keep in employment persons with disabilities in the ordinary working environment and to adjust the working conditions to the needs of the disabled or, where this is not possible by reason of the disability, by arranging for or creating sheltered employment according to the level of disability. In certain cases, such measures may require recourse to specialised placement and support services;
3. to promote their full social integration and participation in the life of the community in particular through measures, including technical aids, aiming to overcome barriers to communication and mobility and enabling access to transport, housing, cultural activities and leisure.”

The Council of Europe has dedicated several recommendations and resolutions, as well as studies, conferences and publications to the topic. In 1992, with Recommendation No R(92)6 on a coherent policy for people with disabilities, the Council of Europe underlined its policy principles for the rehabilitation and integration of people with disabilities, recommending governments of all member states concerning all areas of community life to develop a “coherent, global and comprehensive policy in co-operation with people with disabilities and the organisations of and for them, to secure all necessary help for people with disabilities”. The recommendation replaced several past resolutions of the Council of Europe and prompted numerous amendments to legislation in the member states. In 1995, the Resolution AP(95)3 on a Charter on the vocational assessment of people with disabilities called for a paradigm shift away from disabilities towards abilities. From 1997 to 2000, the Council of Europe conducted a major study on *Assessing disability in Europe – similarities and differences*. Major influence was gained again in 2006 when the Recommendation Rec(2006)5 of the Committee of Ministers was launched. It seeks to “translate the aims of the Council of Europe with regard to human rights, non-discrimination, equal opportunities, full citizenship and participation of people with disabilities into a European policy framework on disability for the next decade” by outlining 15 key action lines together with five cross-cutting aspects of disability relating to groups that may suffer from two-fold discrimination, such as women, children or elderly people with disabilities. The key objective of the recommendation was – with due regard to the specific national, regional or local structures and respective responsibilities – to mainstream disability in all respective policies in the member states, while implementing and adapting the

Council of Europe's Disability Action Plan 2006-2015, in order to promote the rights and full participation of people with disabilities in society to improve the quality of life of people with disabilities in Europe in general.

In the field of sport since 1976, the Council of Europe has developed, with the Steering Committee for the Development of Sport (CDDS), policies to promote its key values, namely the protection of human rights, democracy and the rule of law, in and through sport. Its work was based on Resolution (76) 41 of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, known as the European Sport for All Charter. This Charter, revised in 1992 into the European Sports Charter, requests that public authorities develop mutual co-operation with the sports movement and considers that it is necessary to agree on a common European framework for sports development in Europe. It seeks to enable every individual, with or without disabilities, to participate in sport.

In 1986 the Committee of Ministers emphasised the right of people with a disability to participate in sport via its Recommendation No. R(86)18 "European Charter on Sport for All: Disabled Persons": "sport should become a driving force for the disabled to seek or restore contact with the world around and the recognition as an equal and respected citizen". In this regard, "the governments of the Council of Europe's member states should encourage and work closely with the sports organisations concerned in order:

- to develop appropriate activities at all levels of sport for disabled persons and to ensure in particular that recreational participation in sport is adequately provided for;

- to continue the efforts, at national, regional, and local levels, and within the competent international sports organisations to harmonise, simplify and, where appropriate, to reduce the classification categories and the eligibility criteria for participation at competitions between disabled persons [and]
- to develop policies designed to give the general public more information on sport for disabled people."

After the closing of the CDDS in 2005, and having truly considered that sport is a fundamental pillar of civil society and one of the most accessible channels for transmitting core values into everyday life, the Council of Europe created, in 2007, a new platform integrating sport organisations into the political processes: the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport (EPAS). With its 34 member countries (2012), the EPAS provides a fresh momentum to pan-European sports co-operation and addresses the current challenges facing sport in Europe, including the promotion of diversity and fight against discrimination towards disabled persons as one of its priorities. Selected recent actions include,

- a political conference in Warsaw on Disability Sport as an active tool to overcome discrimination and to promote social inclusion organised in co-operation with EPC and the Polish authorities;
- the support to the French Congress on Sport Practices, Disabilities and Territories and to the Spanish National Conference of Adapted Sports on the Integration Process in the International Context;

- a pilot training session for a group of mixed youth on Intercultural Skills for Volunteers and Youth Leaders Working with People with Disabilities;
- the drafting and dissemination of this handbook.

The **European Union** (EU) has considered aspects regarding people with disabilities through its different institutions since the 80s. The work carried out by the Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion was, in 2011, handed over to the Directorate-General of Justice. The EU has defined a disability strategy with three main focus points: 1) co-operation between the Commission and the Member States; 2) full participation of people with disabilities; 3) mainstreaming disability in policy formulation (see website of the Assembly of European Regions).

In 1980, the Disability Intergroup of the European Parliament was established as an informal group of members of the European Parliament interested in promoting the disability policy in the parliament as well as in any national context. In 1996, based on the Communication No. COM(96) 406 final, a High Level Group on Disability was created to “monitor the latest policies and priorities of governments concerning people with disabilities, to pool information and experience, and to advise the Commission on methods for reporting in future on the EU-wide situation with regard to disability”. The rights of people with disabilities were fostered by the adoption of the Charter of Fundamental Rights in 2000. Reflecting the changing theory of disability from a medical to a socially constructed phenomenon, the Charter outlines that “the EU recognises and respects the right of persons with disabilities to benefit from measures designed to ensure their independence,

social and occupational integration and participation in the life of the community” (Article 26). To further its policy commitment, in 2007/2008 the EU developed its anti-discrimination legislation. The Directive 2000/78 on equal treatment in employment and occupation encourages employers to take measures to enable a person with a disability to have access to employment and training. Since 2009, the consolidated version of the “Treaty on the functioning of the European Union” specifically relates to non-discrimination and citizenship of the EU, referring to people with disabilities in its Articles 10 and 19.

As regards sports in general, the European Commission also largely promotes an inclusive approach to sport in order to allow all residents of the EU access to sport. For a long time, the treaties establishing the European Community and the European Union did not contain any articles that incorporated sport into primary law, but reference was made to sport in selected constitutionally relevant documents. Since the ratification of the Lisbon Treaty, the significance of sport is explicitly recognised for the first time and its Articles 6 and 165 emphasise the promotion of sport as a European Community objective. Aligned with the EU White Paper on Sport (2007) and in addition to the EU’s disability policy, the Treaty of Lisbon furthermore demonstrates concrete commitment to the development of sport for people with a disability.

In 2010, the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020: A Renewed Commitment to a Barrier-Free Europe, succeeded the former Strategy 2004-2010. The renewed strategy shows strong convergence with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (see p. 23, to which the European Community is a

signatory, calling for EU countries to promote the participation of and access for persons with disabilities in mainstream sporting activities at all levels. The specific Action Plan for 2010-2015 (SEC(2010)1324 final) to implement the European Disability Strategy 2010-2020 considers the role sport plays in promoting the integration of people with disabilities and also dedicates special notice to sport participation (EC 2010. SEC(2010)1324final, pp.6-8):

“Ensure equal opportunities for persons with disabilities and their families to fully participate in all aspects of social and economic life, namely:

- to exercise all their Union citizenship rights, in particular the right to free movement and residence;
- to be able to choose where and how they live;
- to have full access to cultural, recreational, leisure and sports activities.”

In more detail, the List of Actions 2010-2015 states that the key objectives are to:

“Promote the participation of people with disabilities in sports [and therefore to]:

- Develop and disseminate standards for accessibility of sports, leisure, and recreation organisations, activities, events and venues (2010-2015);
- Promote the participation of people with disabilities in European sport events as well as the organisation of disability-specific events including Special Olympics (on-going);
- Include a priority on Social inclusion through and in sport, with a particular regard to persons with disabilities, in the future Commission policy and incentive measures in the field of sport (2011-2012)”.

The White Paper on Sport called for addressing the “needs and situation of underrepresented groups” and “the special role that sport can play for young people, people with disabilities and people from less privileged backgrounds” (COM(2007)391 final). To identify and address the needs of people with a disability in sport, the European Commission published in 2009 a call for proposals within its first Preparatory Action on Sport in the area of intervention “Promoting European Fundamental Values by Encouraging Sport for Persons with Disabilities” and funded two projects:

- a project led by the European Observatoire of Sport and Employment together with the EPC entitled All for Sport for All: Perspectives of Sport for People with a Disability in Europe;
- a project Youth Unified Sports led by the SOEE.

In addition to these, for example, the European Think Tank in Sport: Sport et Citoyenneté/Sport and Citizenship, receives support to develop a community and interactive platform on “Sport and Disabilities” as part of its Sport and Citizenship’s SPORT project. Major EU-funded work regarding adapted physical activity has been realised through the Thematic Network Adapted Physical Activity – THENAPA I & II – projects, and the European Standards in Adapted Physical Activities (EUSAPA) project.

