

1. Inclusion in General Education

In 1975 the law of one public school in Norway for all children came into effect. It was a merger of the law of public schools dated back to 1969 and the law of special schools from 1951. The law put into effect the leading principles coming out of a broad public and political debate about education for all that took place during the sixties; decentralisation, normalisation and integration were the key words.

Every new educational plan since that time is based on the principle "one school for all". This principle is for all education, also higher education and adult education.

After the introduction of a mandatory right to three years of education following the completion of the compulsory school in "Reform 1994", nearly all young persons in Norway receive 13 years of schooling. Still 0.5% have special educational more or less segregated from the normal schooling system (2001), but the same law with e.g. compulsory P.E. works also for this group. To secure pupils with special needs the right to proper education there is an increased emphasis of the right to get a formal "Individual plan" (IP), developed in cooperation between pupil, parents, school and special pedagogical services. This is an equivalent to the Individual Rehabilitation Plan (IRP) within the health service system. There are steps taken to integrate these types of plans by coordinating services on the community level. The rights and responsibilities of the actual individuals to influence upon their own plan is prominent in the guidelines for the planning efforts.

Over the years, since 1975, there have been different solutions on the requirement for special educational resources for carrying through the principle of inclusion.

The establishment of regional and national Resource centers for people with various types of disabilities have developed special pedagogical competencies through surveying needs as well as advising, training and development efforts.

The municipal Pedagogical/Psychological Service (PPT in Norwegian) are responsible for supporting the local schools regarding education and training in all subjects, including Physical Education (P.E.)

It's also noteworthy that the Government in 2002 launched a campaign against mobbing/bullying that is still running, including development of specific programs in schools. This kind of behaviour was found to be a problem for children with different deviances in function. Besides attitude formation, the programs seem to have had some practical effect on the amount of mobbing/bullying.

2. Inclusion in Physical Education

Physical education is a compulsory subject both in primary, lower and upper secondary education. The right of services are there, but there has been a tendency to exempt children with disabilities from the obligatory P.E.-lessons to a greater extent than desirable. Some empirical reasons for this situation are; lack of knowledge among teachers of how to adapt P.E., lack of understanding of the difference between physiotherapy as a health service and APA,

lack of status of P.E. compared to other areas in schooling and lack of competence in PPT about P.E.(8).

When the official guideline plan for Norwegian public schools was changed in 1987, a considerable step towards "normalisation" of physical education for all was taken. There was produced a book with guidelines called "Adapted learning in P.E. for pupils with special needs"(8) This book was sent to every school in Norway, and used as a curriculum guide for courses all over the country.

Over the last years, there have been taken several educational measures, through available courses, to give working teachers the necessary knowledge and skills to carry out the inclusive P.E. in schools. Norwegian University of Sport and Physical Education(NUSPE), Beost?len Healthsports Center(BHC), the national Network for adapted physical activity(NFTFA in Norwegian) and Norwegian Disabled Sports Federation have for the most part been instrumental for running these courses.

The formal national educational system included in 1973 the first undergraduate study in APA, after initiative from BHC. In 1975 the study was introduced at an intermediate level at NUSPE. The study have changed name several times, but has continued as a one year full time unit within the university system. Half of the educational year takes place at BHC, and it's heavily practice oriented. The name of the study is now "Physical Activity and disability". NUSPE has offered Masters courses in APA since 1992, and this made it also possible to pursue doctoral studies in the field.

APA is represented in all the national curricula for education in P.E. as well as in some curricula for health professionals, usually however as a small part. Most educational institutions offer special courses available for a choice of specialisation. A lot of these courses involve a practicum period at a healthsports center.

The National Sports Federations, as they go along with the integration process(described later), develop educational systems and programs within their federation as part of the inclusion progress. There are some common guidelines for the type and length of the courses in this educational system that makes it possible to build up competency at different levels, from beginner instructor to professional in the field.

