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Sport4Cancer
D2.2 Social inclusion
and gender balance
guide

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1. Introduction

Accessible and inclusive sport, leisure, recreation and tourism are essential for full participation in society. They enhance well-being and give everyone, including people with disabilities, the opportunity to develop and use their potential (European Commission, 2016). The Council underlined this importance in its conclusions on access to sport for people with disabilities (Council of the European Union, 2019).

According to the Eurobarometer on Sport and Physical Activity²¹, women (36%) participate in sporting activities less frequently than men (44%) in Europe. Similarly, 40% of men never engage in any form of physical activity, while 52% of women do (European Commission, 2018).

Even when significant differences exist between Member States, female participation in sport is always lower than male participation. Furthermore, female participation in sports declines with age: 33% of women aged 15-24 years do not engage in any physical activity (European Commission, 2018).

2. Terminology

A) **Sex** is defined as (British Council, 2021): referring to the biological aspects of an individual as determined by their anatomy, which is produced by their chromosomes, hormones and their interactions.

- generally male or female
- something that is assigned at birth

B) **Gender** is defined as (British Council, 2021):

- a social construction relating to behaviours and attributes based on labels of masculinity and femininity; gender identity is a personal, internal perception of oneself and so the gender category someone identifies with may not match the sex they were assigned at birth
- where an individual may see themselves as a man, a woman, as having no gender, or as having a nonbinary gender – where people identify as somewhere on a spectrum between man and woman.

C) **Social inclusion** is an essential component of addressing gender (in)equality. It is defined as the process of improving the conditions for participation in society, particularly for disadvantaged people, through improved opportunities, access to resources, voice, and respect for rights (UN Department of Economics and Social Affairs, 2016). Much of the research and debate on social inclusion focuses on the three domains of social participation, economic participation, and political participation (Beal & Piron, 2005).

3. Women barriers to participate in sport activities

According to Talleu (2011) the main barriers to women's participation in sport are:

1. **A limited offer of sports**: the specific needs of women and girls are not taken into account, as adjustments need to be made to cater for girls and women (in terms of facilities, supervision, teaching methods, equipment, etc.). The problems are the same from one sport environment to another. Seventy per cent of the curriculum is devoted to ball games, while only 10 per cent is devoted to dance and gymnastics, activities more associated with girls.
2. **Problem of quality of sports facilities**: open sports facilities designed for self-managed sport do not seem to offer equal opportunities for women, as they do not seem to be designed to encourage female or mixed participation. As a result, the various sports offers may have unintended negative consequences for women's sport. This is because they frequently disregard the preferences and aspirations of women and girls. In this way, they may unintentionally lead to exclusion.
3. **Accessibility problems**: One of the primary reasons why girls drop out of sports is due to the nature of the activity. Furthermore, a lack of transportation, combined with late schedules and the emergence of safety concerns, significantly discourages girls from participating in sports. The lack of segregated time slots for girls and women can also be a significant disadvantage for many ethnic minority girls and women.

People of migrant origin may face exclusion, discrimination, or even racism in various sporting environments. There is very little data available for women, but these issues must not be overlooked because stereotypical and racist attitudes are major impediments.

4. **The rules of national sporting institutions**: different sports prohibit women from wearing headscarves during competitions, and more general dress codes can present significant challenges. As a result, women are unable to reconcile their cultural and religious identities with the rules of sporting organisations.
5. **Individual barriers to sports practice**: Lack of time is one of the main reasons given by non-practitioners to justify their attitude. The main issue is not so much a lack of free time for women as it is the amount of time they allow themselves to do what they want. This lack of interest is closely related to family obligations and responsibilities that have been viewed as women's duties for decades, and which are a major barrier for working-class or ethnic minority women.
6. **Low level of relationships**: the size and quality of their friendship network can also act as barriers to girls' and women's participation in sports. In general, it should be noted that the decision to participate in sports is heavily influenced by friends among young people. In contrast, a lack of friends in the sporting community appears to have a particularly negative impact on female participation, particularly among ethnic minorities.
7. **The influence of families**: Families, particularly parents, have a significant impact on initiating and retaining their children in sports. Parents must assist their children because they lack financial independence and have transportation issues. Furthermore, if there is a "sporting atmosphere" at home and parents are especially aware of the benefits of physical exercise, this can have a clear positive effect on children's participation.
8. **Adolescent issues and the question of coeducational sport**: Puberty, physical changes, and the search for sexual identity are all common barriers to girls participating in sports and, more specifically, learning physical education at school during adolescence. When asked to perform in front of other students, especially boys, girls may experience embarrassment, shyness, or even modesty.
9. **Communication, images, and icons**: Inappropriate diffusion of sports information and images can also be a barrier to girls' and women's participation in physical activities and sports. Current information-seeking and communication tools are advanced and diverse enough to provide quick access to the required information. Furthermore, the limited coverage of women's sport and female athletes in the various media (television, press, radio, and television, for example) does not allow for quick access to the necessary information.