As the first document adopted by the European Union’s Education, Youth, Culture and Sport Council, in November 2010 the EU ministers responsible for sport adopted a resolution and two sets of conclusions in the field of sport. The Draft Council Conclusions on the role of sport as a source of and a driver for active social inclusion

again include the matter of participation of people with disabilities in sport (EC 2010, 14535/10 Sport 12 SOC 615):

“Support the “Sport for All” principle based on equal opportunities by:

1. Increasing the overall participation in sport and providing encouragement for physical activities to as many citizens as possible, including young people.
2. Paying special attention to social inclusion in sport of people who are currently not physically active, mainly among socially disadvantaged groups.
3. Bearing in mind that access to “sport for all” is important, including the accessibility and availability of sport facilities, infrastructures and venues to as many people as possible, in particular to persons with disabilities, as well as the importance of enabling persons with disabilities to participate on an equal basis with others in recreational, leisure and sporting activities.”

Based on the White Paper on Sport and the Communication from the Commission on “Developing the European Dimension in Sport” (COM (2011)12 final), on 20 May 2011, the Council of the EU adopted a Resolution on a European Union Work Plan for Sport for 2011-2014. The resolution states that priority should be given by member states and the Commission for the period covered to 1) the integrity of sport, in particular the fight against doping, match-fixing and the promotion of good governance; 2) the social values of sport, including health, social inclusion, education and volunteering; 3) the economic aspects of sport, for example, sustainable financing of grassroots sports and evidence-based policy-making. Following prior documentation, disability sport issues might be

mainly addressed within the social values of sport, but should also be considered transversally.

The **United Nations (UN)** Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) that entered into force on 3 May 2008 plays a major role in the development and support of better participation for people with disabilities in sports at the European level as well. On 30 March 2007, the Convention was signed by 82 signatories, with 44 signatories to the Optional Protocol and one ratification; this being the highest number of signatories in history to a UN Convention on its opening day. The EU took a lead role in the process of adopting the Convention. As of March 2010, the European Community and all its member states signed the UNCRPD, and as of November 2010, 16 out of 27 member countries had ratified the Convention. The Convention refers explicitly to the participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport with the aim to: “promote the participation of persons with disabilities in mainstream sporting activities at all levels; ensure that persons with disabilities have an opportunity to organise, develop and participate in disability-specific sporting activities; ensure that persons with disabilities have access to sporting venues and services” (Article 30). Whilst the Council of Europe’s Disability Action Plan is by its nature a morally and politically binding document, the UNCRPD is a legally binding instrument. Regarding any further “development and implementation of legislation and policies to implement the present Convention, and in other decision-making processes concerning issues relating to persons with disabilities, [the United Nations clearly states that] States Parties shall closely consult with and actively involve persons with disabilities, including

children with disabilities, through their representative organizations” (Article 4 paragraph 3).

Further to the Convention, various organisations of the UN system work together to implement the UN development agenda, in order to promote the full and effective participation of persons with disabilities in society and development. One prominent initiative is the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) representing a concerted effort by the United Nations to address global poverty. Surprisingly, persons with disabilities are not directly mentioned in any of the MDG goals, targets or indicators. In this regard, a recent study supported by the United Nations states that a “clear link between disability and poverty means that all MDGs are relevant to persons with disabilities and persons with disabilities must be included in all MDG efforts”. Furthermore, all stakeholders “that advocate on behalf of disabilities issues should now be considering what co-ordinated efforts will be needed and what additional disability groups, experts and advocates should be brought to the table, as they begin to think about what will replace the MDGs in 2015 and beyond” (Groce, 2011).

One such stakeholder advocating and representing disabled people in Europe is the **European Disability Forum** (EDF). The EDF is an independent, membership-based, non-governmental organisation created in 1996 to make sure that decisions concerning disabled people are taken with and by disabled people. “The work of EDF covers all fields of EU competence and a great number of initiatives. Although the European institutions might seem far for many citizens, the decisions taken by the EU, which are the result of negotiations between all Member States, have a direct impact on disabled people’s

lives.” European research indicated “to improve understanding and provision, engagement in sports organisations needs to improve within and between countries but also between sectors. It is most notable how infrequently (if at all) organisations of and for disabled people are mentioned [as involved stakeholders in disability sport.] [...] These disability organisations have driven the improvement in access to a broad range of services for disabled people, yet sports organisations have not made best use of their political influence. In this regard, both at the national and EU level it is recommended that the disability sport organisations further enhance co-operation with disability organisations” (Guett et al, 2011).

III. Learning from experience

This handbook comprises good practices from the disability sport sector that were pre-selected by individual national experts from different countries and disability sport sectors, and rated as worth being considered by other stakeholders from which to learn.

This publication focuses on the provision of positive case studies proven in real context to provide significant impact and added value to their organisation or sector. The handbook is not intended to be prescriptive either in form or content, but rather seeks to provide guidance by describing a variety of possibilities that have been successful and could further facilitate positive development of related governance and action in disability sport at local or national level. In this regard, the national experts were not provided with an explicit definition or constricted framework for collecting their case studies on purpose, but were equipped with overall principles and guidelines along with a short questionnaire and personal guidance. On principle, the term “best practice” was refrained from being used. On the one hand, this term is well established in many fields, but has, on the other hand, in some regard also become a “vogue term” being used at the international level sometimes by following vague definitions, selection criteria or nomination processes. Nonetheless, the case studies presented here relate to certain formal and informal standards that were followed by the experts, making the chosen practices worth sharing or “good practices”. General criteria for selection of the case studies included for example a special cost-benefit-ratio, unique stakeholder partnership, particular aspects of sustainability, addressing special target groups, an innovative “first-time-ever” realisation, mass participation and/or awareness

raising, the implementation of particular government policies, proven impact through evaluation of the outcomes and special (possibilities for) transferability whether in the specific national or the trans-national context. Considering current challenges in disability sport, special attention was given to examples fostering education, and targeting young people.

Especially in business or organisation development, learning from “good operating practices” or “benchmarking” is common practice in strategic management and is a feature of accredited quality management standards (International Organization for Standardization 2011, ISO 9000). The general idea is that with appropriately approved processes, a desired result can be delivered more effectively with fewer complications or unforeseen problems. If prior operational weakness is discovered and isolated, and further improvements regarding particular needs are adequately incorporated, when applying a good practice it may even evolve to improve. Disability sports are a complex phenomenon and a multi-dimensional experience, with often heterogeneous target groups involved and certain specific requirements to be addressed. To some extent it must be accepted that a practice that is good under the given circumstances for one group of persons with a disability might not be applicable or may even be inappropriate for the particular needs of others. In many cases, the experts involved in the execution or evaluation of a practice, also provided information on particular innovations, special selection criteria and specific recommendations towards the implementation of the case study.

The following section provides brief summaries of case studies in disability sport in Europe. The list of examples is by no means

exhaustive but presents only a glimpse of the variety of projects and initiatives being implemented in European countries. However, the case studies do illustrate a good range of initiatives in the field that support the development of, and help to overcome barriers to, participation in sport by people with a disability.

A. Campaigns & tools

	SPECIAL HEROES
Country	Netherlands
Dimension	Local and national
Target Group	Physical impaired, wheelchair user, learning impaired/intellectual disability, blind or visually impaired, deaf or hearing impaired, children with behavioural problems (ADHD, autism, conduct disorder, psychological problems).
Organisation	Gehandicaptensport Nederland (Dutch knowledge centre on sports for people with a disability), Landelijke Vereniging van cluster 3-scholen (national membership organisation for cluster 3-schools) and the NOC*NSF
Main Topic	Sports stimulation programme for children in special schools (6-19 years)
Short Description	Sports have to be experienced! Special Heroes wants children and young people with disabilities (6-19 years) to experience that sport and exercise can be fun, and to learn about sport and physical activity. Special Heroes is a national sports promotion programme with regional project managers working closely with schools and local sports providers. The methodology of Special Heroes has three phases: 1) Within-school offering (regular PE classes), 2) After school/extracurricular offering (e.g. in sport clubs), and 3) Aftercare for continuity. The sport activity offered varies depending on the wishes of the children. 142 schools for children with physical and intellectual disabilities and children with a chronic disease joined the programme, meaning around 17 000 children participate. Pilots are carried out in 40 schools for children with behavioural problems, in nine schools for blind and visually impaired children, and 15 schools for deaf and hearing impaired children.
Comment	The three-year programme undergoes external evaluation through the Mulier Instituut, and is strongly aimed at sustainability. This means that structural sports participation of the children and the continuation of the programme at the schools after the funding period is already being considered, and the schools regional project managers already search for possibilities to further anchor the project locally (e.g. local government support).
Contact	Franceline van de Geer, geer@specialheroes.nl
	www.specialheroes.nl

