



Report on accessibility to sport and physical culture people with various disabilities in Giżycko County

prepared within the framework of the "Sport without barriers" project

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I. Analysis of strategic documents in terms of activities addressed to people with disabilities

The Poviat Council in Giżycko on September 25, 2014 adopted a resolution on the adoption of the Strategy for the Integrated Development of the Great Masurian Lakes Poviats. This strategy does not contain any provisions concerning physical culture, including sport, in relation to persons with disabilities. The only provision relating to sport at all is the Operational Objective 1.3. Modernization and reorganization of the educational and sports base in the area of the Great Masurian Lakes and the specific objective resulting from it: Implementation of projects related to the modernization of educational and sports facilities.

As part of the funds owned or obtained from EU funds, the poviat self-government while modernizing sports facilities at schools, includes (if possible) elements that facilitate their use by people with disabilities (e.g. widening the door, removing thresholds).

On February 25, 2016, the Giżycko Poviat Council adopted a resolution on the adoption of the Program for Supporting Disabled People in the Giżycko Poviat in 2016-2022. One of the goals of this program is "to create conditions for the full participation of people with disabilities in cultural life, sports, recreation and tourism". The proposed tasks for implementation are:

- granting co-financing to people with disabilities from the (PFRON) State Fund for Rehabilitation of Disabled People for the elimination of functional barriers, orthopedic items, aids, rehabilitation stays, sport, culture and recreation (no forms of implementation entered)
- supporting initiatives related to organizing sports, recreational and cultural events for disabled children (form of implementation organizing sports, recreational and cultural events according to the developed calendar of events for disabled children; planned effect increasing the share of children with disabilities in sports, recreational and cultural events)
- popularization of active forms of life by creating opportunities for full and active participation in cultural life, sports, recreation and tourism for the disabled;
- popularization of sports and cultural achievements of people with disabilities (forms of implementation:
- -developing a joint calendar [for communes and poviats] of cultural, sports, recreational and tourist events for the disabled;
 - -organizing special Olympics in cooperation with special Olympics clubs;
- -integrating local governments and non-governmental organizations to organize sports and recreation for the disabled;
- -creating conditions for full participation in sport and rehabilitation for disabled students of the Special School and Education Center by building a Rehabilitation and Sports Center.

In the program implementation schedule, for all tasks, the implementation date was entered in the years 2016-2022 (i.e. the entire duration of the program), and those responsible for implementation were entered in all points "In accordance with statutory competences".

There is no doubt that the poviat self-government, through its organizational units, events with organizes many sports for people various disabilities. These are mostly institutions that statutorily deal with this group of people. Their main but vocational rehabilitation or educational activities. activity is not sport, However, it does not take place according to the calendar planned in the program that is common for communes and poviats, but according to the work plans of individual units. The integration of local governments and non-governmental organizations to organize sports and recreation for the disabled is also imperceptible.

The tasks presented in the program include support for non-governmental organizations in co-financing sports events from the poviat budget (grant competitions) and for individuals from PFRON funds. The Special Olympics Club at SOSW organizes activities at the swimming pool and a Regional Swimming Meeting every two years. Funds were obtained for the construction of a rehabilitation and sports hall for students of the Special School and Educational Center.

The general nature of the program provisions, the lack of implementation deadlines and the persons and institutions responsible for the implementation of the task pose a big problem with determining whether the activities carried out by various entities result from the program, or would they be implemented anyway even if the program did not exist. Therefore, it is difficult to say at this stage (before the evaluation of the program by its authors) whether the goals set by the Poviat Council will be achieved as a result of the introduced program. negligible

The City Council in Giżycko on March 27, 2015 adopted a resolution on the adoption of the Sport Development Program of the Giżycko City Commune for 2017-2020. Among the strengths of the local community, the high organizational level of entities involved in sports for the disabled and seniors was indicated. The opportunities for the development of sport in Giżycko include, among others a record of the development of a new sports discipline in the city - bocci (which is also a Paralympic discipline) integrating people with various levels of physical

The program includes a separate point concerning the sport of disabled people, emphasizing the need to maintain very good cooperation with entities organizing sports events for disabled people. In the program, the city council upheld the will to provide the city's sports infrastructure free of charge in order to organize events such as: special Olympics, regattas, workshops, and sailing training for disabled people. The program includes support (by providing facilities for competitions free of charge) for two disciplines for people with disabilities: swimming and table tennis. It is also planned to develop and sign agreements with entities dealing with people with disabilities for the joint organization of three cyclical integration events in the city during the year.