Inclusion in Sports and Physical Activity

There is a Board for Physical Activity in the national Health Department that has as it's goal to develop competency, national plans and strategies for carrying through national policy regarding physical activity for all groups in the nation as part of a national health strategy(6,7). This board developed in 2004 a report called "Physical activities for persons with disabilities - proposals"(9). This report presented the generic background information for the importance of physical activity for the overall group with disabilities, and specific guidelines for specific

disability groups.

In an action plan called "Together for Physical activities 2005-2009", 8 departments presented plans for this particular area to follow up on the Governments plan of action for a healthier population in Norway(10). Based on the report mentioned above, it is in this plan also given many advices of how to include people with disabilities. The suggestions include activities in the range from rehabilitation services to activities provided by sports and cultural organisations and institutions. It's regarded important to have a full range of possibilities for participation in various activities in a continuous "activity chain" from rehabilitation to full participation in society. As part of a normalisation trend, each and every department, responsible for their section of social life, includes persons with disabilities within their spectrum of action plans, in contrast to making special efforts for a special population in each sector.

In Norway the so called Healtsports centers(healthsports is synonymous with adapted physical activity) have made a great contribution to the provision of physical activities as well as physical education for persons with disabilities(14). Formally these centers are part of the Special Health Service System, but has a network to sport, education and medical fields. The merger of pedagogical and medical competencies at this places is a unique concept having had great influence on the provision and development of APA and sports for disabled in Norway and contributed to joint efforts by different professions and sectors in society. Besides giving direct provision of services for persons with disabilities, the centers have an educational function and are doing research and documentary work within the field of APA.

Sports

The Norwegian Confederation of Sports & Olympic Committee (12) comprises the central administration of the sport in Norway. There are 19 district associations and 56 different national sports federations in the confederation. It's by far the largest voluntary organisation in Norway, regardless of field. Half of the Norwegian population are members trough one or more sports clubs that exists in every community in the country. School sport, as it is organised e.g. in US, is nonexistent in Norway.

The confederation is the most important cooperation partner for the authorities in formulating the policy of sport in the country, including sports for persons with disabilities.

The Confederation of Sports confirmed on their national assembly in 1996 that the goal for the organisation was, over time, to overtake the responsibility of sports for all disabled. There are still some specific concerns related to the groups with hearing impairments, partly due to the organisation on the international levels of these group.

The Norwegian Disabled Sports Federation(NDSF), founded in 1971, is still one of the national sport federations. In 2000 the federation had about 20.000 individual members. However, the focus of this federation has changed. Today it's a transfer period, where the federation is going from running the sport for persons with disabilities over to be more of a competency federation, with the aim at helping other single sport federations like e.g. swimming, ski, volleyball etc, etc., to accomplish their duty to include all with a desire to do the actual sport into their organisation. One actual problem, that is not solved yet, is who is eventually taking over the sports that have

no corresponding Norwegian Sports Federation, like e.g. boccia and goal-ball. Elite sports seems to be the easiest to integrate, and has for some years been pretty well accommodated financially and practically by the Olympic committee program.

The department of Cultural Affairs, being responsible for the Sport in the Government, support the integration process by funding some of the measures taken based on an annual application from The Norwegian Confederation of Sport.

This transition period is suggested to end in 2015 when all single sports federations are expected to take the full responsibility for the sports activities for persons with disabilities. Some of the federations have already come a long way. Many of them have developed strategic plans for accomplishment of the goals within a few years.

Soccer, skiing, table tennis and archery were the first federations to take full responsibility, in 2002. There is economic support trough the Confederation of sport, and competency transfer from NSDF and Beitost?len Healthsports Center through special courses developed to support the process in the single sports federations.

One part of following up the integration process in sport was initially to establish consultants in districts for helping out with the process on the local level. In an introductory period there were 18 such consultants, most of them part-time involved. In 2005, based on an organisational change in public services to the population that in many respects now are distributed trough five regions in the country(north, mid, west, east and south),there is now 5 fulltime consultant positions(1 in each district).

