

# **Needs assessment**

The needs of stakeholders to implement MATP within  
their organization

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# **MATCODE**

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## Introduction

Participation in sports and exercise is significantly low among people with profound intellectual and multiple disabilities (PIMD), who completely depend on others for almost every aspect of their life. With the Motor Activity Training Program (MATP) the consortium 'MATCODE' wants to make a difference in their lives. MATCODE is an international (Erasmus+) program where three countries collaborative implement the **M**otor **A**ctivity **T**raining Program Training & **C**oaching **D**evelopment in Europe (**MATCODE**). The MATCODE project is committed to further developing and expanding the opportunities that MATP offers to athletes, stakeholders, and organizations. Members of the MATCODE consortium are: Special Olympics Ireland (SOIR), Special Olympics Slovakia (SOS), Disabled Sports Netherlands (GSN) and the Academic Collaboration Centre for people with PIMD from the Netherlands (ACC PIMD).

MATP is designed for athletes who are unable to participate in official sport competitions because of their skill and/or functional abilities (Special Olympics, 2018). MATP is effective to prepare athletes - including those with severe or profound intellectual disability and significant physical disabilities - for sport-specific activities appropriate for their ability levels. Therefore, MATP is one of the few movement activities suitable for people with PIMD. The program is executed in a circuit format where no one is excluded from participation. Personal improvement is the primary focus for each individual. The MATP exercises can easily be adjusted to be more difficult or easier. The MATP program consists of the following seven basic activities: Mobility, Dexterity, Striking, Kicking, Mobility and Swimming (floating). The MATCODE consortium believes that people with PIMD have the right to experience the joy of sports, exercising, moving and being moved. Experiencing that you belong to a group (inclusion) is essential for everyone in our society, also for people with PIMD. The aim of MATCODE is the participation of all people (6+ - all ages) with pervasive support needs in the field of sports, exercise and physical activity by expanding the number of people and organizations who offer MATP.

### *Stakeholders analysis*

In a previous study, Boshuijzen, ten Brug and Waninge (2023) investigated the stakeholders that are involved in offering sports and movement activities for people with PIMD, to determine the context of the person with PIMD related to sports and exercise and in particular MATP in Ireland, the Netherlands and Slovakia. The stakeholders analysis provides a brief definition of when someone has severe profound intellectual and multiple disabilities and describes the impact their disabilities have on their sports and physical activity behavior. People with PIMD are characterized by a combination of profound or severe intellectual disabilities and severe motor disabilities (Nakken & Vlaskamp, 2007). These persons need support from others for all their activities and quality of life (Shalock et al., 2021),



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due to the combination of severe limitations in multiple areas. There are many benefits - for both the physical as mental health - when people with PIMD participate in sports and exercises. Physical activity has, among others, a positive effect on physical fitness, cognitive functioning, emotional wellbeing, lowers the risk of diseases and can improve the overall quality of Life (John, Borschneck, & Cairney, 2020). Exercise contributes to developing motor skills that have a positive influence on the development of cognitive, communication, emotional and social skills (Adolph & Franchak, 2017).

The stakeholders analysis reveals that to participate in MATP, it is important to not only focus on the person with PIMD, but also focus on the context of the athletes, because people with PIMD need support of their environment to facilitate exercise and movement. This environment has a lot of influence on the amount and quality of their physical activity. The idea of looking at a person in its context, fits in nicely with the ecological model of Bronfenbrenner (1977). According to Bronfenbrenner, an individual is surrounded by different persons, organizations and institutions. In the ecological model, these persons, organizations/ institutions are represented and divided into different layers around the individual. All these layers interact with each other and with the person with PIMD. The system surrounding an individual consists of a micro-, meso-, exo- and macro system. All these levels affect the person with PIMD, from a more direct or a more distant level. The closer the layer is to the individual, the more direct influence that person or entity has on the person with PIMD. The conclusion of the stakeholders analysis describes that there are a few similarities among the countries. It is described that the importance of enthusiastic individuals on the overarching level, emerged in all three countries. The MATCODE consortium mentioned that the government should be involved to get sports well embedded in the policies and regulations. The countries were very clear about the need to create more awareness. Awareness must be raised and there needs to be more information. This requires a change in attitude and is related to culture, where the influence of culture appears to be larger than expected. If we zoom in on culture, this has a lot of influence on how people look at persons with PIMD. For more information, read the stakeholders analysis.