As the provisions of this program are specific, it should be stated that the majority of the program in terms of supporting people with disabilities is implemented. The task to be implemented is the development and signing of agreements, which will give the entities organizing sports events the opportunity to plan their work.

Conclusions

Some of the strategic documents are written in a very general way, which means that entities that deal with the issues of people with disabilities in their activities are not able to determine what priorities the local government has and in what form it will implement them. What can be expected from the local government and will the local government meet these expectations?

II. Analysis of the availability of sports facilities for people with disabilities

During the implementation of the "Sports without barriers" project, 10 facilities were analyzed in terms of the availability of various rooms for people with physical disabilities. People on wheelchairs or on crutches checked the possibility of entering the building, moving around the corridors, using the cloakroom and the bathroom. They also paid attention to the location of switches, soap containers, information, etc.

Sports hall of the Municipal Sports and Recreation Center at Mickiewicza Street

It is not possible for people in a wheelchair to enter this sports hall on their own. Steep, high stairs lead to the hall, there is

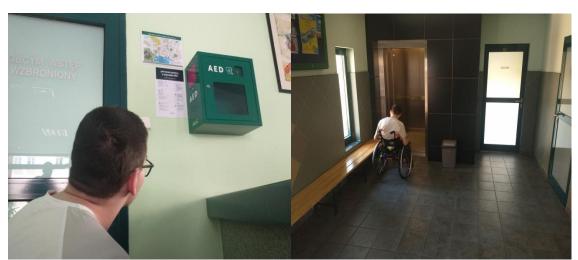


Swimming pool

There are no thresholds on the ground floor that would make it difficult for wheelchairs to move. Doors with handles open slightly. The elevator is wheelchair friendly. The corridors are spacious, making it easier to move around. The cloakroom and bathroom on the first floor are well-adapted for people with physical disabilities. There is no toilet on the ground floor for people with disabilities, and there is very little space for wheelchairs in the one there. In the pool area, some information boards are too small, the text is too small and too high. Information on recycling posted at the reception desk is invisible to people in wheelchairs. The cash desk on the 1st floor is too high. There is no swimming pool lift on the premises of the facility. The defibrillator is positioned too high and it will not be possible for a wheelchair user to reach it.

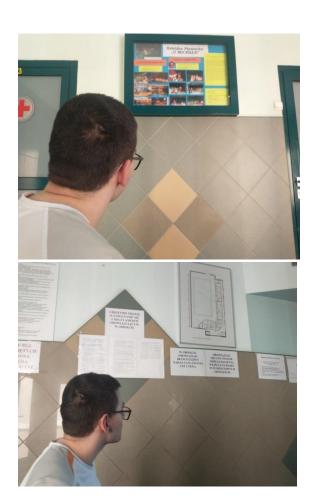






Defibrillator placed too high

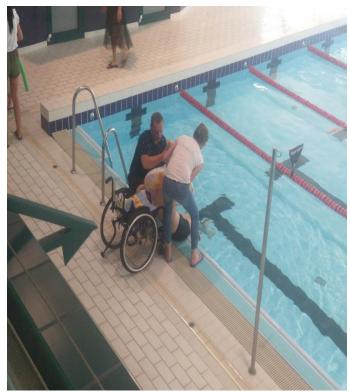
Entrance to the elevator



 $\label{eq:much information} \textit{Much information is too high and the font is too small to read}$



The cash desk is too high



There is no pool lift

Ice rink

The front door is too heavy to move. There are no doorsteps on the premises and the corridors are spacious. The elevator is friendly and easy to use. Bathrooms for people with disabilities are located on each floor. Lockers are easily accessible by wheelchair users. The ice rink has sports equipment that allows people in wheelchairs to play curling.