Employment of youngsters with a disability

An important measure for including persons with disabilities into society at all levels is to make the society less disabling in every respect. An important political step was made when the Government released the "Plan of action for the disabled" for the period of 1994-1997. This plan was further revised and made operative for the period of 1998-2002(1).

The leading slogan for both this plans were "Integration, full participation and equality". Expressed goals were to collect information, increase knowledge through evaluation and research and to make participation in local education, leisure and cultural activities(including physical activity and sport)available to everyone on their own premises, regardless of disability. In 2001 a very comprehensive report on the national status of people with disabilities was launched. It was a follow up on the previous "action plans". It was called "From user to citizen. A strategy for building down disabling barriers" (4).

It's regarded as a comprehensive state of the art report (375 pages) concerning participation and equality for persons with a disability in the Norwegian society. It encompasses 22 chapters. 6 chapters contain basic information like actual concepts related to disability in society, value platform, national historical development, international developments, and general strategies. 11 chapters contain analysis of structural and institutional framework in society that people with

disabilities face in areas of importance for participation and equality. In 4 chapters the experiences are evaluated and proposals for further strategies are considered.

The 11 areas under consideration in this report shall be mentioned to demonstrate the scope of the report:

- Physical availability
- Transportation
- Information and communication technology
- Living and housing
- Lifelong education
- Employment
- Leisure and cultural activities(including sport and leisure time activities)
- Health and social services(including active rehabilitation)
- Special conditions for laps and immigrants with disabilities
- Family life and sexuality
- Research about disability

The Government used this comprehensive report to promote strategies, goals and measures in the politics related to persons with disabilities(5).

The present political debates on these issues are basically based on the two mentioned official publications. Organisations dealing specifically with these issues have been heavily involved in public hearings about the different measures and suggestions.

It's a general trait in society with more leisure time. This time might be the most important for participation in social life, varied activities and quality of life in general. The realisation of this fact has led to considerable involvement by the authorities to avoid exemption of people with disabilities in these area, as explained in the chapter Leisure and Cultural activities in the report mentioned above(4). The government has also provided an extensive report on outdoor life for persons with disabilities(11).

One important contribution to provide employment opportunities for persons with disabilities is to adapt university studies to the different needs of the group. On request of the Department of Education in 1999, all Norwegian universities and University colleges had to make an "action plan" for adaptation to students with disabilities. A person with a duty to follow up on this was appointed at every university. At NUSPE(13) there is a board taking care of these special needs.

The actual situation on the job-market for persons with disabilities can be described by some numbers about employment in public statistics for the second part of 2004 in Norway; People recognised as disabled(defined as; physical or psychological health problem of some permanent character that can lead to hindrances/barriers in daily life) amount to 16 % of the

total population between the age of 16-66.

46,5 % of this population have employment (42 % part-time), while 78% of the non disabled have employment(27 % part-time). 2,4 % of the disabled population is registered as applicants for a job.

24 % of the non-employed would like to have an employment of some kind, and 90 % are previously employed for some time(15).

There are the last few years taken many initiatives to improve the possibilities for persons with the disabilities to participate in the labour market. Some of the initiatives are linked to the OECD report from 2002; "Transforming Disability into Ability".

Some of the initiatives are:

A merge of job applicant services and the social and pension administrations to promote better coordinated services related to the overall goal to keep people in the job-force without unnecessary barriers.

There is an formal agreement between the labour organisation and the Government called "Including work-life" with specific goals and measures to handle situations where the work situation is at risk.

There are also recruiting programs for having more people employed in public sector in Norway. Adaptation of work places, guidance and follow-up of persons with reduced functional capacity, the use of assistants and functional assistive devices as well as rules and regulations, followed up with available economy, giving people with reduced function a better chance to try out a work situation are some of the present political initiatives(3,4,5).

The most recent development in Norway is an official proposal to the government of an anti-discrimination and accessibility law (16). The proposal was launched May 18. this year. If such a law will be confirmed by the government in 2006, this means a shift from social welfare policy to a law with human rights as a foundation for rights for persons with disabilities.

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