	PARASPORT
Country	United Kingdom
Dimension	National
Target Group	Physical impaired, wheelchair user, learning impaired/intellectual disability, blind or visually impaired.
Organisation	Paralympics Great Britain
Main Topic	Tool to signpost disabled people to sporting opportunities
Short Description	PARASPORT is a web-based programme which recognises that for disabled people, finding routes into sport is not as straightforward as for non-disabled people who need to simply visit their local sports facility. Firstly a 'classification wizard' helps disabled people to find out what sports are suitable for their impairment group and then a club search facility signposts them to high quality sports clubs. Approximately 50% of the 30,000 monthly users use the club search facility and are signposted to one of the 2,000 clubs on the site.
Comment	In regard to implementation in other countries, it is important that there is an easy means by which visitors to the site can determine their own potential sport and event classification; also that the club database is kept properly up to date.
Contact	Jane Jones, jane.jones@paralympics.org.uk
	www.parasport.org.uk

WOUNDED SOLDIERS PROJECT

Country	Denmark
Dimension	Local, national and international
Target Group	Physical impaired, wheelchair user, ambulatory patients
Organisation	Danish Sports Organisation for the Disabled
Main Topic	Motivation and integration of wounded soldiers towards and through sports
Short Description	<p>The Wounded Soldiers Project is aimed at physically wounded soldiers, making them understand and experience their “new” body in order to be, and by being, active. The soldiers are trained and motivated by specific sport consultants on an individual level in order to understand that their limits have not been (re)moved – they just need to apply a new approach to reach them.</p> <p>The concept of the project is based on close co-operation between the Danish Sports Organisation for the Disabled and the Danish Army, and combines pedagogical, psychological and physiological knowledge with resources from sport clubs. Activities for the current 34 soldiers include rowing, wheelchair basketball, archery, running, cycling, track and field, motor racing, triathlon and mixed martial arts. They can be done during or after work at the local sports club, at schools or at the local military facilities. Both the soldiers and the sports club representatives are permanently accompanied by specific key contact persons (coach and physiotherapist).</p>
Comment	<p>The case study describes a good example of the need to motivate and integrate wounded soldiers towards and through sports. In regard to implementation, close co-operation between the sports organisation (e.g. coaches) and the military departments (e.g. military physiotherapists) is vital for success.</p> <p>Besides the general benefits of sport to the wounded soldiers, and due to their physical talent and discipline through military training, they may often even be recruited for further Paralympic sports activities via such projects.</p>
Contact	Rune Oland, rol@dhif.dk

	SPORTS, WOMEN & DISABILITY
Country	Spain
Dimension	National
Target Group	Physical impaired, learning impaired/intellectual disability, blind or visually impaired, deaf or hearing impaired
Organisation	Spanish Sport Council: Subdirección General Promoción Deportiva – Programas Mujer y Deporte & Subdirección General Adjunta de Deporte Paralímpico, Spanish Paralympic Committee
Main Topic	Promotion campaign of physical activity and sport for women with disabilities
Short Description	For multiple reasons, girls and women with a disability do not carry out as much sport as men in Spain. One of the most important reasons is a lack of information and knowledge about the possibilities of where and how girls and women with disabilities can participate in sport activities. In this regard a special promotion campaign addressed to girls and young women with a disability was launched to highlight the extensive possibilities of sport for disabled women in Spain. First actions included the production of a 12-minute video showing examples of nine female athletes with different disabilities, both at elite and grass-roots level. It is distributed via multiple channels, including online social networks of the Spanish Sport Movement.
Comment	The aim was to provide a positive and strong message and therefore it was decided that images of the athletes competing or training be shown, with them explaining their motivation to play sport. The athletes used short and concrete sentences giving very positive messages. As other European countries face the same problems, the exchange of awareness raising tools is strongly supported and recommended.
Contact	Maria Blasco & Silvia Ferro, maria.blasco@csd.gob.es or silvia.ferro@csd.gob.es

SCHOOL SPORTS COMPETITION

Country	Slovenia
Dimension	National
Target Group	Physical impaired, wheelchair user, blind or visually impaired, deaf or hearing impaired
Organisation	National Paralympic Committee Slovenia
Main Topic	Integration of teenagers with disabilities in national school sports competitions
Short Description	In Slovenia, primary and secondary schools have a strong multiple sports competition system from the local to the national level. Based on this system, and in order to overcome segregation and to integrate teenagers with disabilities in able-bodied sport activities, children with disabilities now participate at those school sport competitions and compete with the “able-bodied” teenagers at national level (as a starting point). Until now, the sports offered include swimming and athletics (both at primary and secondary level), and table tennis (at primary level). Inspiring moments can be experienced when all spectators and able-bodied athletes cheer for the athletes with disabilities.
Comment	The case study describes “basic integration” that can be implemented in most countries, especially related to its specific cost-benefit-ratio through the use of existing structures. Proper adjustment to the existing sport education structures is recommended, as then often people who generally do not work with children with disabilities will work with them. An encouraging “side-effect” is that in most cases they change their perspective towards “disability” in a positive way.
Contact	Spela Rozman, spela.rozman@zsis.si

www.zsis.si/index.php/olska-portna-tekmovanja

	RECRUITMENT FROM SOUTH TO NORTH
Country	Norway
Dimension	National
Target Group	Physical impaired, wheelchair user, learning impaired/intellectual disability, blind or visually impaired, deaf or hearing impaired, all age groups, but focusing on children and youth
Organisation	Norwegian Olympic and Paralympic Committee and Confederation of Sports (NIF) and National Sport Federations
Main Topic	Campaign for raising awareness and recruiting new athletes to disability sport
Short Description	After a ten year long integration process, sport for people with a disability is organised under the umbrella of the NIF, with all national federations being responsible for recruiting, adapting and organising competitions for disabled within their sport, built on inclusion and equality and including both elite sport and sport for all. In the “Recruitment From South to North” campaign, Per Christian Brunsvik and Steinar Andreassen Jensen were to handbike approximately 2,700 km from the southernmost point of the mainland of Norway to its northernmost point. The three-month trip was “accompanied” by 25 recruitment events (3,000 participants incl. 1,000 people with disability), eight seminars (500 participants), 18 school visits (1,000 pupils) and 50 meetings (mainly related to challenges in transport) with municipality decision makers. The overall aim was to recruit 500 new athletes, alongside awareness-raising for disability sports at all levels (including the changed organisational structure of disability sport). Media coverage included 154 reports in national, regional and local media over TV, radio, internet and newspapers, as well as a Facebook page (400,000 views).
Comment	The project gave a unique entry for raising awareness, and showing the opportunities people with a disability have within Norwegian sport. Although recruitment events and raising awareness with decision makers is part of the regular work, these two excellent ambassadors handbiking through Norway gave a much more holistic and focused approach and impact. Experience showed that a joint initiative provides increased awareness and emphasis. For effective action, it is important to gather all local forces from decision makers to healthworkers, sport clubs, parents and athletes. A documentary will be shown on National TV in 2012.
Contact	Mads Andreassen, mads@idrettsforbundet.no
	www.idrett.no/tema/funksjonshemmede/norgepaalangs/Sider/RekrutteringNorgep%c3%a5langs.aspx

	THE OLYMPIC DAY
Country	Lithuania
Dimension	Local
Target Group	Physical impaired, wheelchair user, blind or visually impaired
Organisation	Lithuanian Paralympic Committee & Lithuanian Olympic Committee
Main Topic	Awareness raising campaigns on Paralympic Sports in a smaller country
Short Description	<p>Due to a long-term agreement of co-operation with the Lithuanian Olympic Committee, the Lithuanian Paralympic Committee makes use of the OC's communication structures by 1) publishing regular information about the Paralympic movement in the OC's quarterly magazine, and 2) organising Paralympic sport events during the Lithuanian "Olympic Day". Every year both organisations collaborate for the organisation of the Olympic Day on the 18th of June. Nine Paralympic events, such as basketball 3x3, draughts, chess, and darts, take place. Both Olympic and Paralympic athletes take part in a "one mile run", and participate in the Olympic torch and NOC and NPC flag's relay. Overall an estimated 2,000 people participate, 150 of whom have a disability.</p> <p>Furthermore, the Paralympic Committee makes use of the existing structures in Lithuanian school sport, in order to introduce disability sports to children. During projects and meetings, famous national athletes with disabilities inform the children about their sporting career and play sport together with the children. Sports mainly include goalball, wheelchair basketball, table tennis, draughts and chess.</p>
Comment	The case study is a good example for smaller countries taking the opportunity to raise awareness through activities with "existing" or more "established" structures such as the Olympic Committee and school sports.
Contact	Gintaras Zavadckis, gintas.zavas@gmail.com

PARALYMPICS 2012: ONE YEAR TO GO

Country	Austria
Dimension	National
Target Group	Physical impaired, wheelchair user, blind or visually impaired
Organisation	Austrian Paralympic Committee
Main Topic	Raising awareness of Paralympic sport to Olympic athletes and the media
Short Description	To celebrate the campaign “LONDON 2012 Paralympic Games – One Year to Go! Get involved! Be part of it!”, the Austrian Paralympic Committee organised a specific awareness-raising event with top Paralympic and Olympic stars. During the event, Olympic athletes tested Paralympic sports for the first time under the guidance of Paralympic athletes, including competing against each other. Olympic medallist Mirna Jukic, for example, took the challenge of swimming a race against the visually impaired swimmer Peter Tichy – blindfolded. The event gathered more than 100 spectators and very positive feedback was received from all parties. The event was supported by NPC Austria’s sponsors. Both print media and television were present and ensured national-wide dissemination.
Comment	The event is a good example how to bring the Paralympic sport closer to Olympic athletes, spectators and especially the youth (as possible future athletes). The case study was a “first-time-ever” realisation at the national level, similar to the IPC’s International Paralympic Day 2012 in London. The event is well transferable to all National Paralympic Committees.
Contact	Petra Huber, office@oepc.at