The lockers can be used by people in wheelchairs



There are no thresholds to enter the ice rink



From the room on the first floor you can watch what is happening on the ice rink

City Base of Water Sports

Access to the base is not very comfortable for people in wheelchairs. Too narrow driveway to the front door. No support leg at the door. A person who checked the availability of this facility and using an electric wheelchair, which is larger and heavier than a standard one, was not able to open the door on his own. The doors inside the building are of the appropriate

width. Elevator adapted for people in wheelchairs. The inscriptions on the doors are placed at the standard height. Toilet cubicles are too narrow. In the building, on the entrance doors to the rooms above the door handles, there are inscriptions in Braille for the blind (names of rooms). It is the only sports facility in Giżycko with such facilities for the blind.



Difficult access to the building

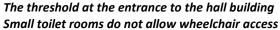


Signs for the blind in the facility

School gym of the Secondary School No. 2, in which there are integration classes

There is no sidewalk connecting the room with the parking lot and neighboring buildings. The entrance to the room is difficult, there is a threshold at the door. There is also such a threshold at the entrance from the corridor to the dance floor. The bathroom is cramped, not suitable for people with mobility difficulties. The stairs to the first floor are narrow and steep, so that a person in a wheelchair cannot use the cloakroom or the audience.









The stairs make it impossible to get to the cloakroom and the audience

School gym of Primary School No. 3 with integration classes

There are ramps to the entrance door to the school on both sides of the building. The doors to the large sports hall and the cloakroom next to the hall are suitable for wheelchair access. Bathrooms on each floor of the building and at the large sports hall are adapted for people with physical disabilities. Wash basins, soap dispensers and disposable towels are placed at the appropriate height. The corridor connecting the small and large rooms allows wheelchair access. There are no thresholds in communication routes. The door to the small gym is quite narrow, but it was possible to pass it by a wheelchair (it is possible to open the second door leaf).



School gym at the Special School and Educational Center (SOSW)

Since the building in which the SOSW is located was not built for the needs of the school, but for the workers 'hotel, the room in which the students practice was not initially intended for a gym, but for the canteen of a workers' hotel. However, due to the lack of another larger room in the school, it was partially adapted to conduct physical education classes in the Center. The room is small, there is no cloakroom. There is a threshold between the hall and the "changing room". The entrance door closes automatically, which makes it difficult for wheelchair users to enter. There are graphic markings on the door to the gym, which make it easier for people with communication difficulties to find the room.



Graphic markings to help people with communication difficulties find a room

School gym in the Complex of Schools of Environmental Development and Agribusiness

This gym is used by students of the Special School and Educational Center. Many sports events for the local community are also held there. The hall is used by sports clubs and associations. During the on-site inspection in this gym, it was found that a "door closer" is installed at each door, which for a person moving in a wheelchair and not efficiently operating with two upper limbs makes it extremely difficult to open such a door, because it is not able to hold the door on its own. After unhooking the door closer, the person in the

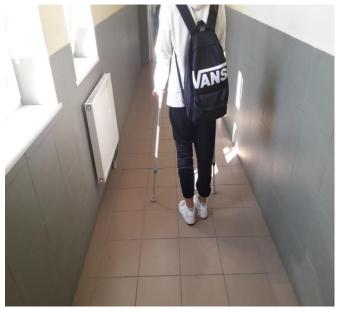
wheelchair can easily open the door. In the bathroom for the disabled and in the bathroom in the women's locker room, the light switch is too high. A person who does not efficiently operate with the upper limbs (contractures) is not able to turn on and off the lights on his own. In the bathroom in the women's locker room next to the toilet boxes, a person who does not efficiently operate the upper limbs has a problem with opening the box because the handle is incorrect. A different handle should be installed allowing you to grasp it efficiently and pull through the door. The soap dispensers are installed too high.



