

Launch of the EU-COLPBOL project

Sport and inclusion in a project framed in the E+ Sport 2020 program of the European Commission

Last week, the EU-COLPBOL project was kicked-off, with the objective of the implementation of the sport of Colpbol at a European level as a tool to improve the quality of life of people with intellectual functional diversity.

Colpbol is a new sport modality created by the Physical Education teacher Mr. Juanjo Bendicho and managed by the Colpbol Sport Association, which in the last 20 years has established itself as a new, innovative and inclusive sport with great educational potential. Colpbol is a collective game played by teams, that encourages the maximum possible participation of all the players, whatever their physical-motor level and their conditions; that minimizes individual differences and requires an essential collaboration and collective communication to achieve the ultimate goal of the game, the goal; that is to say, a true and authentic TEAM GAME.

The two fundamental pillars of Colpbol, which define its essence are cooperation raised to the maximum power, it is a mandatory first-touch game and co-education, as it is always a mixed game.

This sport has had a good development in Spain in recent years, especially in the school environment, and at present AEC organizes and develops different competitions at various levels, however, it is a practically unknown sport at European level.

The project is led by COPAVA, together with a strong European Consortium, an entity that includes 53 occupational centres with more than 2,500 users that has experience in adapting this sport to Persons with Intellectual Disabilities organizing every year since 2014 a league in the Valencian Community, in which 12 occupational centres participate gathering more than 130 players with diversity that play this sport with the aim of improving their Quality of Life.

With this project, the European Commission gives us the opportunity to make a sport, that offers a new integrating dimension, available to everyone, beyond our borders.

Besides COPAVA, to carry out the project, a transnational consortium of the following entities related to sports, education, technology and involved in the sector of PwID has been set up:

- ASOCIACIÓ ESPORTIVA COLPBOL, led by the creator of Colpbol (Spain)
- ASOCIATIA LAGNDON DOWN CENTRUL EDUCATIONAL TEODORA (ALDO-CET) (Rumania)
- UNIVERSITATEA DIN CRAIOVA (Rumania)
- KINONIKES SINETERISTIKES DRASTIRIOTITES EFPATHON OMADON “EDRA COOP” (Greece)
- NATIONAL AND KAPODISTRIAN UNIVERSITY OF ATHENS (NKUA) (Greece)
- KAUNAS UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES (Lituania)
- CENTER FOR SOCIAL INNOVATION (CSI) (Cyprus)

The first meeting of the consortium was held by videoconference on 21st and 22nd January and it was focused on the presentation of each entity and the approach to the different outputs to be developed in the next months: state-of-the-art of inclusive sports in each country, adaptation

of the rules of the game, transference of Colpbol for PwID and creation of guidelines and Training Packages aimed to professionals, persons with disabilities and their supports.

The project has been launched and all the involved parts are already working enthusiastically in order to develop this innovative project and implement in EU a true and authentic inclusive team game, a sport for all, that will improve for sure the quality of life, social inclusion and personal development of persons with different capabilities.

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