	SPORT FOR ALL WEB GUIDE
Country	Spain
Dimension	National
Target Group	Physical impaired, wheelchair user, learning impaired/intellectual disability, blind or visually impaired, deaf or hearing impaired
Organisation	Spanish Paralympic Committee, Spanish and Territorial Federations of Disability Sport, MAPFRE Foundation
Main Topic	National sport activities data collection, regardless of disability or level of ability
Short Description	The “Guide on Sport for All” aims to create a web-based information source with multi-search functions across the range of all sports and physical activities offered for people with disabilities in all regions of Spain. The web-guide shall become a reference tool for the sector and specifically a vehicle for promoting disability sport and adapted physical activities, in order to increase participation. End users can consult the platform in a simple, quick and efficient manner, to search for sports matching their interest and type of disability. Through a web-questionnaire, new programmes can also be added.
Comment	The web guide is the first and only database compiling all kinds of adapted physical activities and disability sports in Spain. It is run from a central agency in co-ordination with federations, councils, municipalities, associations, and disability stakeholder groups. Parts of the platform are still provisional as the data collection is in progress.
Contact	Miguel Rodriguez, miguel.rodriguez@csd.gob.es
	www.guiadeporteparatodos.es

	PARALIONS
Country	Ireland
Dimension	National
Target Group	Physical impaired, wheelchair user, blind or visually impaired
Organisation	Paralympics Ireland
Main Topic	To encourage people with disabilities to become involved in physical activity
Short Description	The primary aims of the ParaLions Programme were to encourage people with disabilities to take part in physical activity, to identify the sports in which athletes are eligible for the Paralympic Games, to recruit new members for National Governing Bodies of Sport in Ireland, and to identify future talent for Irish Paralympic Squads. The programme had a number of elements to it: 1) Pre-Launch: the programme overview was agreed with NGBs and a pre-launch pack produced to include an information booklet, questionnaire, kitbag, t-shirt, pen, key rings, etc. 2) National launch with significant media coverage approximately 6 months before Beijing 2008 to promote the Paralympic Games and to encourage completing the questionnaire for “selection”. 3) ParaLions Athlete Search Day – all selected individuals (over 400) were invited to a special event, where they were provisionally classified and tried out a range of Paralympic Sports with Beijing 2008 Team Members. Along with these, sports demonstrations took place. 4) The NGBs would follow up specific sport events for identified athletes.
Comment	The level of potential for athletes to transfer sports was particularly noticeable. When athletes realised the sport they participated in deemed them ineligible for Paralympic Games, many immediately transferred and are now active at national level in a different sport. The programme was a major success but does require the following in order to improve post London 2012: a) Increased budget, b) Greater level of follow up by the NGBs, c) Improved buy-in from some of the NGB's, and d) Tailored fast track programmes for athletes identified. Regarding implementation of such a programme, the primary issue is that the individual sports are included at every stage of the process. The lack of follow up by some sports after the programme is completed may make it otherwise look like the NPC were the guilty party having raised expectations of young kids with disabilities.
Contact	Liam Harbison, info@paralympics.ie

B. Education initiatives

	PLAY THE GAME
Country	Netherlands
Dimension	National and international
Target Group	Physical impaired, wheelchair user, blind or visually impaired
Organisation	European Disabled Golf Association & Netherlands Golf Federation
Main Topic	Education programme for the introduction of the game of golf
Short Description	Golf is a sport for everyone, regardless of age, gender, physical condition or physical challenge. In this regard the sport is also widely enjoyed by people with disabilities. In order to introduce the game properly, the Netherlands Golf Federation developed an advanced education programme (2nd version) for their golf professionals to teach people of all ages with physical limitations; at the same time and to complete the circle, a course was developed to educate sports instructors at rehabilitation centres to introduce golf to their patients as part of therapy during treatment. In this regards, the golf professionals could gradually take over where the sport instructors stop, to turn therapy into sport. At the moment, around 70 golf professionals and 31 sports instructors from 23 rehabilitation centres have been trained and certified in the Netherlands.
Comment	Evaluation of the programme is undertaken during and after the education programme. In addition, the professionals need to fulfill continuous reporting of experience to keep the certificate valid. In regard to transferability and implementation of the programme, the Professional Golfers' Associations of Europe is willing to promote the course, as soon as it has been translated into English (early 2012), to their national member organisations. A key factor for implementation to be considered is the co-operation with the golf facilities to allow these new activities to take place at their venues.
Contact	Pieter van Duijn, p.vanduyn@tiscali.nl
	www.edgagolf.com

	EXPORT-SPORT
Country	Italy
Dimension	Local
Target Group	Learning impaired/people with an intellectual disability
Organisation	University of Cassino & Italian Union of Sport for All
Main Topic	Special sport programme based on a non-formal approach in a wide range of sporting activities and a regional multi-sport tournament
Short Description	The EXPORT-SPORT programme is based on a non-formal approach and aims at improving the social integration of people with a disability by being directly involved in a wide range of sporting activities (e.g. swimming, football, etc.). The project aims at using the Adapted Physical Activity (APA) as part of the process of rehabilitation that the Local Health Authorities (ASL) implement for people with an intellectual disability. In each of the four ASL local departments a group of APA educators is in charge of dealing with a local group of disabled people with the scope to involve them in specific sport-based activities aimed at enhancing the effectiveness of the therapy that each person receives. Sport activities are also conceived as a means for promoting a higher level of integration among people with intellectual disability and the mainstream society. To this purpose, specific moments in which groups of people (e.g. students from school, university students, etc.) are directly involved in sport activities for disabled people are also promoted. Furthermore, a multi-sport tournament where disabled people from each department can experience direct involvement in a controlled and well-designed competitive context is implemented in collaboration with the Italian Union of Sport for All.
Comment	The project is one of the first examples in Italy that proves the use of APA educators and an APA approach as part of the services that ASL provides to people. It is also worth noting that all the educators involved have a masters degree in APA. Finally, the approach based on the promotion of mixed activities involving both able-bodied people and people with a disability is a good operating example towards the clearing of the stigma that is often attributed to people with an intellectual disability.
Contact	Simone Digennaro, s.digennaro@unicas.it

	LEISURE, LIFE & LEARNING
Country	Denmark
Dimension	National
Target Group	Learning impaired/intellectual disability
Organisation	Danish Sports Organization for the Disabled
Main Topic	Sport participation concept for children with special needs (8-17 years)
Short Description	Project School Sport – Leisure, Life and Learning is a concept for children who have special needs to participate in sports provided by schools for special needs, after-school programmes and local sports clubs. The project combines pedagogical knowledge with resources from sporting clubs through public-voluntary partnerships. The school assigns an employee. This key person's main focus is to recruit children to the project and, in co-operation with the local sports clubs, to generate exercise activities aimed at and adapted to the requirements and resources particular to this group of children. There are now 14 schools involved in the project. The choice of sports activity depends on local conditions and opportunities.
Comment	Key elements of the project are public-voluntary partnerships and the pedagogic knowledge through a permanently involved "key person" enabling parallel adaptation. Co-operation between the coach and the professional staff is important and necessary. The project experienced that therapists are good in therapy, educators are good for pedagogy and sports coaches are best for training.
Contact	Jens Winther, jens.winther@dhif.dk

	INTENSIVE COURSE ADAPTED SWIMMING
Country	Bulgaria
Dimension	Local
Target Group	Physical impaired, learning impaired/intellectual disability, blind or visually impaired, deaf or hearing impaired
Organisation	Club “Water sports” – National Sports Academy “Vassill Levski”
Main Topic	Adapted swimming training for persons with disabilities – intensive course
Short Description	The aim of the project is to increase the possibilities for access to a range of adapted physical activities and sports (especially swimming) for persons with disabilities, especially teenagers. The nature of the training activities includes education and training, recreation and health aspects. The benefits for the participants are: functional development, increased adaptation possibilities, physical and motor development, social inclusion and equal access to social services like sport. The accomplished activities include systematic training in swimming for persons with disabilities (physical, intellectual and sensory). The training load is two sessions of 60 minutes per week for three months. In order to achieve the goals of the project, an adapted swimming methodology is applied: 1) Focus on motivation and adaptation to the specific environment of the water, 2) Focus on the primary swimming training, acquisition of reflexes and different swimming abilities (in swimming technique elements, in co-ordination and different stroke combinations). The training process was organised individually and in groups according to the abilities and the specifics of the participants (types and levels of disability).
Comment	The project is part of the programme of the Bulgarian ministry of physical education and sport called “Sport for persons with disabilities and children at risk”. The project is an example of good co-operation between the governmental and the NGO sector in Bulgaria. It is also a concrete example of the general community policy giving special emphasis to the role of sport and its social functions. Furthermore, evaluation showed that all participants learned to swim, their existing sports skills improved and the social interaction in the group was positive.
Contact	Maya Nikolova, maya_neytcheva@yahoo.fr

