

DEV: Differentiated Engaging Volleyball

Deadline for expression of interest: 10th of May 2021

The idea

The new millennium has seen the increase in the participation of people with disabilities in sports, and eventually the increase of the visibility and social inclusion of people with disabilities in our societies. International events, such as the Paralympics and various programs and initiatives – a big part of which was funded by the European Union via the Erasmus + program. To some extent, this increase has improved the conditions in our societies, in terms of facilities and infrastructures. More and more public spaces are already or are becoming accessible and the focus has been steadily shifting from the disabled body to the disabling architecture, structures, attitudes.

Nevertheless, there is still a great way to go before our societies become inclusive, and even more to be done towards breaking the stereotypes and the taboos regarding disabilities. Sports have been a privileged field for the visibility and expression of the disability movement. Yet, this success has been hindered by a crucial obstacle: the association of disability events with something extra-societal or special, as if the disability is the determinant feature of one's self and value.

Our project intends to bring together organizations active in the field of sports, and more specifically volleyball, who share the vision to encourage physical activities of individuals, through volleyball, indiscriminately of ability, gender, age, nationality, sexuality, or any other feature that may be used as a determinant of one's identity.

During the project, the members of this capacity-building partnership will share ideas from grassroots volleyball-related games from each country. These games will then be organized and rules will be set to achieve – through differentiation – an athletic product/sport that allows for groups of mixed abilities/ages/genders, etc. to play and even compete together.

Upon shared, the intercultural ideas will be practiced by individuals of different ages, genders, and abilities, during in-country training sessions or workshops, organized and conducted by the partners. By the end of the project, each country will organize a local or national exhibition tournament, and the shared or newly created games will be documented in a digital book, to be shared around Europe.

This project is also a great opportunity not only for creating or sharing games that can encourage inclusive physical activity through differentiation but also a chance to evolve and learn through the cooperation of similarly minded organizations, and a great opportunity to create a strong network of such organizations.

The objectives

- Promote equal opportunities and awareness of the importance of health-enhancing physical activity, through increased participation in, and equal access to volleyball for all;
- Promote activities encouraging the practice of volleyball and physical activity including traditional and grassroots games, open for all;
- Promote international co-operation between groups working in the field of volleyball;
- Increase the capacity of organizations to engage people with and without disabilities in sports.

Planned events

1. **January 2022**: Kick-off meeting / 2 days (held by one of the members of the partnership)
2. **March 2022**: Training seminar / 5 days (Greece)
 - a. for sharing grassroots games and other ideas that can be used for a differentiated inclusive volleyball
 - b. for setting simple rules and defining the games that we will use to promote equal opportunities and physical activity through volleyball for all
3. **April – June 2022**: In-country trainings/workshops
for introducing and training the games to and with mixed groups of people
4. **April – June 2022**: Study visits / 2 days
2 members from each partner will visit another random country to learn from the training practices. Each partner will host a different partner than the one they will visit.
5. **June 2022**: Local or national exhibition tournaments (in each country). The tournaments will be broadcasted live through one of our affiliate's Youtube channel
6. **Autumn 2022**: Final meeting / 2 days (held by one of the members of the partnership)

Call for partners

We are looking for partners from the EU, the EFTA countries, and the EEA, who are active and experienced with volleyball (i.e. sports clubs, athletes associations, referee associations, veterans, federations, etc.)

Partners' responsibilities

- host kick-off meeting (one of the partners)
- participate in kick-off and final meeting with 1 member
- participate with 1 member in the main activity (#2) and share ideas for inclusive volleyball
- organize/conduct in-country training and tournament
- participate with 2 members in 1 study visit
- host 2 members from one of the partners during their study-visit
- host final meeting (one of the partners / may be different from kick-off meeting)