Hard to grasp handle

Hall of the City Sports and Recreation Center at 3 Maja

In the gym at 3 Maja, many city events take place. These are a variety of events including sports activities and sports competitions. It is used by school students, associations, clubs, but also city residents during various events (as participants and viewers). You can enter the building with a wheelchair ramp. In this hall, the corridors are narrow, making it difficult to move around in a wheelchair. It is not possible for people in wheelchairs to enter the auditorium because there is no driveway, no elevator, and stairs are a barrier. It was impossible to find a bathroom for the disabled. There was no information about it on the ground floor, and a wheelchair user cannot enter a higher floor.



Narrow corridors at the entrance to the hall

The facilities of the Central Sports Center (COS)

The core activity of COS is, in accordance with the statute, "creating organizational, economic and technical conditions for sports training conducted by Polish sports associations and other entities operating in the field of physical culture, including the implementation of tasks related to the preparation of the national team to participate in the Olympic Games, the Paralympic Games, the Deaf Games, the World Championships or the European Championships." The provisions of the statute show that people with various disabilities prepare for various types of championships in the Center. In 2019, the Supreme Audit Office carried out an inspection at the Center regarding the use of the facilities of the Central Sports Center by people with disabilities. The post-inspection statement shows that the Center is adapted to practicing 11-year paralympic disciplines, i.e. boccia, judo, wheelchair basketball, 5-person soccer, 7-person soccer, sitting volleyball, wheelchair fencing, wheelchair dancing, wheelchair tennis, table tennis and sailing. The center does not have infrastructure for practicing winter sports by disabled athletes. The center has specialist equipment supporting the training of disabled people, including rehabilitation tapes, balancing platforms and pads, balls and a sensory pillow. During the inspection, the sports base of the Center was adapted to the needs of athletes with disabilities (ramps, passenger lifts, adapted toilets, wide doors enabling free movement of people in wheelchairs), but none of the accommodation facilities was adapted to the needs of people in wheelchairs. The information obtained from the director of COS shows that the construction of accommodation rooms has been planned to adapt them to the needs of people in wheelchairs.

The Central Sports Center (COS) is a very important institution on the sports map of Giżycko. For many years, it has been very actively involved in the co-organization of many sports events that take place in its area.

Conclusions

Some of the sports facilities in Giżycko were built at a time when little was said about the necessity of their accessibility for people with various disabilities.

Consequently, these facilities have the most barriers. However, as the public awareness of the accessibility of public buildings is growing, facility administrators, if they are financially possible, make efforts to increase this accessibility. Most often it concerns the reconstruction of toilets, the removal of thresholds, and the installation of the appropriate width of the door. Placing information in sports facilities requires a lot of changes. Most often they are placed too high, the print is too small, and there is a lot of text. This excludes visually impaired people or wheelchair users from obtaining up-to-date information provided to the customer by the facility administrator or sports clubs.

III. Qualifications and knowledge of disability issues by physical education trainers / teachers

Physical education teachers and sports coaches play a huge role in developing the sports passion of people with disabilities. It is up to them, to a large extent, whether physical culture, including sport, will be a passion or an unpopular activity. It also depends on them to a large extent whether this group of people will practice sport only during compulsory physical education classes at school, or will participate in classes in sports clubs.

A questionnaire was sent to teachers / trainers, which was completed by 13 people.

5 people work at school as physical education teachers and are also trainers in sports clubs,

4 people work only at school as teachers, and 4 people are only coaches in clubs.

When asked about the completed studies entitling them to work with people with disabilities, only 4 persons entered the fact of graduating from such studies.

5 people completed the courses improving work with people with disabilities.

10 people stated that the groups they work with include people with disabilities.

6 respondents stated that people with disabilities they work with take part in various types of competitions.

The questionnaire was asked whether if there are no disabled people in the group with which the respondent works, is he / she ready to accept such persons for classes.