### *Needs assessment*

This research examines how MATP can be implemented within different healthcare organizations, sports clubs and schools. The previous study, stakeholders analysis (2023), captured how MATP is organized in different European countries. This analysis made an important contribution to approaching the organizations in this study. It shows who can be involved in organizing MATP and how it is organized, this varies by country and by organization. The stakeholders analysis also helped to build the connection between local and (inter)national networks and exchange knowledge that has been developed. This has been an important part to follow-up with this research.



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The needs assessment provides insight into how organizations approach setting up MATP activities and everything that entails. This can encompass practical matters, the content of training, as well as coaching skills necessary to deliver MATP. The entire journey that has been undertaken, both internally and externally, has yielded certain experiences and insights. The ways in which you can offer MATP in your own country is divided into three different categories:

1. Sports clubs for people with PIMD.
2. Healthcare organizations that take care and offers daycare service for people with PIMD.
3. Schools that offer Physical Education (PE) for children/young adults with PIMD.

To learn more about these different implementation styles of organizations in all participating countries, further research is being conducted into the implementation of MATP. For this research a SWOT analysis is conducted; to research this multifaceted and complex topics. A SWOT analysis is a deliberate planning method used to evaluate the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of an organization or project (Culp et al., 2016). More information about the method can be found in the following chapter: approach and methodology.

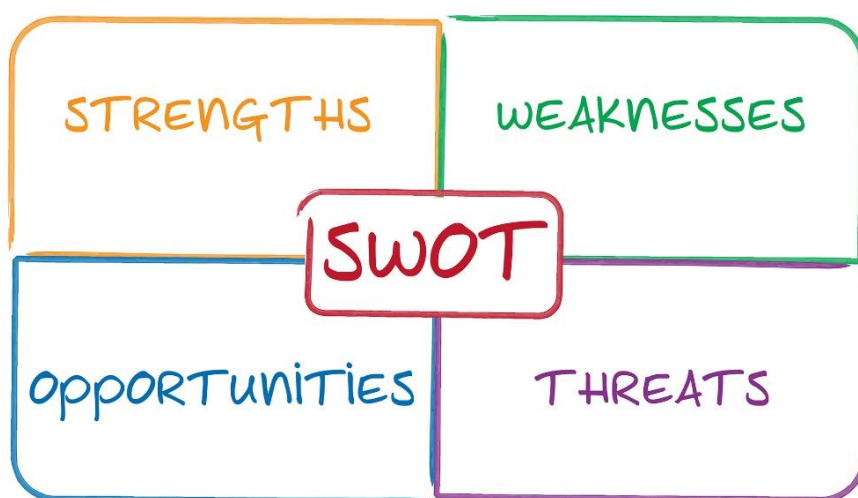
## Approach and methodology

### *Design*

The execution of the research regarding ‘the implementation of MATP within your organization’ is based on the SWOT model. This visually represents the strengths and weaknesses (internal) and opportunities and threats (external) that influence the organization, guidance, and execution of MATP activities both within and outside the organization. As shown in Figure 1 it illustrates the various elements that influence these aspects.

**Figure 1**

*Example SWOT model*



Explanation elements SWOT model (Culp et al., 2016)

- Strengths: Internal attributes of the organization that are helpful to achieving the goal(s)
- Weaknesses: Internal attributes of the organization that are harmful to achieving the goal(s)
- Opportunities: External conditions that are helpful to achieving the goal(s)
- Threats: External conditions that could inhibit the achievement of the goal(s)

### *Participants*

Data were collected by stakeholders from three members of the MATCODE consortium: Special Olympics Ireland, Special Olympics Slovakia and Disabled Sports Netherlands. The project group members administered the survey and conducted interviews with stakeholders involved in the MATP program. These organizations are responsible for developing MATP in their own country.

### *Data collection*

Three phases were used to collect the information needed; First, the local and (inter)national cross-sectoral exchange networks (sport, health, and education) and stakeholders analysis are used to gather all the necessary information. Second, a questionnaire was distributed to these stakeholders. Based on the information from the questionnaire, in-depth questions were asked during interviews. With this mixed methods approach, both quantitative and qualitative data of the implementation of MATP has been obtained.

