



**Sport  
Empowers  
Disabled  
Youth**

# Inclusion in sport in practice

Preliminary results from the EU project  
“Sport Empowers Disabled Youth 2”

@sedyproject

<https://inholland.nl/sedy2>

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Inholland University of Applied Science Haarlem  
Adapted Sports Netherlands



Portuguese Federation of Disability Sports (FPDD)  
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Pajulahti

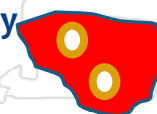
Pajulahti Sport Institute

Finnish paralympic committee



Lithuanian Paralympic Committee

Lithuanian Sports University



FEDERAÇÃO PORTUGUESA  
DE DESPORTO PARA PESSOAS  
COM DEFICIÊNCIA

## Goals of the project

To develop a SPIN tool (Sport Participation and INclusion tool) to promote inclusion and participation in sports:

- To discuss the meaning of inclusion in sport in practice;
- To exchange best practices to increase inclusive sport participation in youth with disabilities
- To develop practical materials for raising inclusive sport participation;

## From what does it mean?

- SEDY 2 addresses the topic of encouraging inclusion and equal opportunities in sport
- UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN, 2006)
- What does Inclusion in sport in practice mean?

## To how to put it in practice?

- It is only a common language which makes it possible to set common goals, to jointly develop tools that pursue everyone's goals and to exchange best practices efficiently.
- Because inclusion in sports and exercise must take place in practice.
- Within the SEDY 2 project we aim to develop a consensus statement on the meaning of inclusion in sport in practice and the best ways to promote it.

## What are we doing?

### Meaning of Inclusion in sport

- Focusgroups with different stakeholders (children, parents and **sportprofessionals**) in all partner countries to discuss the meaning of inclusion in sports





## Preliminary results Sportprofessionals

# Inclusion =

### **Individual needs and wishes**

“It is an individual experience of belonging, being accepted and feeling welcomed”

### **Taking part    Connect(ion)**

“that the sports could become joyful participation”

### **Having a choice**

“Inclusion can happen in a general sports club and also in a special group”

### **Equal opportunity to participate**

“To create conditions for disabled children to play sports by accommodating capabilities, aspirations, and needs of everyone”

### **Inclusion ≠ inclusion policy**

“As professionalis we think the same, but it’s maybe not the same as written in policy ”



## Comparable with

- A **rights-based** approach to the inclusion of people with disability in sport
- Covers the **spectrum of opportunities** for people with disabilities: inclusion within mainstream settings as well as inclusion within disability-specific opportunities.
- In accordance with their **individual preferences, wishes and choices**

(Kiuppis, 2016 and Black and Williamson, 2011)

# How can we solve this?

## Barriers

### **Put the child in the center**

“Inclusion and exclusion terminology is the problem and it may become a hindrance. Can’t we forget the concepts and focus on the children?”

### **Parents not sportminded**

“Sometimes the main problem hindering inclusion could be overprotective parents”

### **Clubs are not ready**

“it depends on specific trainers”

### **Attitude**

”Exclusion is not always intentional”

”Exclusion can occur when someone does not even try to solve to problem. Attitude is important”

### **Society has a lack of understanding**

“The disability is not important, much more important are the inclusive environment and society”

### **Buddy can be a solution (is often temporary)**

## Next steps: ask the children!

Young people who have Special Educational Needs and Disabilities have been marginalised in research.



Due to assumptions regarding their ability to engage, inflexibility of research design and the presupposed difficulties in conducting ethical research (Aldridge, 2016).

However, young people with SEND in research have valuable insight and are keen to seize opportunities to share their experiences (Coates and Vickerman, 2013. Fitzgerald, 2009).

graphic by @LMSharpy

# Focusgroup Methodology

Overcoming these Barriers  
Using these tools within the  
focus group:

- \* Visual aids
- \* Symbols
- \* Audio/videos
- \* Simple words
- \* Clear questions
- \* Story technique

“Focus on me” method (developed in Sedy 1)  
Dr Niamh-Elizabeth Reilly & Rachael Batters  
Youth Sport trust UK

**“my voice was heard, I could express my feelings”**



Dr Janine Coates

Lesley  
Sharpe



graphic by @LMSharpy

## What should we ask the children?

- No need for children to know about the word inclusion
- What children really want has to be starting point
- Before I ask the question I would like to give an opportunity to experience inclusion
- What kind of group would you like to be part of?
- What do you want to do or try?
- What are the things that make you feel welcome?
- What are the issues that you think before you go some activity for the first time?
- What are the things that adults most often are successful/ unsuccessful?
- Is participation joyful to the child?

## Our questions for the focusgroup

- What would you take to a desert island? (ice breaker question)
- What does 'inclusion' in sport mean to you?
  - Or 'feeling included'? Did you have a choice?
  - When did you really feel good in a (sports) group/doing activities/physical activity?
  - When did you feel 'part of it'?
- Can you describe a time when you felt included/not included?
- Who do you think can participate in sports?
- What do you think helps/prevents you from doing sports?



# Our tools



# What do you think?

What does Inclusion in sport in practice means?



# Thank you

- “Sport Empowers Disabled Youth 2”
- @sedyproject
- <https://inholland.nl/sedy2>
- [afke.kerkstra@inholland.nl](mailto:afke.kerkstra@inholland.nl)



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