Only 3 people answered this question with the following answers:

- yes
- yes, but only with a mild intellectual disability
- yes, with certain dysfunctions (which ones were not specified in the answer)

In the survey, trainers and physical education teachers were asked what barriers there are in the area of the Giżycko Poviat in accessing sports by people with various disabilities.

The respondents gave the following answers:

- architectural barriers
- no barriers
- lack of reliable and comprehensive information about events in which young people with disabilities could participate
- no joint planning (methodological conferences in the field of physical culture)
- the sports infrastructure is not used by institutions or associations whose statutory task is to work with disabled people
- lack of a gym in the Special School and Educational Center (Specjalny Ośrodek Szkolno Wychowawczy)
- an unadjusted sports facility at Mickiewicza Street, despite the renovation, the entrance to the hall remained unchanged

- no suitable facilities
- no free training to improve qualifications for people conducting classes with people with various disabilities
- there is no club offer, none of the clubs (known to me) conducts classes for people with disabilities
- I think that the biggest barrier is not the "physical or mechanical" barriers, but the fact that coaches or instructors do not even give children with disabilities a chance to participate in the activities. Of course, many types of disabilities require an appropriate approach, supported by, for example, pedagogical preparation, but I have often encountered a situation when people, for example, children with autism, were refused participation in classes. I believe that trainers and instructors should be shown that, firstly the disability does not exclude the possibility of practicing sports, secondly that the results are not the most important and that sport can be treated as entertainment, recreation, thirdly that sport greatly influences the development of people with disabilities and belonging to the team means that they do not feel "rejected" by society, which they struggle with on a daily basis, fourthly that there is simply nothing to be afraid of (because often refusal to participate in classes is due to fear)

The latter answer best describes the reasons for the low participation of people with various disabilities in activities that take place outside school or in some other form of daily stay where they study, work or have therapy. During conversations with trainers who conduct classes outside the school, they say that "their classes are not for people with disabilities" because:

- athletes prepare for sports competitions
- people with disabilities need more time
- if they admit a disabled person to the team, he/she will be different in terms of the level of the other players
- if the trainer devotes more time to the person with a disability, he/she will not have enough time for the others.

There is no doubt that it is not always possible for healthy and disabled players to participate in one team. Not every disability allows for joint training with non-disabled players, because for both groups they may not be effective. Also, the goal of the clubs, i.e. promotion to the next league, is not always achievable for many disabled people. However, many coaches do not even consider accepting people with various limitations so that they can train the sport of their choice. There is no exclusion of any of the groups in the recruitment announcements, but in reality these people either do not apply or they hear that it is not possible to take part in training.

Conclusions

Most often, those who conduct classes with this group of people (due to their professional work at school) are prepared to work with the disabled. Most of them have completed forms of training, which, at least to a small extent, allow for adjusting work with a person with a specific disability. Most teachers and trainers do not improve in this area, nor do they see the need to do so. In Giżycko, not many people with disabilities participate in training together with healthy people.

IV. The role of sport in the life of a person with a disability from the point of view of the parent of a disabled person

From an early age of a child, it is the parent who supports and helps to develop passions. It is the parent who is the first teacher, mentor, comforter. In the case of a child with a disability, the parent fulfills these roles even more, and for even longer. Sport for the child of these parents is not only a fight for the result. It is primarily rehabilitation, therapy and a fight against one's own limitations. Therefore, in the project "Sport without barriers", the parents of people with disabilities are the people who are most suitable to say what sport is in the lives of their children and what barriers they have to overcome in order for their child, often already grown up, to participate in various sports activities.

A questionnaire was sent to parents of people with disabilities, which was completed by 25 parents of people with intellectual disabilities, autism and motor disabilities, whose children study at a special school or completed it a few years ago.