To begin with, the network of the MATCODE consortium members was used to research how sports activities for people with PIMD are organized and executed. While not much visible information was stored, it provided an understanding of the perspectives on the organization of MATP. The perspectives of these stakeholders were incorporated into the preparation of this report. In the next phase, an digital questionnaire was administered to the stakeholders. This questionnaire was completed by 52 respondents, with 15 answers from Slovakia, 20 answers from the Netherlands, and 17 answers from Ireland. The stakeholders were categorized into types of organizations: care, education, and/or sports clubs. This choice was made because the vision of the organization of MATP can differ among these organizational types. The questionnaire was divided into two parts:

1. The experiences of respondents
2. The implementation of MATP using the SWOT model.

The questionnaire primarily focused on the participants' experiences and their perspective on MATP both internally (within their own organization) and externally (outside the organization), as well as their ideas for further development of the MATP program.

In the final phase, interviews were conducted to gain more in-depth information from the answers given in the questionnaires. The (online and physical) interviews took between 20 to 40 minutes. A total of 17 interviews were conducted, with 6 interviews from Slovakia, 6 interviews from the Netherlands, and 5 interviews from Ireland. The SWOT model was also used as a basis for structuring the interviews to ensure the results could be referenced back to this theory in the report.

### *Analyse*

The questionnaire was analysed by collecting all the answers from the respondents from the three participating countries and evaluated qualitatively by coding the results and a thematic analysis on similarities and differences between all answers. From these responses, several topics were identified and incorporated into the topic list of the interviews (attachment II). These topics were used to compile the questions for the semi-structured interviews.



The structure of the needs assessments was as follows:

1. Make the digital questionnaire (SWOT model)
2. Analyse the results of the questionnaire
3. Follow up: make the questions for the interviews (based on SWOT model + results questionnaire)
4. Analyse the results of the interviews
5. Analyse all the results (questionnaire and interviews)

To achieve concrete results, the SWOT model was used in both research instruments and used to structure the needs assessment. You can recognize the SWOT model by the four frequently mentioned concepts: 1) strengths, 2) weaknesses, 3) opportunities and 4) threats. The results are presented by describing the general findings and quotes.



## Results

Two types of research instruments were used in the study: a digital questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. The results of the questionnaire and interviews are analysed using the SWOT model. In both research instruments, this theoretical model was used as the framework for collecting data. First, a brief explanation of general outcomes of the results will be described. Then the results will be discussed following the structure of the SWOT model (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats). The internal factors and the external factors will be compared and by analysing the results, the (new) insights will be described.

### *Backgrounds respondents*

MATCODE is an international partnership between sports organizations committed to MATP: sports and exercise for people with severe or profound intellectual and multiple disabilities (PIMD). The respondents of the research have a role within the sports sector or have affinity/experience with people with PIMD. The distinction within this target group is therefore also made on the structure of the MATP program, which can be carried out within care, education and/or sports organizations. The perspectives of both care, education and sports professionals are reflected in the outcomes of the respondents from Slovakia, Ireland and the Netherlands. Respondents were asked whether their organization offers sports and/or exercise activities for people with intellectual and multiple disabilities. The majority (82%) of respondents indicated that their organization offers sports activities for this target group.

### *The preconditions for the MATP program*

MATP was developed for athletes who cannot participate in regular sports competitions due to their physical and/or functional limitations. The MATP program aims to create an appropriate individual training program for everyone. The premises of the execution of the program is that execution of basic activities with an individual approach for each athlete. The organization of this individual approach requires certain ways of thinking. For example, one can think about the degree of guidance, availability in space or transportation possibilities. A certain framework is needed that can guarantee the preconditions for organizing the MATP program.

