**Questionnaire- OHCHR report**

**“Rights of persons with disabilities on participation in sport under article 30 of the Convention”**

**July 2020**

**Disability Policy**

Ireland’s [National Disability Inclusion Strategy 2017-2021](http://www.justice.ie/en/JELR/Pages/WP17000244) (NDIS) is the key framework of policy and action to address the needs of persons with disabilities. It takes a whole of Government approach to this goal, both practically and also in creating the best possible opportunities for people with disabilities to fulfil their potential. The [2020 Programme for Government](https://www.greenparty.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/2020-06-15-ProgrammeforGovernment_Corrected-Final-Version.pdf), *Our Shared Government*, commits the Government to improving the lives of persons with disabilities in a number of ways over its lifetime.

The NDIS contains three specific actions relating to sport:

*Action 75:*

We will ensure that new buildings and facilities for arts, sport or leisure are based on universal design principles.

*Action 76:*

We will foster disability awareness and competence in voluntary, sporting, cultural and other organisations. We will ensure that disability inclusion is fully integrated into funding programmes, monitored and linked to further funding.

*Action 107:*

We will develop access to outdoor recreation facilities especially footpaths and trails.

**Sports Policy**

Sport in Ireland is guided by national strategies and includes sport for persons with disabilities.

Ireland’s [National Sports Policy 2018-2027](https://assets.gov.ie/15979/04e0f52cee5f47ee9c01003cf559e98d.pdf) contains 57 actions to transform the Irish sporting landscape over the next decade, and addresses persons with disabilities throughout.

Sport Ireland, the statutory agency tasked with the development of sport in Ireland, has a lead role in implementation of the policy. Sport Ireland’s [Statement of Strategy 2018-2022](https://www.sportireland.ie/sites/default/files/2019-10/sport-ireland-statement-of-strategy-2018-2022_0.pdf) also guides national strategies on sport.

The [Sport Ireland Policy on Participation in Sport by People with Disabilities](https://www.sportireland.ie/sites/default/files/2019-12/sport-ireland-policy-on-participation-in-sport-by-people-with-disabilities.pdf) provides the policy context for the promotion of sport for persons with disabilities and a basis for an enhanced and more concerted approach by Sport Ireland and the organisations they work with.

New building development in Ireland is guided by universal guidelines, and specific guidelines on making outdoor activity accessible are in place. The National Disability Authority (Ireland’s independent statutory body that provides information and advice to the Government on policy and practice relevant to the lives of persons with disabilities.) has produced [guidelines](http://nda.ie/Good-practice/Guidelines/Guidelines-on-Person-Centered-Planning/) covering a broach range of areas including person-centred planning, public transport and universal design in the built environment.

Sports Ireland Outdoors works with sporting bodies and other organisations to develop and promote a variety of outdoor sports. In 2018 the Irish Wheelchair Association, in partnership with Sport Ireland published [Great Outdoors: A guide for accessibility](https://www.sportireland.ie/sites/default/files/2019-12/great-outdoors-a-guide-for-accessibility.pdf) which provides guidance to agencies involved in the provision of outdoor recreation amenities and facilities in Ireland on how to provide for the participation of persons with disabilities.

There are 29 Local Sports Partnerships across Ireland through which Sport Ireland helps people to get active and remove barriers to sport and physical activity. Each has a Sport Inclusion Disability Officer.

The [Disability Sport Inclusion Charter](https://caracentre.ie/sport-inclusion-disability-charter/) was launched in Ireland in 2018 and there are over 250 organisations signed up to it.

The Irish Sports Monitor measures adult participation in sport and physical activity since 2007. The [2019 Mid-Year Report](https://www.sportireland.ie/sites/default/files/2019-11/ism-2019-mid-year-report-final_0.pdf) showed for the first time the disability gradient gap has decreased for those participating in sport from 18% in 2017 to 16% in 2019.

**Competitive Sport**

There are four National Sports Federations in Ireland which cater to competitive sport for people with disabilities:

* Deaf Sport Ireland
* Irish Wheelchair Association
* Special Olympics Ireland
* Vision Sport Ireland

Disability specific competitions are offered through these Federations. National competitions are offered via Disability National Federations and mainstream National Federations, depending on which Federation governs the disability version of the sport.

High performance sport for people with disabilities is governed by Paralympics Ireland.

A number of mainstream National Sports Federations offer competitive opportunities for people with disabilities, examples include Badminton Ireland, Football Association of Ireland, Irish Rugby, Irish Sailing, and Tennis Ireland.

**Financial Support**

Sport Ireland operates an open and transparent grant application on an annual basis in sport. This caters to National Federations, Local Sports Partnerships, other sport support agencies and high performance athletes.

Information on funding for National Federations and other agencies can be found in the [*Sport Investment 2020*](https://www.sportireland.ie/sites/default/files/2020-01/invest_final.pdf) report.

Sport Ireland invests in high performance sport through the provision of High Performance Programme Funding to National Governing Bodies. In 2020 €700,000 was allocated to Paralympics Ireland.[[1]](#footnote-1)

The International Carding Scheme provides financial support to athletes for their training and competition programmes, with the primary purpose being to support Irish athletes in reaching finals and achieving medals at European, World, Olympic and Paralympic levels. Amounts allocated under the 2020 scheme can be found [here.](https://www.sportireland.ie/sites/default/files/2020-01/2020-international-carding-scheme_final.pdf)

**Sports Structures**

The Local Sports Partnerships Network covers the country. Case studies of a range of programmes for persons with disabilities are contained in the [Local Sport Partnership Annual Report 2019](https://www.sportireland.ie/sites/default/files/media/document/2020-07/2019-lsp-annual-report.pdf) including programmes in County Clare to allow children on the Autism spectrum and those with physical disabilities to enjoy athletic activities, as well as activities in Donegal to encourage handcycling among persons with physical disabilities.

Disability National Governing Bodies govern the activities they deliver across the country.

1. <https://www.sportireland.ie/high-performance/high-performance-investment/high-performance-programme-funding/high-performance> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)