1. What made your child play sports?

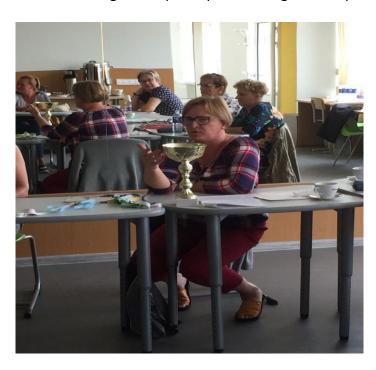
- he/ she started swimming at school
- school offer, afternoon classes, swimming lessons, school trips
- thanks to school, my son started practicing sports (swimming), thanks to self-denial he became a competitor (he won medals)
- classes within the school (gymnastics)
- signed up for aikido
- at school, during physical education lessons, he had classes at the swimming pool
- the child was obese
- he /she likes swimming
- school activities
- my child was overweight
- the daughter is very fond of sports activities, she has been keen on sports since childhood
- passion for basketball and running
- disease (diabetes)
- health problems
- drowsiness, health problems
- my child likes to swim and play football
- willingness to catch up and play with peers, willingness to spend time actively
- because she is a very active child and has to discharge her energy, there is a bicycle, jogging, but also a swimming pool helps her
- there is not much sport, riding a bike, playing ball
- frequent persuasion of the teacher and guardians that he can do it, but he needs to practice a little more
- physical education teachers played a very important role, infecting him with their passion for sport
- he is healthier, feels better, is physically and mentally more fit
- likes to play sports

- 2. Have you encountered any barriers while your child is playing sports? If so, with what?
- 15 of the surveyed parents said they had not encountered any barriers. The other parents gave the following responses:
- my child's main problem is that after graduation he has ceased to actively participate in sport
- the child cannot go to the competition as a fan, and there is no psychological care before going to the mat
- no elevators and ramps
- injuries
- when playing football, he does not cope like others and gets discouraged
- the biggest problem is the lack of places for people with disabilities during sports activities, not all facilities are adapted to such children
- jedyne takie chwile były w trakcie "kobiecych dni" kiedy dziecko nie radziło sobie z samoobsługą
- 3. Has sport influenced the functioning of your child? I would like to ask for reflection.
- yes, it had a positive impact, she learned to swim, learned to cooperate and help others
- yes, sport suited to his abilities gave him a lot of joy, strengthened his muscle strength, overcame many weaknesses, taught him to work with others
- my child does more laps in the pool and likes swimming
- it would definitely be fun if there were more of this sport
- the child spends more time outdoors, through playing sports, he learned to cooperate better with his peers
- the child spends more time outdoors and less time at the computer
- he runs much better and lost weight
- the child became more open to people, independent, caring and disciplined
- sport taught her discipline, self-esteem, commitment, she felt safer among her peers
- he is glad that his silhouette is improving
- sport motivates her to make greater efforts
- she is calmer, oxygenated and, most importantly, happy
- the child is in better mood
- the son is active, it is easier for him to move around
- I noticed an improvement in her results and a better mood
- our daughter is more disciplined, her overall fitness has improved significantly
- better physical condition
- improvement of physical fitness
- likes to swim and enjoys swimming
- we can now go to the pool together, he is not afraid of water anymore
- the son liked working on his muscles
- her efficiency has increased a lot, thanks to playing sport she has a goal in life, this is something she loves and I think she will be sad when school ends

Analyzing the parents' statements, it can be stated that most of their children started playing sports at school. It is the offer of the school that contributed to participation in cyclical sports activities which, from the parents' point of view, give their children joy and independence, but above all have a positive effect on their health.