In the interview, respondents were asked to think about what these preconditions might be. Practical examples are used in describing these results. Respondents indicated that organising MATP depends on human resources at different levels of involvement. In this case, levels refer to the involvement of people around the athlete. Think of the role of coaches, parents or the government. Respondents described multiple different important human resources. For example, the coach. Respondents described that a trained coach is a minimum requirement for organizing MATP. Secondly, creating friendships with other athletes and enjoying physical activities together with family members was



mentioned as important features of MATP. This shows that other athletes and family members are two other important human resources. Thirdly, the commitment of human resources is an important part for sports clubs. They are focused on volunteering, because it's the most important part to exist as sports club. In any sense, this seems to be mainly about the involvement of people who have knowledge of the athlete or the provision of the sports activities.

Respondent 12 indicates that having "hands" is very important, because with more needy athletes you cannot manage a training session on your own. Other respondents indicate that the use of materials is not so much the starting point. According to respondent 12, creativity - handling play in activities - is the basis for offering the MATP program to athletes with intellectual and multiple disabilities. This creativity, according to the respondent, is only expressed when the coach start focuses on the needs of the athlete. The explanation she gives for this is that *"you actually set yourself aside a bit and start from the small steps your student takes and celebrate that success."* Respondent 12 chooses the needs of the athlete as a starting point. Here starts from the idea of what is important for the athletes.

Respondent 15 indicates that playing a sport - by anyone - requires a personal interest in sports and exercise. The coach should commit to a program from the passion that the athlete has for (specific) sport(s). That may be about a particular expertise in the sport or about the overarching sport category. Also for this respondent, creativity in offering what the athlete enjoys should be the goal.

‘I think that's one thing that we need to get across to people as well that with motor activities, the more inventive and creative you can be will certainly help with your equipment because it could be quite minimal.’

### *SWOT-model*

As described earlier, the results of the questionnaire and interviews were structured in the SWOT model. The SWOT model depicts in a small visual overview what the strengths and weaknesses (internal) within the organization and opportunities and threats (external) outside the organization are that affect organizing and implementing MATP. Each category is explained in detail. A connection is made between the two research instruments. Figure 2 shows the results in keywords of the SWOT analysis.

**Figure 2**

*Strengths and weaknesses (internal)*

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
Approached as a sport	Insufficient knowledge and skills
Customization	No interest from family and/or sports organizations
Inclusivity & diversity	Lack of resources
Athlete development	Lack of guidance
Participation	Few sports opportunities

*Opportunities and threats (external)*

<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
Sporting events (SO)	Higher level of support
Network: cooperation with schools	Shortage of guidance/staff
Sports materials	Social acceptance
Innovation	Lack of awareness
Encouraging more activities	Uneducated coaches

**Strengths**

Implementing MATP starts within your own organization (internally). Strengths highlight what an organization, project or program excels at. In both research instruments, we asked the participants about the strengths of the MATP program. Participants were asked to what extent they believe MATP is an important addition to the sports offerings for individuals with PIMD. The main themes that recurred in the answers were: MATP approaches physical activity for persons with PIMD as a sports activity, customization of the activities, positive influence on inclusion and diversity, athlete development and possibilities for participation. Analysing the output of the digital questionnaire, it gets clear that the strengths of the MATP program are contributing to the opportunity to participate in sports for persons with PIMD. By deviating from physical activity as a form of therapy, a setting is created where the athlete can experience the enjoyment of the sport (approached as a sport). Respondent 4 in the questionnaire sums it up in the following sentence and key words:

“The joy of sport can be experienced by everyone, regardless of intellect or physical ability, regular sports training, not just therapy, teamwork, cheering on friends, the socialization aspect”

Respondents indicated the importance of MATP in fulfilling the individual needs of sport and exercise at a non-active competition level. In this regard, the MATP program is based on possibilities rather than limitations. During the questionnaire and interviews, people indicated that MATP distinguishes itself



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in this by not focusing on the activity, but the individual needs (customization). By starting from the needs and possibilities of the athlete, it creates an environment that suits each athlete. It enables the athlete to be able to develop (athlete development). Respondent 42 recounted:

“I believe that the MATP programme helps encourage the upkeep improvement of fine motor skills which will help the individual in their personal life. As well as this MATP programme, impacts a person’s mental health being part of a group & making friends via common interests.”

According to respondent 5, it’s a strength that a training routine is established. Being able to continue participating in activities therefore directly contributes to participation. This participation has an effect on creating an inclusive environment. In the MATP program the athlete gets a customized training program is central, allowing a diversity of athletes to participate with their own needs. Respondent 19 refers to this aspect as *"the inclusiveness and adaptiveness for all activities"*.

