



**Bsport+**

**Newsletter**

***BOTTOM UP SPORT PARTNERSHIP***

Co-funded by the  
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# **BOTTOM UP SPORT PARTNERSHIP**

## **Newsletter 1**

It has been a year since the BSPORT+ Project started. Just before our neighbourhoods and cities closed down due to the coronavirus pandemic, the 10 organizations that lead this initiative in 9 European countries (Albania, Belgium, Denmark, Italy, Spain, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden and Turkey) met to launch it in Istanbul (Turkey) at the beginning of March. At that time, no one imagined the year ahead, or that the BSPORT+ project would be more necessary than ever: against restrictions on mobility and the lack of social contact, sports, physical activity and the maintenance of Healthy lifestyles make us stronger against the pandemic at both levels, physically and mentally.

One way to protect your well-being is through physical activity. Not only BSPORT+ partners agree on the benefits of sport and physical activity, but also many scientists talk about the positive effects of sports on our lives: Exercise improves mood, reduces stress and anxiety, increases self-esteem and self-confidence. Sport can even serve as a way to prevent mental illness. [1] Scientists claim that daily exercise reduces the risk of depression and cognitive decline and dementia in adults and the elderly by 20-30% without side effects. [2]

However, and although we know the benefits, there are still great inequalities in the participation of people with disabilities in sports and in the maintenance of healthy habits. As a working group, we asked ourselves what we can do to reduce them and during this year we have advanced by creating strong ties with other organizations and individuals that help us achieve our



objectives (see article 1) and we have researched the causes of these differences (see article 2). The result: we are now more prepared than a few months ago to tackle the problem. So to finish each partner is explaining us how their plans to activate PwD in their own countries (see article 3).

This year has been very hard, but the future is not yet written, do not let it catch us out of shape.

Enjoy the reading,

Sara M Isperto

**Fundación INTRAS**

## References:

1. Rosenbaum S, Tiedemann A, Sherrington C, Curtis J, Ward PB. Physical activity interventions for people with mental illness: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *J Clin Psychiatry*. 2014;75(4):964-74.
2. Health Do. *Start active, Stay active*. 2011.



## 1. BUILDING A COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE. Creating links with other companies.

B-SPORT+ is a blueprint to engage and activate Persons with Disabilities (PwD) and to assist them adopting healthy habits through a Lifelong Sporting System starting at an early age and continuing in their active life (workplace, professional activity, etc.).

The first step of BSPORT+ project was to involve different influential and expert institutions, who have experience working with PwD and/or promoting healthy habits. They are or could be NGOs, research units, sports clubs, schools or other relevant organisations/institutions; they just need to register on our project website ([www.bsportplus.eu](http://www.bsportplus.eu) 'who we are' section). Our goal is to build a community of practice in each partner country to be able to:

- a) Equip institutions and bodies to assist PwD in adopting healthy habits



- b)** Build a capacity building programme for professionals working with PwD at any level
- c)** Build upon the network's expertise and knowledge exchange
- d)** Promote cross-sectoral cooperation towards a unique goal: promote healthier hab Zits among PwD

As a good sample of how we have been working on this, we present the case of KTH, our partner from Sweden, which is a large school with over 3600 employees. These are the results so far:

It has been an active autumn which above all results, in a plethora of contacts (stakeholders) that can enable long-term change in activating PwD. Some of these contacts are: GIH, RF, TäbySim and NackaHi. A larger Zoom meeting with these and other actors was held on October, 27th to gather forces and meet each other. During this meeting, two areas that are relevant to BSport+ were identified:

- Para-sports where there is an interest in getting more people active.
- Ongoing projects that look at the benefits of physical activity where previous research has been done among both children and the elderly. Here the plan is that BSport+ can function as a platform to take the knowledge

that already exists and convey this to stakeholders. To get a better insight into all developments in technology linked to sports, a first joint meeting was held on December, 11th and the next step will be to organize an internal conference in sports where, among others, Bsport+ is intended to be part of the program.

From the larger perspective, a first Nordic meeting to discuss about how to compete for the gold in Paralympics with larger countries such as China and the USA was held on the December, 1st. It also gathered the knowledge about sport technologies that exists in the Nordic region and identified common interests linked to activities for PwD.

