PARALYMPIC SCHOOL DAY

PROJECT REPORT
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

OVERVIEW .................................................................................................................. 3  
PROJECT STRUCTURE ................................................................................................. 4  
  GENERAL .................................................................................................................. 4  
  SPECIFIC ................................................................................................................ 6  
OUTCOMES .................................................................................................................. 8  
  PSD RESOURCE KIT ................................................................................................. 8  
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OVERVIEW

The Paralympic School Day (PSD) is a non-formal educational programme initiated by the International Paralympic Committee (IPC). The aim of the programme is to create awareness and understanding about persons with a disability.

The PSD is a set of activities that educate youth about Paralympic sport, individual differences and disability issues in a fun and playful environment. These activities can be organized during a school day, at a sports club or any other interested youth organization and targets an audience of young persons, especially between the ages of 6 to 15.

In 2004, the IPC, in close collaboration with the European Paralympic Committee (EPC), initiated a two-year PSD pilot project in Europe through a grant from the European Union (EU). The overall aim of this pilot project was the creation of materials, including all educational and vocational manual used throughout the project, giving youth organizations in Europe a tool to implement the PSD Programme independently. The result was the PSD Resource Kit consisting of three components:

1. PSD Manual
2. Activity Cards
3. PSD DVD

These three components include a wealth of information and materials to assist teachers to prepare, implement and reflect on their PSD. Using these materials, teachers can apply their own creativity and individual adaptations to create the best PSD experience for their students.

This kit has been created by specialists in Paralympic sport, disability and pedagogy to provide teachers with the skills, knowledge and resources to conduct a successful Paralympic School Day.
PROJECT STRUCTURE

GENERAL

The following organizations were the PSD project partners:

- European Paralympic Committee
- Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium
- University of Olomouc, Czech Republic
- University of Koblenz, Germany
- Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece
- Latvian Disabled Children’s and Youth Sport Federation, Latvia
- Swedish Development Centre for Disability Sport, Sweden

The project started in October 2004 and was conducted in three main phases:

1) The development of an education programme and educational materials, taking into consideration cultural and educational differences of the participating countries,

2) The national implementation of the education programme. Each participating nation implements PSDs during this phase of the project.

3) The evaluation of the education programme and implementation strategy; development of the PSD Resource Kit.

During the implementation phase of the project, partnerships between the Ministry of Education, elementary schools, National Paralympic Committees, sport federations for the disabled, disability advocacy groups, sport federations and the regional Paralympic committees were key. In addition, a
PSD website was created as a connector for different nations in various regions of the world to connect on a global Paralympic education programme.

During the PSDs organized within the framework of the project, children listened to stories from sportsmen with a disability, looked at sport activities on video, participated in adapted physical activities, games and sports and experienced the potential accessibility of their school. Furthermore, teachers and coaches went through a training seminar presenting and outlining the theoretical framework of the PSD concept.

By informing youth without a disability about the life and actions of persons with a disability, awareness und understanding is raised and equal opportunities at the grassroots level is promoted. The participation of schools, universities, institutes for adapted physical education and sport federations for the disabled ensures a broad and inter-disciplinary approach to the integration of persons with a disability.
SPECIFIC

Each of the project partners organized PSD to gather information and experience, providing the core data for the PSD Resource Kit. As follows are examples of PSDs implemented during the project.

**Greece**
The Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, one of the project partners, hosted the 2nd PSD conference, which included the first implementation of a ‘Paralympic School Day’ in the 5th and 13th Elementary School of Serres.

During the half-day ‘Paralympic School Day’ about 220 school children, aged six to twelve years, were able to practice a wide variety of Paralympic sports and adapted physical activities, such as Athletics, Boccia, Goalball, Sitting Volleyball and Wheelchair Basketball. Almost all of the sport sessions were lead by former or active Paralympic athletes, providing excellent knowledge on the respective sport and serving as role model for the pupils to learn from. In addition, sessions were conducted to let the students experience different areas related to Paralympic sport or disability, such as the Paralympic Games, classification, accessibility and human rights.

**Czech Republic**
On 10 July 2005, around 100 children with and without a disability from elementary and special schools gathered in "Heyrovského" Elementary School in Olomouc to attend classes in Wheelchair mobility, blind orienteering and Athletics.

Assisted by Czech Paralympians, the children were able to gain an inside view into Paralympic Sports such as Wheelchair Basketball, Goalball and Boccia. In addition, videos from the ATHENS 2004 Paralympics and Salt Lake City 2002 Winter Paralympics were shown.