### Weaknesses

Along with strengths, there are also challenges that occur when implementing MATP at one's own organization. The weaknesses highlight where there is room for improvement within the organization. Using the digital questionnaire, we asked respondents to indicate the problems they face in organising MATP activities. During the interviews, we asked the participants to reflect on these "weaknesses" and tell us how they feel these can be addressed in a way that this will help them to be able to organize sports activities. The main themes that recurred in the results involving weaknesses are: insufficient knowledge and skills, no interest/support from family members of the athletes, no interest/support from sports organizations, lack of resources, lack of guidance and fewer sports opportunities in general.

The lack of knowledge and skills from professionals about MATP seems to be a common problem. The majority of the respondents mentioned that the problem of this lack of knowledge and skills, is more often related to a lack of guidance. Due to high turnover in supervision staff and a shortage of staff who have experience with the target group, people do not know how to organize MATP activities. Below, respondent 30 indicates that the responsibility for providing sports opportunities for people with PIMD primarily lies with care organizations rather than the municipality itself.

“Within the municipality you see that sports and exercise for people with PIMD still lies with the care organizations. Often it is focused on ID or physical disability, but not PIMD. Within the care organizations a team of therapists is at work. The knowledge and expertise for PIMD is not sufficiently present within current regular adapted exercise programs.”

In addition to the lack of knowledge and skills, there seems to be a lack of guidance. According to respondents, not enough people are being trained in offering MATP, so the knowledge of guiding people with PIMD in sports is not being obtained outside of work practice. Furthermore, respondent 7 indicated that it is difficult for their care organization to employ enough staff due to the national cutbacks in the financial capacity of the health care industry. Finally, there seems to be - due to the limited sports offerings for this target group - a great unfamiliarity with the opportunities that participating in MATP are offering. Respondents indicate a decreased interest among parents and sports clubs to get involved in MATP, because they are more focused on individual rehabilitation. In the Netherlands, this seems to have a direct effect on athlete participation. This complicates the process of starting a group of athletes that want to (and get the chance to) participate in MATP.

### Opportunities

There are a variety of factors that can help MATP continue to grow and develop. The opportunities outline the external factors that can have a positive influence on this development. First, we looked at what promising developments the organizations describe in the field of sports and exercise for people with PIMD. Secondly, the link to opportunities in cooperation with other organisations is made. Here, one can think of cooperation with schools, health care, sports clubs/associations or other (sports) events that are created to increase the participation of athletes with PIMD in sports activities. The main themes that were mentioned in the outcomes of the questionnaire and interviews are: organizing sports events, network (cooperation) with schools, development/availability of sufficient and appropriate sports materials, innovation and encouraging the organization of more activities.

Working toward a sports highlight "event" seems to be the trend. In both the questionnaire and interviews, this is the most frequently given answer. Respondent 2 asserts that participating in events gives athletes a stage to show the best version of themselves. The Special Olympics events are a great example of this. But not only the large-scale events seem to add significant value for the athlete, coach or parent. Also, the smaller events - more internal within the organization - can create this impact. In Slovakia, the experiences have resulted in annual and weekly MATP activities and events. In terms of events, an annual MATP Challenge Day and MATP Training Camp are organized.

In several areas, it seems that the use on innovation and innovative ideas can contribute to a different mindset and approach to MATP, increasing opportunities in sports for people with PIMD and allowing coaches to be flexible and creative within organizing and tailoring the activities themselves. It is indicated that the input of innovation can help promote the totality of activities. Examples given are innovative sports activities such as water skiing, cycling, bocce or frame running. Another example that was described by one of the respondents is adapting a workshop of "regular" sports.