During the meeting of parents of people with disabilities from Giżycko (Poland), Alytus (Lithuania) and Kuldiga (Latvia), they pointed out the following issues:

- when a child with a disability graduates from school, sports activities (especially in team games) ends. Parents gave examples of a situation in which they were looking for the possibility of a child's participation in sports clubs for a fee, but none of the coaches agreed to accept them
- the parent does not take part in competitions, does not cheer on, does not observe his child's emotions
- if a child starts with healthy peers and is, for example, 7 (although there is 1 in his group), he treats the start as a failure. If the competition is organized in the open formula, the organizer or trainer should ensure that the person with a disability does not perceive participation in the competition as a failure
- in many cases, the parent is forced to bring his child (even an adult) to sports activities, both individual and organized. Due to work or other family responsibilities, it is not always possible and therefore a disabled person is forced to resign from classes. Therefore, parents report the need for help, e.g. an assistant or a volunteer in this regard
- for many people with disabilities, cups, medals, T-shirts are trophies, which is why such items should be given to participants during the competition (not sweets)







Conclusions

The information obtained from parents shows that the most developed forms of using physical activity are in schools.

Whether it's in the form of classroom or extra-curricular activities. They are also systematic classes. Parents pay attention primarily to the health aspect of these activities.

Often, after graduating from school, a person with a disability uses such classes on an ad hoc basis in therapy centers, with parents, in associations working for people with disabilities.

It is very difficult to find a sports club that, even for a fee, will agree to accept a person with a disability for training, so that he can train with players without disabilities.

V. Participation of people with disabilities in sports events in the Giżycko Poviat

Many sports and recreational events for local communities are organized in the Giżycko Poviat. The organizers are local government units, associations and informal groups. Observation of events and analysis of event announcements show that people with disabilities are not excluded from them. On the contrary, during the event, the organizers' care for ensuring the comfort of participation for people with various disabilities is visible.

Mass recreational and sports events are very popular among residents, regardless of their fitness. Many times, the participation of groups of people with disabilities is noticed in them. They take part in them as representatives of, for example, schools, occupational therapy workshops, community self-help homes, occupational activity institutions, associations.

Local government and non-governmental entities organizing sports events for people with disabilities are very active in the Giżycko Poviat. Regatta of disabled sailors, swimming mittens and boccia tournaments, organized for many years, have become a part of the

calendar of events. These are national or regional events, often with the participation of foreign sportsmen. Volunteers are involved in the organization of these events, and they support the organization of such events with great commitment.

Recommendations

- 1. When developing and adopting action programs, specific, unambiguous provisions should be placed that allow residents to obtain information about the planned activities of the local government, and for the authors of the document to help determine whether the task has been completed and the goal has been achieved.
- 2. Before commissioning, after the construction or renovation of a building, people with various disabilities should check the availability of the premises that will be used by everyone. They should check the use of installed devices, accessories such as wash basins, soap dispensers, switches, electrical sockets.
- 3. The unit managing a sports facility (in the presence of a disabled person) should analyze various elements influencing the possibility of using them by these people, such as removing, changing the position of elements, which can be done without major financial outlays.
- 4. It is necessary to analyze the visual information system in the facilities (announcements, information, inscriptions on the premises) in terms of their legibility for people in wheelchairs or visually impaired and blind (people with a given disability should participate in the analysis); change of advertisements, information, room names in larger font, with a small amount of text at a height suitable for reading by all clients of the facility.
- 5. As part of nonlimited tenders for the implementation of public tasks commissioned to non-governmental organizations it should aim to award bonuses for offers in which cyclical sports activities for people with disabilities will be carried out.
- 6. Creating sports sections in sports and recreation centers (or other organizational units dealing with sports) in which disabled people could participate.
- 7. Creating voluntary groups by non-governmental organizations and organizational units of the self-government to help people with disabilities attend and participate in classes.
- 8. Creating a network of contacts between physical education teachers and trainers within which the exchange of good practices will take place. Study trips of this group of people to places from which the applied practices can be transferred to the local environment are recommended.
- 9. Organizing free trainings for physical education teachers / trainers on the specificity of individual disabilities and work with this group of people.
- 10. Organizing information campaigns on the importance of physical culture for the health and functioning of a person with a disability. Information activities would be

- aimed at making residents and entities involved in sports aware of the necessity and possibility of participating in the physical culture of people with various disabilities in accordance with their interests and psychophysical abilities.
- 11. Disseminating comprehensive information on the possibility of participation of disabled people in regular sports activities.