**Latvia**
In Saldus, the first Latvian PSD took place on 4 November 2005. Organized by the Public High School of Saldus, in co-operation with the Latvian Disabled Children’s and Youth Sport Federation, around 200 school children with and without a disability experienced Boccia, Goalball, Sitting Volleyball and Wheelchair Basketball.

Edgar Bergs, winner of a silver and a bronze medal at the ATHENS 2004 Paralympic Games and student of the Saldus high school, promoted the Paralympic Movement in order to inspire his fellow students. Representatives from the local municipality, the National Paralympic Committee as well as the National Olympic Committee attended the PSD.

**Sweden**
From 21 to 25 November 2005, the Swedish Development Centre for Disability Sport (SUH) in Bollnäs, organized a series of Paralympic School Days.
For five days, about 800 kids between 6 and 12 years had the chance to experience sports for persons with a disability. Advised by SUH volunteers and Paralympians, including Marleen Bengtsson-Kovacs, European Table Tennis Champion and silver medallist at the ATHENS 2004 Paralympic Games, the children participated in different sports (ie, Wheelchair Basketball, Table Tennis and Wheelchair Racing) and practised life in a wheelchair.

HRH Crown Princess Victoria of Sweden and the President of the Swedish Sport Confederation, Karin Mattsson, attended one of the days and actively took part in the activities.

“It was an enlightening experience, something that everyone should have the chance to experience”, said HRH Crown Princess Victoria.
OUTCOMES

As a result of this project, 35 PSDs were conducted in six countries reaching more than 5,000 children.

A direct outcome of the two-year initiative was the PSD Resource Kit consisting of three components, including the Paralympic School Day Manual, Activity Cards and the Paralympic School Day DVD. The kit includes a wealth of information and materials to assist teachers to prepare, implement and reflect on their PSD. For more information, please contact the IPC at psd@paralympic.org.

PSD RESOURCE KIT

1. PSD Manual
   The Paralympic School Day Manual is divided into two sections:

   - Section one looks at the concept and organization of a PSD and helps to plan, implement and follow up on a PSD
   - Section two provides background information about the International Paralympic Committee, the Paralympic Movement, Paralympic Games and sports as well as general information about persons with a disability
2. Activity Cards
The Paralympic School Day Resource Kit contains 20 Activity Cards, which have been divided according to the four values of the Paralympic School Day. Each value is represented by a different colour. These cards give you information about the activity and suggest tools to help you implement the activity. Alongside, many of the cards have video footage and worksheets that might be helpful for the activity.

The activities included on the cards are as follows:

**Respect for sporting achievement**
1. Athletics: Practicing Athletics (track and field) skills.
2. Boccia: Practicing Boccia skills.
4. Sitting Volleyball: Practicing Sitting Volleyball skills.
5. Wheelchair Basketball: Practicing Wheelchair Basketball skills.
7. Winter Sport: Alpine Skiing, Cross Country Skiing or Ice Sledge Hockey.

**Respect and acceptance of individual differences**
10. Photo Game: Experiencing similarities and differences.
11. Equipment: Obstacle course - how to use adapted equipment.
12. Accessibility: Discovering the school's accessibility.

**Sport as a human right**
13. Table Tennis: Practicing Table Tennis skills.
14. Football: Practicing adapted Football skills.
15. Dance: Practicing inclusive dancing.
17. Quiz: Gaining knowledge about Paralympic sports and athletes.

**Empowerment and social support in sport**
18. Athlete Story: Meeting an athlete with a disability.
20. Art: Reflecting through art.
3. PSD DVD
The Paralympic School Day DVD includes all the created Paralympic School Day materials: The Manual and the Activity cards in electronic format, along with video clips, worksheets, additional materials for classroom activities and links to other sources of information.

NEXT STEPS
The PSD Resource Kit was created to enable (primarily) schools to implement the PSD Programme individually. Nevertheless, the initial distribution of the PSD Resource Kit needs to be supervised/lead by the IPC to 1) ensure the accurate implementation of the aims and objectives of the PSD Programme and 2) enable the IPC to track and evaluate the impact of the implemented PSD Programme.

In order to achieve a global distribution and ensure an accurate implementation, the IPC needs to establish a network of organizations that will assist to put the PSD Programme into practice. This not only applies to the distribution of the created PSD Resource Kit but also to its translation and cultural adaptation.