‘We use our own flexibility and creativity and we joined a swimming workshop organised by National Swimming federation’

The network (cooperation) with schools and other organizations is also an opportunity to be better utilized. Respondent 15 indicated that in health care, work is often done in a multidisciplinary team, where an individual plan is drawn up for a person with extra needs by a team of different professionals. This form of collaboration could also be applied more broadly in sports, healthcare and education, according to the respondent. Respondent 16 indicated that the effectiveness of the MATP program could be increased if physical and occupational therapists were willing/able to contribute with their expertise in organizing the MATP activities. This seems to require a closer relationship between different organizations. Respondent 21 indicates that the focus on doing things together with partners and expanding this network within the health care industry can ensure to expand MATP sports opportunities. She writes in the questionnaire, *" playing sports together lends itself perfectly to that. "*

### Threats

There are a variety of factors that can hinder the growth and development of MATP. Threats identify these external and hindering factors. First, we looked at what unfavourable developments the organizations see in the field of sports and exercise for this people with PIMD. The main themes that came back in the outcomes are: the athletes needs a higher level of support, shortage of guidance/staff, (a lack of) social acceptance, a lack of awareness/relevance and uneducated coaches.

‘Ensuring a higher level of support and guidance in organizing training sessions, inter-club, and national events. Just like all athletes from the Special Olympics, athletes within the MATP program train and celebrate their personal achievements. Therefore, it is crucial that MATP activities and events receive sustainable financial support equal to other activities under the umbrella of the Special Olympics.’

Above is an extended quote from respondent 2. The lack of (trained) staff that can guide organizations from an outsider perspective. also seems to be an unfavourable development. Respondent 25 writes that due to a "lack of volunteers, more focus is put on therapy and less on sports and games". The consequence of this development seems to have a major impact on MATP. Respondents indicate that there is low awareness and that this is affecting the social acceptance of people with PIMD being active in sports and the society as a whole. Respondent 41: *It's the public and how they see them. Also the way they judge the sever ushers, on their limitations.*

Awareness can be created through visibility. Organizing and/or attending an (sports) event can help to increase the visibility. As mentioned earlier, working towards an event is an important highlight for the athlete, this is called a goal-oriented approach. According to the respondents, it is not always feasible to organize this independently due to a lack of time or expertise. Respondent 5 noticed that the core of this challenge may also be due to a lack of resources. The last theme reflects that the problem of unqualified professionals/trainers and volunteers seems to be growing. According to the respondents, the strength of MATP lies in the fact that it is an individualized program that allows athletes to actually experience the joy of sport and development. Without adequate supervision, this can no longer be offered in this way.

## Conclusion

The research on the implementation of MATP for people with PIMD shows that there are several internal and external factors that affect the effectiveness and growth of the MATP program. These factors can be summarized using the SWOT model (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats). The SWOT analysis provides insight into the strengths and weaknesses of the program within the organization (internal) and the outside opportunities and threats (external).

### *Internal: strengths and weaknesses*

1. **Strengths:** MATP differs from other sports and exercise activities because it starts with the athlete and not the sport activity. This enhances the potential of the athlete. Examples of this potential are about self-reliance, health and quality of life. The versatility of the MATP program gives organizations the possibility to customize the program to not only their athletes, but also the possibilities (and limitations) of their own organization. The program assumes an individual approach. Sports activities are offered in such a way that each athlete can participate at their own level.
2. **Weaknesses:** On the other hand, it is challenging for organizations to be able to organize the MATP program, partly due to a lack of guidance for (new) staff/volunteers and a lack of resources. MATP differs from other programs in a way that it is focused on individual needs and possibilities. With a lack of (trained) staff and volunteers, this is difficult to achieve. The lack of guidance and the lack of knowledge makes starting a program not easy and brings multiple challenges.

### *External: opportunities and threats*

3. **Opportunities:** In the MATP program, people often work toward a “final event (for example the MATP Challenge Day, SO Regional Games or SO National Games)”. One of the components the MATP program is known for at Special Olympics. Respondents indicated that participating in an event has great added value for the athletes, family members, health care workers, caregivers, coaches, other athletes and many more. There is purposeful work towards that sporting event and also it is a moment for the athlete to show what they have been training for recently etc. Finally, using the professional network involved with people with PIMD can contribute greatly to increasing awareness for participating in MATP.



4. **Threats:** The biggest threat within the MATP program is the limited capacity of human resources to offer hand-on-hand coaching for athletes. It seems that gaps (with incompetent supervision) are filled to keep enough guidance during events/activities. Otherwise, the event will not be followed up. However, quality cannot be guaranteed because knowledge is limited among many organizations, facilitators, etc. There seems to be too little connection with other organizations, so awareness of MATP has not developed much.