	SPORTING GROUP FOR BLIND & VISUALLY IMPAIRED PEOPLE
Country	Italy
Dimension	Local
Target Group	Blind or visually impaired
Organisation	University of Cassino & Italian Union of Blind Persons
Main Topic	Special sport programme based on a non-formal approach and aimed at improving the social integration of blind and visually impaired people
Short Description	The NGO “Italian Union of Blind Persons” (UIC) aims to provide blind and visually impaired people with the opportunity to play an active part in society via concrete involvement in sport activities. UIC is committed to improving the lives of blind and visually impaired people and strengthening communities by utilising several kinds of activities which promote health, culture, education and integration. Sport and play are an important part of UIC’s activities. Through a specific programme driven by “A.S.D. Ciociaria Non Vedenti”, sport activities are used in a non-formal way in order to provide opportunities to get involved, to promote healthy lifestyles and to develop new educational approaches. At the same time, UIC promotes a general educational platform where people without visual impairments, especially children and youth, can experience what it is like to play sports as a blind person in order to develop their knowledge, abilities and skills and to help create an integrated and understanding society.
Comment	The activities mentioned represent a “gateway” bridging the mainstream society with the dimension of disability. It is recommended that such activities must be based on multilevel partnerships that embrace local authorities, school systems, sport organisations (federations, clubs, etc.), disability organisations, etc. with the aim of implementing broad strategies of inclusion.
Contact	Simone Digennaro, s.digennaro@unicas.it

ADAPTED WATER SPORTS CAMP

Country	Bulgaria
Dimension	National and international
Target Group	Physical impaired, wheelchair user, learning impaired/intellectual disability, deaf or hearing impaired
Organisation	National Sports Academy “Vassill Levski” (NSA)
Main Topic	Inclusive adapted water sports camp for youth with disabilities and practical training for APA instructors
Short Description	Summer camps at the Black Sea are a typical life experience for students and the youth in Bulgaria. A “camp” is a setting where they can learn new skills, build friendships, and experience personal growth. Unlike the school setting, with emphasis on academics, the camp setting provides a unique experience in which the emphasis is on sports, social interaction, and fun. While the majority of summer camps available to children with disabilities have been segregated, the only opportunity available for camp experiences that bring together youth with and without disabilities in Bulgaria is the Adapted Water Sports Camp organised by the NSA. This programme brings individuals with disabilities and students from NSA together to train in activities and to compete as mixed teams. During the twelve-day session, campers and staff participate in water sports activities: sea swimming, aquatic games, kayaking and sailing, as well as other recreational outdoor games and activities. The aim is to provide new sports opportunities for all participants as well as to strengthen existing sports camp experiences for people with intellectual disabilities and to create an atmosphere of understanding, learning, and sharing.
Comment	The camp is officially included in the NSA master programme in Adapted Physical Activity at the NSA. Furthermore, long term evaluation showed an improvement of the existing sports skills of all campers, greater satisfaction of introducing campers to new sports, improved self-confidence for the participants with disabilities, and overall development in the social and adaptive skills.
Contact	Stefka Djobova, stefka.djobova@abv.bg
	www.nsa.bg

	EDUCATION PROGRAMME: MOVEMENT, SPORT & GAMES
Country	Belgium
Dimension	Local
Target Group	Physical impaired, wheelchair user, learning impaired/intellectual disability, blind or visually impaired, deaf or hearing impaired, motor disabilities
Organisation	Sport & Handicap
Main Topic	Holistic education and training programme on movement, sport and games for persons with a disability
Short Description	The education and training programme especially targets sport for children and teenagers with disabilities and was carried out in the Belgian province of Limburg with the involvement of disability sport organisations and education institutes. It includes interactive lectures, audiovisual presentations and practical instructions in different settings. Main target groups are teachers in special needs schools and coaches in sport clubs for the disabled. With its holistic approach to the topic of disability sports and adapted physical activity for teenagers, the content relates to a broad range of topics, including sport possibilities for persons with disabilities, the understanding of normal and abnormal locomotion, the human values of sport for persons with a disability in regard to social participation, health promotion aspects and personality-building, concepts of disabilities in relation to sport skills and sport disciplines, the organisation of sport for persons with a disability, training strategies, and special needs in sport education for the youth.
Comment	The programme is running in its third consecutive year, in a series of six weekly lessons. In regard to implementation in other countries, one should note that an important part of the programme was and should be spent on direct practical training, including e.g. wheelchair sports, sport for cerebral palsy, and sport for mentally disabled children.
Contact	Denis Jaeken, djaeken@skynet.be

	SPORT SI PUÒ: SPORTS CAN
Country	Italy
Dimension	Local
Target Group	Physical impaired, wheelchair user, learning impaired/intellectual disability, blind or visually impaired, deaf or hearing impaired
Organisation	Italian Paralympic Committee
Main Topic	Swimming courses for pupils of primary and secondary schools
Short Description	The SPORT SI PUÒ project is established in Italy at regional level and funded for the second time due to its successful implementation of swimming courses for children with and without disabilities. The courses involve 40 schools in 18 different towns, meaning an involvement of 170 pupils with a disability. The courses are organised in an integrated way, and able-bodied learn, swim and compete together with disabled children. The courses are held during official school times and participation is free. The project also includes a sports medical check-up at the respective local health authority.
Comment	The sports programme received the maximum score from an evaluation by the Paralympic Committee. A “side-effect” is that the project also trains the swimming coaches on how to approach disabled athletes. In regard to implementation in other countries, it is strongly recommended to involve the municipalities, the local health authorities, together with the schools from the very beginning.
Contact	Valentina Barbera, barbera@comitatoparalimpico.it
	www.comitatoparalimpico.it

	SPORTS FOR ALL CHILDREN
Country	Finland
Dimension	National
Target Group	Physical impaired, wheelchair user, learning impaired/intellectual disability, blind or visually impaired, deaf or hearing impaired
Organisation	Consortium of Finnish Sport Federations for the Disabled
Main Topic	Disability sport integration project for children
Short Description	The project Sports for All Children (Liikuntaa Kaikille Lapsille) was launched by three Finnish disability sport organisations as an answer to the challenge of inclusion and ran from 2001-2008. The project, implemented in co-operation with a variety of schools, produced an activity-centred education model and provided education for approximately 1,000 instructors. The related events (almost 200) were attended by approximately 18,000 physically active people, while 56 sports camps provided children with possibilities for engaging in accessible physical activity. In addition to the many guidebooks and materials prepared in co-operation with the sports federations, the project has published three guides for instructors and a set of fact cards called “Getting to know Disability Sports” (Vammaisurheilu tutuksi).
Comment	Training, interaction and developing activities in co-operation with mainstream organisations turned out to be the most effective means of encouraging participation and promoting accessible physical activity. In this regard, the project set out to gradually change the Finnish culture of physical activity into one that facilitates the participation of children with special needs in mainstream activities. It also facilitated the merger of the Finnish Disability Sport Organisation, and contributed to the launch of the new inclusion programme: Open for All (Kaikille avoin).
Contact	Aija Saari, aija.saari@vammaisurheilu.fi
	www.liikuntaakaikillelapsille.info

	SOCHI 2014 PARALYMPIC EDUCATION PROGRAMME
Country	Russian Federation
Dimension	Local, national and international
Target Group	Physical impaired, wheelchair user, learning impaired/intellectual disability, blind or visually impaired, deaf or hearing impaired
Organisation	Organising Committee of the XXII Olympic Winter Games and XI Paralympic Winter Games of 2014 in Sochi with a broad range of stakeholders
Main Topic	Multi-stakeholder Paralympic Education Programme related to the XI Paralympic Winter Games of 2014 in Sochi
Short Description	The aim of the Paralympic Education Programme is to 1) change the attitude of Russian society to people with disabilities, 2) change the attitude of people with disabilities to their own lives through expanding the borders of their possibilities, and 3) raise interest in the Paralympic Games of Sochi in 2014. One of the concrete objectives includes the creation of customised educational products for different target audiences, including school children (targeted with Paralympic lessons), Paralympics staff and volunteers (info booklets), Paralympic Games' partners and "persons of influence" (info meetings), athletes (accessibility map), students (Paralympic seminars) and the media (Q&As, position statements). The individual Paralympic education programmes and projects include theoretical and practical elements. Awareness-raising activities on the importance of a barrier-free environment, for example, lead also to the development of a practical Accessibility Map. The programme for school children provides for demonstrations during lessons, scenarios of Paralympic lessons and guidelines and basic methodologies for teachers. Furthermore, options to enhance during lessons include school visits by Paralympic athletes, Sochi 2014 Ambassadors, and Mascots, activity lessons to familiarise with Paralympic sports, and photo contests about the "Paralympic day in our school".
Comment	The implementation of a pilot programme will start in 2012, with the full-scale implementation planned for 2013 and a legacy monitoring in 2014. Already within its development phase (2011), the programme includes scenarios for continuity and sustainability. The programme is a good example of how a major disability sports event can be "exploited" to raise awareness and to create positive development with effects on many parts of the organising country's society.
Contact	Tea Grigolashvili, moscow.epc@gmail.com