Maria Pencheri  
[WONCA Europe](#)

Jonas Willén  
[KTH](#)

## 2. RESEARCH ON LIFESTYLES DRIVERS OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

The Bsport+ consortium of 9 countries and 10 partners performed an in-depth assessment on the PwDs habits and lifestyles within their individual targeted communities. Desk research and primary data collected via online surveys were used to gain a comprehensive understanding of targeted PwDs communities' lifestyle, needs and sport participation.

The performed extensive literature review empathise that PwDs are willing to adopt a healthy lifestyle but they faced many internal and external barriers in doing so. Most frequent internal barriers are lack of understanding and support which makes them feel uncomfortable. Consequently, PwDs demonstrate a low self-esteem, motivation and participation in different spheres of life, including sport activities. Other factors inhibiting PwDs' active participation in sport activities are financial constraints, community support and accessibility to sport facilities, lack of information and/or legislative support, etc.

The collected primary data using online survey tool support this literature findings and non-significant variances were observed across countries. Most of



the surveyed PwDs stressed that the main factors preventing them from active sport participation are lack of time, family and friends' influence, appropriate facilities, transportation problems, financial constraints, lack of interest, lack of confidence, health condition, etc. According to the survey results, family and friends' support, personal assistive devices, facilities and infrastructure and the role of the organisations and policies can make easier their participation to sport activities. Most of the respondents are motivated to practice sport activities and many of them do at least one of the following physical activities: leisurely walking, bicycling, skating, swimming, light gardening and housework, dancing or other moderate exercises, running, weight training, etc.

Lastly, the current COVID-19 pandemic situation has challenged the life of surveyed PwDs at both levels: psychologically and physically and now more than ever we must redesign tools to do not make desiquailities even higher.

Ornela Vladi

[European University of Tirana](#)



### **3. DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES TOWARDS A COMMON GOAL: ACTIVATE PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES.**

**Project partners explain the benefits of BSPORT+ and how they are going to apply it.**

#### **FUNDACIÓN INTRAS (Spain)**

Intras Foundation is always trying to increase the opportunities available for inclusive participation of our service users (people with psychosocial disabilities). Sports is one of our field of interest and the organization of events integrated in the community where INTRAS Foundation operates is one of our priorities. Currently in our region, people with psychosocial disabilities should decide if they join sport activities adapted to another target groups (e.g.: people with intellectual

dissabilities) or join regular activities, which are not always accessible to them. Through Bsport+ we will address this issue by providing high-quality sport opportunities based on equity and inclusion, open to anyone regardless their health condition and sharing our model to other organizations and professionals to activate PwD in general.

### **ISTANBUL AVRUPA ARASTIRMALARI DERNEGI (Turkey)**

Istanbul Avrupa Arastirmalari Dernegi recently engaged in the field of sport, physical activity and healthy lifestyle through two ERASMUS+ Sport funded projects (My Best Sport Day and the European Game), and aims at consolidating its specific set of competences into the HEPA, now with project BSPORT+ and Fit for Kids (both ERASMUS+ Sport). Under the project BSPORT+, IAAD seeks to promote accompanying educational activities such as a Teachers' Resource pack. IAAD aims at taking a leading role at local level (district of Büyükçekmece) in providing impetus for fostering social inclusion and intercultural competences with a community-based vision and strategy, engaging and activating individuals and families to adopt healthy lifestyles.

### **OZARA (Slovenia)**

OZARA d.o.o. is strongly committed to pursue innovative and contemporary approaches for quality of life for employees and users of our programmes. Sport is an integral part of workplace health promotion activities and we are keen to learn something new especially when it comes down to involve people in sport and other socializing activities for our target groups. Active and healthy lifestyle is a very important element for tackling different problem areas and situations when working with our target groups. The greatest benefit of this project is to share, learn and benefit from the multiple professional experience of this consortium, bringing together, HE, businesses, NGOs and thus gather a variety of approaches for a multiplying effect to the target groups, beneficiaries and surrounding social realms we work and live in.

### **STICHTING WONCA EUROPE (Netherlands)**

WONCA Europe is thrilled to be a part of the Bsports consortium and to contribute to promoting physical activity (PA) to people with disabilities. The various positive benefits of regular PA are widely acknowledged, where PA contributes to preventing and managing non-communicable diseases such as type-2-diabetes and cardiovascular diseases. We believe that family doctors are in a unique position to encourage PA given their access to a great group of people across communities, and we want to build upon this by generating knowledge about

prescribing PA to people with disabilities.