4. Barriers to participation of people with disabilities in sport activities

Programmes and interventions aimed at increasing participation in sport for people with disabilities are often designed to address complex and multifaceted barriers to participation (European Commission, 2018). Charlton et al. (2010) identified three main types of barriers:

- **Intrapersonal:** the attitudes, beliefs, knowledge and skills that each individual constructs from their environment, culture and past experiences predispose people to participate or avoid participation.
- **Interpersonal:** motivation to do sport is also influenced by people's social environment (community approval, family, friends or social pressure).
- **External:** the nature of the physical environment, the quality of service provision, the ease of access to reliable and up-to-date information about services and the existence of stimuli (models or advertisements).

Reflecting the above typology, Martin's (2013) analysis suggests that barriers to physical activity participation can relate to three distinct levels: individual, social and environmental.

- a) **Barriers at the individual-level:** These could include a variety of barriers that are directly related towards the functional limitations of the disability or to physical and psychological aspects. Psychological and physical barriers, on the other hand, are primarily related to the fear of failure, the perception that able to perform physical activities would take an inordinate amount of time, and, finally, pain and/or a lack of energy.
- b) **Barriers at the social level:** Social barriers primarily refer to a lack of professional preparation among community sport and physical activity staff to communicate with and adapt physical activities to the needs of people with disabilities. For example, parents are not always given the necessary training and equipment to overcome individual barriers. Other types of barriers at this level include a lack of playmates, financial constraints, and sometimes parents' concern for their children's physical and emotional safety.
- c) **Barriers at the environmental level of sport activities:** There are various barriers in the built environment that reduce the attractiveness of doing sport for adults with disabilities, such as poorly located facilities or insufficient opportunities to progress from mere physical activities to competitive sports. There may also be environmental and management barriers related to a specific sport's athletes and governing bodies. These obstacles arise primarily when disabled athletes attempt to compete with other athletes.

5. Gender and social inclusion issues to be taken into account

The European Commission (2022) sets out a number of horizontal criteria and cross-cutting recommendations on gender equality in sport, highlighting:

1. Gender mainstreaming

To achieve a comprehensive, integrated, structured, and long-term impact, all sport organisations should take a gender mainstreaming approach. European documents advocate for the inclusion of a gender perspective in sports-related activities (Council of the European Union, 2010). Gender mainstreaming is defined by the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) as "the incorporation of a gender perspective in the preparation, design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of policies, regulatory measures, and expenditure programmes, with the goal of promoting equality between men and women and combating discrimination."

2. Intersectorality

Sports organisations must take an intersectoral approach to equality. Intersectionality is a way of looking at how the interconnectedness of power systems affects personal experiences and creates inequalities (Collins, 2015). It contends that multiple identity-based patterns of inequality, such as sexism, racism, and homophobia, are inextricably linked (Collins, 1993). Because these inequalities overlap, people experience them at various intersections: sex/gender, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, and so on (Lin et al., 2021). Adopting an intersectional approach will thus aid in understanding why participation rates in sport among groups experiencing multiple forms of marginalisation remain very low when compared to dominant groups.

On the other hand, the International Olympic Committee (2021) indicates some initiatives that can facilitate gender balance coverage in sport organisations:

1. Ensure that the competition calendar is equally balanced for women's and men's events.
2. Stipulate in events that coverage of female and male athletes should be of equal quantity and quality.
3. Organise women's and men's competitions to be held at the same venue and at the same times.
4. Ensure that female athletes and coaches present themselves as potential interviewees. Offer incentives to the media to assign female staff.
5. Balanced gender representation is a priority.
6. Ensure that sports policies and rules are free of gender bias.

Figure 1. Example of language that we promote during the project. Source: International Olympic Committee (2021).