C. Sport development

	RACE RUNNING
Country	Denmark
Dimension	Local, national and international
Target Group	Cerebral palsy/neurological impairment
Organisation	Cerebral Palsy International Sports and Recreation Association
Main Topic	Compendium & Camp to facilitate the introduction of Race Running
Short Description	RaceRunning is a sport started in Denmark in 1991 which turned into a national sport for certain groups of people with a disability, especially cerebral palsy. In order for CPISRA to expand the RaceRunning sport, a collection of important information to help organisations, clubs and individuals start the sport was developed. A practical compendium and a video, along with a sport-specific web page, explain the sport from A to Z. In addition, each year RaceRunning athletes, trainers and organisers gather for a week to train, socialise and compete in a Sports and Junior Camp.
Comment	It is possible to practice RaceRunning on equal terms with non-disabled athletes, and even people who normally use an electric wheelchair at all times, can use a RaceRunner. The camp offers not only a great opportunity to practice the sport, but also to share experiences and knowledge about the possible implementation of the sport in other countries for all interested stakeholders.
Contact	Mansoor Siddiqi, mas@handi.dk
	www.racerunning.org

	WI(I)NNING IS EASY
Country	Hungary
Dimension	National
Target Group	Physical impaired, wheelchair user, learning impaired/intellectual disability, visually impaired, deaf or hearing impaired, obese children
Organisation	Pető Institute of Conductive Education and College for Conductor Training
Main Topic	Virtual Sport Programme and research on persons with disabilities playing on the Nintendo Wii™ Console
Short Description	The Nintendo Wii™ Console provides a new opportunity for leisure time activity. Although it is an IT-based virtual game, it requires active movement for control. The game along with the specifically developed Virtual Sports Programme (VSP) allows people with disabilities to get closer to the world of sport, because while they are playing, they are in fact executing real sports movements and experiencing sports. The VSP allows players to compete with others in different “sports” and “skill levels”, e.g. during specific summer camps for people with disabilities. For those who became regular players the “Virtual Play, Sports and Leisure Activity Association” was established.
Comment	Research proved that this especially improved positive mood along with motor co-ordination in the game and team-building. The special innovative element of VSP is provided by using a video game console to experience sports and as a therapy and motor development tool, while the children with disabilities regard it “only” as a “game”.
Contact	Zsuzsanna Sáringér-Szilárd, sasizsu@gmail.com

	RIDE WITH THE WIND
Country	Greece
Dimension	Local, national & international
Target Group	Physical impaired, wheelchair users, any age group
Organisation	Global Kiter Foundation
Main Topic	Introductory kitesports lessons and workshops for people with a physical disability
Short Description	Kiteboarding is a sport that uses the power of the wind by a kite to move on water, land or snow, while standing on a board or sitting in a buggy. The objective of Global Kiter Foundation (GKF) is to improve access, awareness and inclusion of kitesports for people with a physical disability (paraplegic, tetraplegic, amputees). GKF offers 1) workshops for an introduction to kiting, and 2) continuing education for skills development. In just four months of operation, GKF has organised three workshops in two cities in Greece, training 20 participants with varying physical conditions; 80% have expressed the desire to continue with their training.
Comment	Although kiting can appear complex and challenging, it is in fact an all-inclusive sport. It is an extremely adaptable sport and the GKF programme can be easily implemented in other countries, but instructors must be trained accordingly before teaching. With the development of GKF activities in various locations, venues can also make improvements to offer better access for the participants.
Contact	Sandrine Roussos Werner, contact@globalkiter.com
	www.globalkiter.com

D. Sport & community building events

	MAZI – TOGETHER
Country	Greece
Dimension	National
Target Group	Physical impaired, wheelchair user, learning impaired/intellectual disability, blind or visually impaired
Organisation	Hellenic Paralympic Committee together with schools
Main Topic	School integration event for solidarity for children with and without disability
Short Description	Two schools, one of them adapted, come together for a seven-day event for a “celebration of sports” within a fun and playful environment. In the context of the event, the aim is for students with and without disability to meet, get to know each other, and even become friends. The programme offered includes mixed pedagogical and sport events, in which the children with and without disabilities compete together. Emphasis is put on promoting sport, health, respect, and the understanding of differences and different ways of thinking. The aim of the sport event(s) is not to win, but to create strong bonds of friendship and solidarity between the students.
Comment	The HPC programme seeks to promote the idea of equality of all children, regardless of any differences and, at the same time, it seeks to contribute to a “smooth” integration of children with special needs in society as a whole.
Contact	Margarita Karadimitropoulou, info@paralympic.gr
	www.paralympic.gr

	CONGRESS SPORT PRACTICES, DISABILITIES & TERRITORIES
Country	France
Dimension	Local, national and international
Target Group	Physical impaired, wheelchair user, learning impaired/intellectual disability, blind or visually impaired, deaf or hearing impaired
Organisation	Pôle Ressources National "Sport et Handicaps"
Main Topic	Scientific exchange of multidisciplinary applications in the field of sport
Short Description	The "Sport Practices, Disabilities and Territories" congress was aimed at providing scientific exchange of multidisciplinary applications in the field of sport, delving into the processes of integration of people with disabilities in sports. The event featured several round tables on topics such as training, sport practices from "sport for all" to "elite sport", as well as public sport policies for people with disabilities at local, regional and international level.
Comment	The conference is a good example of a concrete implementation of the necessity for multidisciplinary exchange of knowledge by involving all stakeholder groups, including public authorities, researchers, and practitioners (e.g. coaches). The event was supported by the Council of Europe's EPAS, the French Ministry of Sport and CREPS du Centre.
Contact	Philippe Bissonet, contact@prn-sporhandicaps.fr
	www.handicaps.sports.gouv.fr

	PARÁDA: A Paralympic Day ENEL: Sport Without Barriers
Country	Slovakia
Dimension	National
Target Group	Physical impaired, wheelchair user, learning impaired/intellectual disability, blind or visually impaired
Organisation	Slovak Paralympic Committee
Main Topic	Awareness-raising event on Paralympic & Disability Sports
Short Description	The Paralympic Day and Sport without Barriers was carried out by the Slovak Paralympic Committee together with disability sport and sport organisations and public authorities, such as the Ministry of Education. The main purpose of the event is for a better integration of children and teenagers with disabilities into society through sport activities, as they help them to overcome their handicap more easily. During the events, Paralympic top level athletes gave demonstrations and played alongside the children and teenagers in selected Paralympic and non-Paralympic sports. Sports included boccia, handbiking, laser shooting, table tennis, beach volley, archery, or sitting in a roller sledge and shooting a ball in a hockey goal. The event was organised together with other (non-sport-specific) attractions specifically aimed at the interest of young children, which led to the fact that awareness was raised at various levels.
Comment	The events include activities with “mixed teams” of able-bodied and disabled teenagers, and thus the events became a strong agent for social inclusion in Slovakia. A specific underlying “innovation” was present, as the aim was primarily to reach the children and the teenagers first, and through them the parents and grandparents – it is often the other way round.
Contact	Samual Rosko, rosko@spv.sk
	www.spv.sk

	INCLUSIVE SPORT WEEK
Country	Spain
Dimension	National and international
Target Group	Physical impaired, wheelchair user, learning impaired/intellectual disability, blind or visually impaired, deaf or hearing impaired
Organisation	Universidad Politecnica de Madrid – Centro de Estudios sobre deporte inclusive (CEDI) with the Spanish Sports Council and the Spanish Paralympic Committee
Main Topic	The Centre for Inclusive Sport Studies: Inclusive sport promotion for people with disabilities – generating context for sport practice initiation
Short Description	The “Inclusive Sport Week” marks the launch and presentation of CEDI to society. The first “week” was held in October 2010. The activities were structured in theoretical and practical sessions. The theoretical sessions were developed every day in the morning, e.g. inclusive physical education, health-related sport practice for persons with disabilities, accessibility to sport services and integration processes from disability to mainstream sport. In the afternoon, inclusive practice sessions took place in collaboration with disability associations (Fundación ONCE), sports institutions (Real Madrid Foundation), or sport clubs and national federations. There was one practice session per day, followed by professional exhibitions in the afternoon. Sports included a focus on children with disabilities and comprised blind soccer, inclusive (electric wheelchair) hockey, inclusive basketball and inclusive tennis.
Comment	Apart from the institutional engagement, a special focus is on the training of professionals to promote inclusive sports, even in “regular” physical activity. The main innovation relates to the development of new contexts for playing inclusive sport in Spain, focusing on children with disabilities practising together with persons without disabilities. Institutional support is received from the “Strategic Alliance for Inclusive Sport” that promotes the benefits of adapted sports and inclusive practices.
Contact	Javier Pérez-Tejero, j.perez@upm.es
	http://es-es.facebook.com/FundacionSanitas?sk=wall

	EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IN SPORT FESTIVAL
Country	Russian Federation
Dimension	Local and national
Target Group	Physical impaired, wheelchair user, learning impaired/intellectual disability, blind or visually impaired, deaf or hearing impaired
Organisation	Edinaya Strana Foundation
Main Topic	Youth festival for equal participation in sport activities
Short Description	The aim of the Equal Opportunities in Sport Festival is to eliminate barriers in communication between children living with and without disabilities by increasing the awareness and popularity of Paralympic and disability sports, and helping to create barrier-free school environments. Over 250 children and teenagers, studying at 22 general and specialised educational institutions in the Moscow region take part. The Festival programme includes a presentation of Paralympic sports, sports games and competitions for children, masterclasses and “The Equal Opportunities Relay Race”, where both guests and athletes with a disability participate. The Festival also includes a photo exhibition “Win by overcoming yourself”, which celebrates the achievements of the Russian Paralympic Team.
Comment	The festival is supported by the Sochi 2014 Organising Committee and also includes the participation of business people, youth movement members, politicians and public personalities. Edinaya Strana Foundation means “united country” and provides support for people with a disability established by Paralympic champions; special attention is given to children and teenagers.
Contact	Tea Grigolashvili, moscow.epc@gmail.com

www.edinayastrana.ru

E. Organisation development

	THE FUTURE CONFERENCE: DEVELOPMENT OF THE BSB MISSION STATEMENT
Country	Germany
Dimension	Local
Target Group	In general: physical impaired, wheelchair user, blind or visually impaired, deaf or hearing impaired. Specifically: Board members and executives of the BSB
Organisation	Behinderten-Sportverband Berlin e.V. (BSB) & Leadership Academy of the German Olympic Sport Confederation (DOSB)
Main Topic	Organisation Development: A “Future Conference” regarding the development of the mission statement of BSB (Disability Sport Federation Berlin)
Short Description	The fast development of the association and changes in internal and external relationships made it necessary to re-consider the long-term strategy of the BSB. It was decided to develop a mission statement through a holistic and transparent approach by integrating the entire organisation. As a first step, the status quo of the BSB was identified. It was then communicated and shared with its members. Interviews with the members were conducted regarding their perspectives on the BSB. All BSB members and partners were invited to a “Future Conference” that was conducted in three phases: 1) the past was accomplished, 2) the present was evaluated, and 3) the future has been designed together. The Conference was evaluated by a project group and strategic approaches were formulated.
Comment	The implementation of a “future conference” on topics for a member based organisation development is easily applicable and recommended, as the BSB can report that it strengthened its position for future work. The holistic approach to the development of a mission statement takes time and resources, but the investment is worthwhile in the long-term. The process leads to greater identification and better understanding. The monetary investment in professional consultancy (here, the Leadership Academy of the German Olympic Sport Confederation) adds (amongst others) in particular, credibility to the members.
Contact	Klaas Brose, info@bsberlin.de
	www.bsberlin.de

	FINLAND MEETS NORWAY
Country	Finland
Dimension	National and international
Target Group	In general: physical impaired, wheelchair user, learning impaired/intellectual disability, blind or visually impaired, deaf or hearing impaired. Specifically: decision-makers and executives in disability sport
Organisation	Finnish Sport Association of Persons with Disabilities (VAU) and Finnish Paralympic Committee
Main Topic	Trans-national seminar on collaboration and organisation development in disability sport
Short Description	The driving force for organising the SUOMI MEETS NORJA seminar was the launch of VAU (2010) which had to face the complexity of the existing integration and inclusion model in Finland. At national level, VAU functions as a multi-sport association, serving both mainstream and disability-specific sports (e.g. boccia, goalball, wheelchair rugby). As a member of the NPC, VAU is part of their integration process. At the same time, VAU serves as a national headquarters for Special Olympics. In this context, the international seminar sought to formulate ideas to enable best inclusion and development. The first-day focus was on facts and fundamentals of the various integration and inclusion processes in Norway, the Netherlands and Finland. The second day addressed challenges and ways of solving them.
Comment	One outcome of the seminar was that it was stressed that integration and inclusion work shall continue in Finland with a greater focus on the “sport for all” principle. The seminar also emphasised the critical role of evaluation.
Contact	Aija Saari & Kimmo Mustonen, aija.saari@vammaisurheilu.fi or kimmo.mustonen@paralympia.fi
	www.vammaisurheilu.fi

	NATIONAL RESOURCES CENTRE FOR DISABILITY SPORT
Country	France
Dimension	Local and national
Target Group	Physical impaired, wheelchair user, learning impaired/intellectual disability, blind or visually impaired, deaf or hearing impaired
Organisation	Pôle Ressources National Sport et Handicaps (PRNSH)
Main Topic	National Resources and Information Centre for Disability Sport
Short Description	The PRNSH is responsible for the mission and promotion of “Sport and Disability” at the national level, set up within the structures of CREPS du Centre. A multi-year agreement specifies the principles and actions to be implemented in order to improve the access for people with a disability to sport and physical exercise in France. The Centre acts as a source of knowledge for disability sport, provides services to, and disseminates information between, the different kinds of stakeholder groups in the sector, ranging from athletes to politicians. One recent activity was the implementation of a web-based guide on sport structures (associations, schools etc.) for people with disabilities, the “Handiguide des Sports” (www.handiguide.sports.gouv.fr).
Comment	The PRNSH was created by the French Ministry of Sport, and works closely with the technical and educational teams (ETPR) of the decentralised services of the Ministry of Sport. The PRNSH is a good example of “aligning” the necessity of multidisciplinary exchange of knowledge of all the stakeholder groups in the sector.
Contact	Philippe Bissonet, contact@prn-sporhandicaps.fr
	www.handicaps.sports.gouv.fr

	FOUNDATION PARASPORT
Country	Russian Federation
Dimension	Local and national
Target Group	Physical impaired, wheelchair user, learning impaired/intellectual disability, blind or visually impaired, deaf or hearing impaired
Organisation	Paralympic Sports Foundation PARASPORT & Russian Paralympic Committee
Main Topic	Sustainable (financial) support to the Paralympic Movement for development
Short Description	The Paralympic Sports Foundation PARASPORT is a non-profit charitable foundation organised to support the development of Paralympic sports in the Russian Federation and abroad. It strives to provide sufficient funding and charitable programmes to Paralympic athletes through active co-operation with the National Paralympic Committee of Russia. In addition, it stimulates public policy discussion and promotes sports among disabled individuals and groups. The foundation develops charitable programmes in three major fields: 1) Paralympic Teams Sponsorship, 2) Paralympic Movement Development, and 3) Technology Development Sponsorship.
Comment	The PARASPORT foundation invites founding contributors to join its work. It is open to partnerships and co-operation to support the right of disabled people to full participation, equality, and development through the world of sports.
Contact	info@parasport.ru
	www.parasport.ru

	NATIONAL ADAPTED PHYSICAL ACTIVITY CENTRE
Country	Ireland
Dimension	National
Target Group	Physical impaired, wheelchair user, learning impaired/intellectual disability, blind or visually impaired, deaf or hearing impaired, all categories of disabilities
Organisation	CARA National Adapted Physical Activity Centre
Main Topic	Co-ordinating, facilitating and advocating for the inclusion of people with disabilities in sport, physical activity and physical education throughout Ireland
Short Description	The main aim of the CARA APA Centre is to facilitate an increase in the number of people with disabilities participating in sport and physical activity, by increasing opportunities to participate, improving access, providing information and co-ordinating and delivering training on inclusion. CARA's main objectives include 1) participation, 2) training and education, 3) information and promotion, 4) advocacy and policy development, and 5) research. Recent activities of innovatory character include: A) the National Sports Inclusion Disability Programme which had significant impact on the inclusion of people with disabilities in sport and physical activity in Ireland. The initiative operates at local level within the Local Sports Partnership structures. In two years, there were over 4 500 participants within the programme, and currently there are 14 Sports Inclusion Disability Officers throughout Ireland whose role is to increase sustainable, quality participation opportunities for people with disabilities. B) The CARA APA Centre appointed a National Training and Education Officer to co-ordinate, facilitate, develop and promote cost-effective training and education workshops for coaches/instructors/teachers/para-educators/leisure professionals and students in the inclusion of people with disabilities in sport, physical activity and physical education. A National Inclusion Training Framework and Steering Committee has been developed to guide the developments of national standardised training on inclusion.
Comment	The concept of CARA has been recognised internationally as a model of good practice and has been a model certain countries have a desire to replicate. The model focuses on 1) national co-ordination-local provision, 2) focus on people with disabilities, 3) focus on physical activity, physical education and disability sport, 4) links with disability organisations and relevant sports organisations, and 5) international links.
Contact	Niamh Daffy, cara@ittralee.ie