### **ASOCIACIÓN DE PSICOLOGÍA EVOLUTIVA Y EDUCATIVA DE LA INFANCIA - INFAD (Spain)**

BSPORT+ represents both a challenge and an opportunity for us to develop new opportunities to promote Sport and healthy habits among PwDs at regional level. In this regard, we firmly believed that sport and PA are both very important for the integration of people with disabilities and in the prevention of further or future disabilities. INFAD has gradually increase its special interest in the research fields of disability, ageing, childhood and youth and organizing international congresses and other events. BSPORT+ will be included in the Psychology applied to sports area of INFAD, and we will especially promote healthy lifestyles in educational centres based on Extremadura and Castilla y León Spanish regions.

### **KUNGLIGA TEKNISKA HOEGSKOLAN (Sweden)**

The big goal in society that KTH is trying to tackle is to identify sustainable alternatives for moving from healthcare to wellness in general. Not just only connected to a PwD. There, BSport+ has been identified as an essential part, as many solutions for rising PA of PWDs will most likely be applicable in the larger question of how we, as a society, move towards more preventive healthcare. That is, keep us healthy with the goal of preventing lifestyle diseases. In parallel, we at KTH and together with a consultant have just completed the prototype of technology to help blind swimmers. The plan is to do the first tests in water after New Year.

### **TOPCOACH SRO (Slovakia)**

This project is a great opportunity to share our experiences with other partners and to learn from them. This partnership helps us to develop new ideas and apply then within this project and therefore to support our target groups. We believe that BSPORT+ project outcomes will make the life of PwDs better and higher quality.

### **SInAPSi (Italy)**

SINAPSI offers and supports initiatives aimed at increasing the participation of all the students in university life, with a particular focus on students living educational disadvantages, caused by personal, social, cultural or economic circumstances, that might put them at high risk of social exclusion. SInAPSi provides students with opportunities for self-development and growth, helping them to become



proactive in improving the quality of their life, their academic experience, and social relationships. Sport practice, intended not just as a physical activity performed exclusively for elite athletics, represents a key element for growth, has multiple physical and mental health benefits and it is a source of social inclusion. Through BSPORT+ project, SInAPSi is committed to promote physical exercise and sport practice as crucial means to enhance the overall health and well-being of people experiencing disadvantage conditions, at both individual and social levels.

### **TRENTHUIS (Belgium)**

Trendhuis' involvement in BSport+ comes from our belief that sport and physical exercise are an important part of improving workers' resilience. Research have shown that people who regularly work out not only improve their physical but also their mental health. This leads to less anxiety and stress, which in turn leads to a decrease in burn-out symptoms. We also want to bring awareness to the fact that exercise doesn't necessarily need to involve an expensive gym membership or expensive workout clothes. Physically active modes of transportation like cycling and walking or being active during breaks at work kill multiple birds with one stone by being healthy, cheap and eco-friendly. The responses we received to the BSport+ survey also highlight the importance of spreading awareness about the benefits of being physically active: 51% of respondents said that they spent less than one hour a day in sport or recreational activities; Another 6% even said that they do not work out at all. Trendhuis believes that by being a part of the BSport+ project we can improve the quality of life of a substantial percentage of these people.

### **EUT SHPK (Albania)**

B-SPORT+ represents an innovative project in the current portfolio of experience of EUT. Thus far, it has had a significant impact at both institutional and community levels, by rising the awareness on the need for active sport participation for PwDs in Albania. Up to experts' team knowledge, B-SPORT+ is one of the very few similar initiatives in Albania aiming at engaging PwDs to a healthy lifestyle and sport participation (specifically children and youths with diabetes). Beside its institutional and local impact, B-SPORT+ has enabled an excellent collaboration at European level, promoting the continues exchange of good practices and experiences.



# Bsport+

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## Who we are

FUNDACIÓN  
**Intras**

 **Universiteti  
European i  
Tiranës**  
majora premunt / gjëra të mëdha na presin

  
**topcoach**  
unlock your potential

  
**SINAPSI**  
Universiteti Sinapsi  
Erasmus+ II CENTRO D'ATTENZIONE

**IRENDHUS**

  
**IAAD**

 **Wonca**  
WONCA

  
**ozard**

  
**KTH**  
KTH

  
**INFAD**