| WHEN REFERRING TO PEOPLE | PRONOUNS | NOUNS AND PROPER NAMES | ADJECTIVES | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|--|--------------------|----------------------|---|------------------------------|--------------------|------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|--------------------|--|-----------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------------|--|--|--|---|
| <p>Always use "female/male", women/men and not girls/boys, unless referring to minors.</p> <p>✗ The use of "ladies" is inappropriate when "men" is being used. The term should be women. The same applies for using the term "girls" when "men" is being used.</p> <p>✓ Ladies is appropriate when used with the term Gentlemen, as in a speech: "Ladies and Gentlemen"; or when it is an official title, e.g. "Sir John and Lady Smith".</p> | <p>Do not assume a person's gender identity. Always ask them directly, and unless the gender of the person is known, avoid using gender-specific pronouns (she/he, him/her). Rather, in such cases, the plural (they/them/their) is acceptable. For example:</p> <p>✗ Each athlete must always have his accreditation on him.</p> <p>✓ All athletes are required to always have their accreditation on them.</p> <p>OR</p> <p>✓ The athlete is required to always have their accreditation on them.</p> <p>Similarly, when referring to a mixed-gender group, the neutral plural should be used.</p> | <p>Where possible, use gender-neutral terms, for example:</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>✗ Sportsman</td> <td>✓ Chairperson</td> </tr> <tr> <td>✓ Sportsperson / athlete (or sportswoman/ sportswomen when referring to a specific individual)</td> <td>✓ Chair / Chairperson</td> </tr> <tr> <td>✗ Anchorman</td> <td>✗ Mankind</td> </tr> <tr> <td>✓ Anchor</td> <td>✓ Humankind / Humanity</td> </tr> <tr> <td>✗ Spokesman</td> <td>✗ Boyfriend/ girlfriend or husband/wife</td> </tr> <tr> <td>✓ Spokesperson</td> <td>✓ Partner / spouse</td> </tr> <tr> <td>✗ Cameraman / Cameramen</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>✓ Camera operator / Camera crew</td> <td></td> </tr> </table> | ✗ Sportsman | ✓ Chairperson | ✓ Sportsperson / athlete (or sportswoman/ sportswomen when referring to a specific individual) | ✓ Chair / Chairperson | ✗ Anchorman | ✗ Mankind | ✓ Anchor | ✓ Humankind / Humanity | ✗ Spokesman | ✗ Boyfriend/ girlfriend or husband/wife | ✓ Spokesperson | ✓ Partner / spouse | ✗ Cameraman / Cameramen | | ✓ Camera operator / Camera crew | | <p>Avoid making evaluative comments on an individual's appearance. When describing an athlete's performance, use adjectives that apply to both women and men. For instance:</p> <p>✓ use words such as: beautiful, powerful, strong, graceful, athletic, determined, dominant</p> <p>✗ not gendered or sexist descriptions e.g. sexy, girly, manly, like a man, etc.</p> <p>TIP: FLIP THE GENDER Swap the gender of the person you are talking or writing about. If the result seems strange, there may be a bias.</p> |
| ✗ Sportsman | ✓ Chairperson | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ✓ Sportsperson / athlete (or sportswoman/ sportswomen when referring to a specific individual) | ✓ Chair / Chairperson | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ✗ Anchorman | ✗ Mankind | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ✓ Anchor | ✓ Humankind / Humanity | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ✗ Spokesman | ✗ Boyfriend/ girlfriend or husband/wife | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ✓ Spokesperson | ✓ Partner / spouse | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ✗ Cameraman / Cameramen | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ✓ Camera operator / Camera crew | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

6. Facilitators of participation the people with disabilities in sport activities

The review shows that raising awareness and improving communication about sport opportunities for people with disabilities could facilitate participation in sport by overcoming specific individual and environmental barriers. European Commission (2018).

1. **Awareness raising and communication campaigns:** Campaigns for public awareness and communication: It is necessary to improve knowledge of sport opportunities in order to overcome psychological/personal barriers to participation. It is critical to establish information centres and raises the awareness where data can be shared in terms of communication. It is necessary to consider the significant influence of media images on the promotion of sport opportunities for people with disabilities. Along with communication issues, the importance of parents and families as facilitators of sport participation will be emphasised.
2. **Organisation and management of sport activities:** Sporting activities should be viewed as part of a continuum of inclusion" (Kiuppis, 2018). The inclusion spectrum's goal is "to provide people with disabilities with the opportunity to participate in sport in the way they want to participate, with whom they want to participate, and in the way they want to participate." According to Black and Williamson (2011), is distinguished by various types of activities:
 - **Separate (or segregated) activity:** special activities designed and proposed for people with disabilities;
 - **Parallel activity:** disabled athletes may have to train separately with their disabled peers in preparation for a competition;

- **Disabled sports activity (reverse integration):** non-disabled children and adults are included in disabled sports along with disabled people;
- **Open activity (inclusive):** cooperative or unstructured movement games, or warm-up and cool-down exercises;
- **Modified activities** designed for all, with adaptation to the space, tasks, equipment and teaching of individuals;

3. **Barriers related to environmental and social aspects:** the STEP model could represent a useful tool to overcome such structural/environmental barriers. The acronym STEP stands for Space, Task, Equipment and People (Kiuppis, 2018).