	REPRESENTING THE YOUTH
Country	Germany
Dimension	National
Target Group	Physical impaired, wheelchair user, learning impaired/intellectual disability, blind or visually impaired, deaf or hearing impaired
Organisation	German Sports Youth Federation for the Disabled (DBSJ)
Main Topic	Youth work, development and organisational representation for the disabled youth in sport
Short Description	The DBSJ is the autonomous youth organisation within the German Disabled Sports Association (DBS-NPC) and is member of the German Sports Youth. It represents the interest of children and teenagers with a disability at the organisational level in the German sport system and covers approximately 51,000 members in 5,360 sports clubs. The DBSJ offers and facilitates a great variety of activities, including sport education courses for juniors in Paralympic sports, the German Youth Championships and a Paralympic Youth Camp. The Camp, for example, visits the different sites of the Paralympic Games and is seen as a “motivation camp” for the youth to actually “live” the Paralympic Spirit, but also to draw interest in high-performance sports and a desire to do it.
Comment	The DBSJ is a positive example of how the need to foster the interests and the development of the youth in disability sports can be given concrete implementation within the organisational structures of sport at the national level. Furthermore, the Paralympic Youth Camp describes a specific practice that can be well transferred and implemented in other countries. The EPC started in 2011 with a first pilot at the European level.
Contact	Norbert Fleischmann, dbs@dbs-npc.de
	www.dbsj.de

IV. Recommendations

The central objective of this publication was to provide a useful handbook for practitioners – both newcomers and professionals from inside and outside the disability sport sector – and to strike a balance between not leaving out core information on conditions at European level, and disseminating disability sport practices from different European countries. In this regard, the review of the disability sport conditions and the interpretation of practices collected indicate (alongside other publications of a more academic type) that the organisation of disability sport throughout Europe is complex, and that national structures and policies diverge in substance. Therefore, activities for the promotion and development of disability sports often seem rather occasional or fragmented, and may vary between countries with regard to levels of innovation and deployed resources. Notwithstanding the lack of organisational coherence or fragmented policies for disability sport between or even within the countries, one may conclude positively that in the majority of European countries, activities for the development and awareness-raising of disability sports do exist or are at least recently initiated, whether related to the promotion of Paralympic sports, inclusive school sports concepts or to the broadening of the range of possibilities for people with disabilities at both the grass-roots and sport for all level.

As underlined in the introduction, an analysis of a recent trans-European research indicated that, despite the differences in structure and content of disability sports in Europe, the challenges shared by European countries are calling for more educated and trained staff, improved infrastructures, stronger financial and structural support,

and enhanced accessibility. Despite the limitations of existing data and the restricted realms of this handbook, it is with these mutual challenges in mind that the following recommendations may be made to nurture the development of disability sport. These recommendations are based on the EU funded European research “All for Sport for All: Perspectives of Sport for People with a Disability in Europe” conducted by a team led by the European Observatory of Sport and Employment and the European Paralympic Committee from 2010 to 2011 (see Guett et al (2011), pages 31-36). These recommendations also take into consideration the different underlying systems, approaches and cultural identities towards sport and disability in the Council of Europe’s member states.

Learning from experience

The first recommendation is dedicated to a practical but core matter related to this handbook: how to learn from experience in disability sport? The guidebook provides a realistic source of knowledge using selected examples on how different sector stakeholders (seek to) overcome specific problems in their country. In this regard, it is recommended that the reader’s objective should not be to follow or copy the provided case studies “one-to-one”. Their reproduction or transfer should inspire creativity and encourage innovation from and for the stakeholders in disability sport to ensure that more people with a disability will receive adequate access to sport. If applying role models that operate successfully in other countries or disability sport settings, in-depth evaluation (for example, by starting with a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats analysis) is needed. It is recommended not only to systematically assess the case study concerning its specific circumstances of implementation,

as well as its related effectiveness, efficiency, impact or sustainability, but also one's own organisation's needs, specific structures and circumstances. Only based on objective evaluation and a balance of the unique qualities of both sides, can the actual relevance of the "selected case" for one's own particular goals, and possible capability of implementation be verified. Reading the case studies in this handbook might be followed by a reflective observation, an abstract conceptualisation and active experimentation along with a determination of whether any or what type of adaptation is needed before succeeding in an "applied practice" (Kolb, 1984). Above all, it is recommended to look not only beyond national borders but also to mainstream sports or other sectors in terms of learning from experience, even better combined with personal exchanges.

Education and training of human resources

Any implementation of practices or adequate sector development – regardless of the level – requires well educated and trained professionals; the same applies to disability sport. In this regard, sector analysis shows that a lack of adapted or specific training covering the whole range of required competences and skills in the disability sport sector still exists, and that the image of the sector is often inferior. Therefore, it is recommended that action regarding education and training applies not only to coaches and physical education teachers (for any disability sport specific training), but also to sport officials, administrators, and the general public, when it comes to the rights, needs and abilities of people with a disability in sport. There is a need to fight against the depreciated image of disability sports in general since a better reputation could then attract more better-trained human resources to the sector. One way to pioneer

this could be co-operative training initiatives between disability sport organisations and mainstream sport organisations, with support from training providers and public authorities. Besides making use of easily accessible on-line training sources, activities need to be implemented also at the local (club) level. Alignment and exchange of experience should also be envisaged at European level. Last but not least, it is recommended that special attention be paid to physical education in schools, as this is where young people often get their first taste of, and develop their passion for sport; youngsters with disabilities should be no different.

Financial and structural support

Investments often constitute a serious challenge: always needed, but in short supply. Nonetheless, financial and structural support are essential in keeping up the pace required in order to increase the number of people with disabilities involved in the sport sector at all levels, in parallel to continuous development of the whole sector. Especially in terms of accessibility (still seen as "the" major challenge of the sector), investments for infrastructure are imperative in order to overcome insufficient or inadequate access to sports provision at all levels. In this regard, it is recommended that investments should be considered in the context of the sector when conceiving an applicable funding strategy. Funding should be assessed in terms of outcomes for the sector with the strategy emanating from such considerations. It is recommended that action regarding financial and structural support includes consultation with disability sport stakeholders at a national and European level in order to consider the most appropriate funding model, accompanied by an

impact-based analysis of an investment strategy, including funding sources, distribution and outcomes.

Co-operation of stakeholders

Alongside any financial and structural support, there is co-operation from relevant stakeholders and the possible implementation of an applicable policy, whether it be at local, national or European level. The review of disability sport's surrounding conditions in Europe shows a current fragmentation of the sector. Therefore, it is important that closer relationships and co-operation between key stakeholders be duly considered, since differing approaches can reduce the potential for impact. All stakeholders involved in disability sport are hence encouraged to establish a higher level of interaction and networking through different forms of collaboration, including the implementation of co-operative policies and sharing of economical, intellectual and physical resources. It is recommended that such co-operation not only be kept within the different disability sport organisations but may be extended to the sport sector as a whole, so that disability sport shall not be seen outside the scope of sport. Furthermore, co-operation with disability organisations, such as the European Disability Forum, is strongly recommended as the importance of sport is already recognised by them; however, concrete co-operation with disability sport organisations is still rare. National and European authorities responsible for or related to sport, including the EPAS, could support such co-operation through project funding, operating grants or the provision of information and exchange platforms, although the initiatives must be taken by the sector stakeholders themselves.

Notwithstanding the significance of existing publications regarding the organisation and development of disability sport, as well as recent favourable sports policies, still many aspects regarding the provision of sport for people with disabilities in Europe lack information. Therefore, this publication will end with a general call for future research to provide a more adequate picture of disability sport throughout Europe, so that sustainable trans-national and trans-sectoral co-operation and mutual learning can be continued; it would also open the door for a broader European dimension of disability sport and a more aligned and evidence-based development between the member states of the Council of Europe.

References and further reading

Projects, initiatives and good practice examples:

In addition to the initiatives presented in the second section of this handbook, readers can also consult :

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About the Author

Matthias Gütt is co-founder of the Institute of Innovation Development in Sport, Germany. He graduated in sport science with a specialisation in sport economy and management. After studies in Cologne, Manchester and Barcelona he joined the teaching and research staff at the German Sport University Cologne. His scope of work covers political and scientific consulting and organisational development in sport at the European level. He currently works as consultant for the European Paralympic Committee.

Since the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport (EPAS) was set up in 2007, one of its major priorities has been the promotion of diversity in and through sport. To this end, the Council of Europe has developed a pan-European programme involving a variety of stakeholders from public authorities and the world of sport. All have an important role to play in reversing the discriminatory trends currently observed in sport and in promoting sport as a means of fostering diversity and social cohesion.

This collection of handbooks of good practices is an illustration of current policies and practices throughout Europe. Its aim is to disseminate and share positive experiences highlighting the potential of sport for promoting the Council of Europe's fundamental values of human rights.

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