- **Space** refers to the possible need to increase or decrease the size of play areas to accommodate different abilities or mobility levels.
- **Task**, which should ensure that everyone has an equal opportunity to participate, for example by breaking down different complex skills into smaller components. In this way, it can be ensured that everyone has the opportunity to practice skills or components individually or with a partner before being included in a reduced team game.
- **Equipment** refers primarily to the possibility of providing everyone with equipment that suits the ability or age of the participants.
- **People** refers to the ratio between the number of players and related skills, implying that it may be preferable to play with teams of unequal numbers in order to facilitate the inclusion of some team members while maximising the participation of others.

European Commission (2016) analyses several projects related with the topic of social inclusion and people with disabilities to establish different factors that support the success of the initiatives. The most relevant factors are:

- a) **Positive social context:** The much more positive politically and social climate, in which political support for initiatives is strong and openly communicated, generates a more open attitude among the population toward migrants, particularly refugees, in the recent context. The importance of public support was emphasised through awareness-raising campaigns.
- b) **Creating ownership:** It was deemed ineffective to provide opportunities for participation that did not correspond to the needs and preferences of the target population. Because it was difficult to understand the underlying preferences, which were influenced by their cultural background, involving the immigrant population in programme design and implementation was seen as an useful way to increase uptake and participation while also focusing opportunities on the demands and needs of the target population.

- c) **Cultural exchange:** exchange provides an opportunity to meet in a safe and (via sport rules) also regulated environment and to learn about different groups. For the local community, for example, this has the advantage of breaking down barriers and prejudices, whereas for migrants, it provides an informal way to form links with the community, improve their language skills, and establish social networks, which may lead to employment opportunities.

Participation in sport and sports clubs provide unique opportunities for individual engagement and development through and through sport. The benefits of volunteerism overlap with those of simple cultural exchange (e.g., networking, improved language skills, improved employability), but go much further because volunteerism, and particularly coaching roles, require qualifications.

- d) **Increasing cultural awareness:** Improving cultural sensitivity and understanding is a two-way street; in fact, the integration process itself is constantly working on cultural awareness and the ability to engage with and cope with them.

7. Contribution of women initiatives to the Sustainable Development Goals.

The International Olympic Committee (2021b) states that planning with a focus on gender inclusion and equality in sport organisations and their objectives can contribute significantly to the development of the following Sustainable Development Goals:

GENDER EQUALITY

5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

5.1. End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere.

5.2. Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other forms of exploitation.

5.5. Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life.

5.a Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources.

5.b. Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communications technology, to promote women's empowerment.

5.c Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels.

REDUCING INEQUALITIES

10.2. By 2030, enhance and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, gender, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion, economic or other status

10.3. Ensure equality of opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and actions in this regard.

PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS

16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.

16.7 Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels 16.

16.b Promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development

PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

17. 17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the global partnership for sustainable development

17.16. Enhance the global partnership for sustainable development, complemented by multi-stakeholder partnerships that mobilise and share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources, to support the achievement of the sustainable development goals in all countries, particularly developing countries.



8. Initiatives to be developed in the Sport4Cancer project

The Sport4Cancer sport event will develop different initiatives that promote female participation and empowerment, as well as the social inclusion of other groups at risk of social exclusion:

1. Existing European delegations will have to select their participants considering a gender balance of 50:50.
2. As far as possible, delegations should include 20% of people with disabilities in their team.
3. The day before the event there will be a school sports day with more than 3000 children participating in sports activities on the beach with the aim of informing all groups about the event, including young people from ethnic minorities to encourage families to come to the event during the weekend.
4. The workshop will have a session dedicated exclusively to the role of women in sport.
5. The event will have an extended schedule of activities throughout the weekend with the approximate opening hours of Saturday from 10:00 to 19:00 hours and Sunday from 10:00 to 17:00 hours to make it easier for all those who may have working hours at the weekend to attend the event.
6. A large number of activities with female and/or mixed participation will be promoted, establishing important peak times for the public.
7. The activities will be carried out in the most inclusive way to allow the participation of people with disabilities in as many of them as possible.
8. Different types of activities will be developed: free participation, exhibitions and initiation to sport modalities, sport competitions or sustainable activities.
9. Different cultural activities such as an international fair or concert will be held with the attending delegations to foster relations between participants and cultural exchange.
10. In terms of promotion and dissemination of the event, specific content will be created to highlight women, people with cancer and people with disabilities.
11. During the event, interviews will be conducted with relevant female participants and people with disabilities to empower their image and dissemination in the different social and communication media.
12. All the results of the evaluation of the impacts derived from the event that will be carried out (social perception, tourism, sustainability, quality of the event or volunteering) will be carried out considering the gender perspective.

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