## Recommendations

The needs assessment can provide organizations with an overview into the opportunities and challenges regionally, nationally and internationally when implementing MATP. The recommendations below are based on the information obtained from the research instruments and the description and content of MATP. The purpose of these recommendations is to help organizations improve the implementation and effectiveness of MATP. It is important to identify strengths and weaknesses (internal) as well as opportunities and threats (external). The strengths and opportunities provide starting points for strengthening and expanding the program, while the weaknesses and threats indicate where improvements and adjustments are needed. The recommendations:

1. Being creative, inventive and being able to “think small” is a common answer given by respondents. Respondents indicated that providing sports activities for this target group is a different way of thinking. This can be reflected more in the MATP Coach Course. It requires a certain skill/dedication that can be trained but does not yet receive (enough) attention within the Coach Course.
2. For many people, MATP is unknown because it is less visible than other sports activities and events. Involving regional sports and exercise activities, different levels of government organizations (such as municipalities) can help parents, caregivers, professionals, volunteers and others involved in MATP, to show the positive impact MATP makes on the life of people with PIMD.
3. Increase awareness of MATP by collaborating with various organizations within healthcare, education and sports. Give it a multidisciplinary character to raise awareness. When people literally come into contact with MATP they can see and hear what it means for the target group to be able to participate in our society by being active in sports. An example is to involve physical and occupational therapists, who in practice are mostly in contact with this group.
4. Take into account that the guidance of athletes that must be provided is difficult to manage. The organizations that are responsible for the development of MATP resources need to make sure there are enough trained professionals who can transfer their knowledge and expertise about MATP to new trainers/supervisors/students. In this way the support for the athletes will be easier to organize in the future and students get interested in organizing sports activities for people with PIMD in an early stage of their career.

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## Attachment I: Questionnaire

### Needs assessment MATP

Motor Activity Training Program for individuals with PIMD. For all organizations (sports clubs/care organizations/schools) interested in offering a sports and physical activity program for individuals with profound intellectual and multiple disabilities (PIMD).

### About MATP

Enabling sports and physical activities for people with profound intellectual and multiple disabilities (PIMD) is the goal of the MATP program. This can occur within leisure activities, educational programs, or day care settings.

The Motor Activity Training Program (MATP) is an international sports and physical activity program designed for individuals with profound intellectual and multiple disabilities (PIMD). The program provides insight into the sports and physical activity possibilities for individuals with PIMD and how these can be tailored to the athletes capabilities. With the project MATCODE (three-year international Erasmus+ project) we conduct research into the needs, opportunities, and barriers to enable sports and/or physical activity for individuals with PIMD.

With this questionnaire, MATCODE investigates what implementing parties and/or organizations need in order to offer the MATP sports and physical activity program for people with PIMD. This can encompass practical matters, the content of training, as well as coaching skills necessary to deliver MATP. This questionnaire is intended for anyone with experience and/or affinity in guiding people with PIMD. Are you unfamiliar with MATP? No problem! Feel free to complete this questionnaire.

Filling out the questionnaire takes approximately 10 minutes. Are you a care professional, teacher, and/or sports trainer? And are you interested in this theme? Based on this questionnaire, we would like to conduct a number of interviews with professionals on this topic. This question will reappear at the end of the questionnaire.

### What is MATP?

MATP aims to develop a tailored individual training program for everyone. As the name suggests, the focus is on training rather than competition. MATP is an officially recognized program of Special Olympics. Internationally, it is practiced in 96 countries, with 31 of them in Europe. The goal is to provide physical activity and sports opportunities for individuals with profound intellectual and multiple disabilities (PIMD). This is done in a circuit format where nobody is excluded from participation. Personal improvement is prioritized for each individual. The exercises within MATP can be customized to fit individual needs.

Link: <https://youtu.be/wBHW6hzcU7E>

### General information

The questionnaire is divided into two parts. The first part asks about your own experience with the target group. The second part consists of a few in-depth questions regarding the ability to implement the MATP program within your organization. These questions are elaborated through a SWOT-analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats).

1. What is your name (first and last name)?
2. Which organization do you work for?
3. What type of organization do you work for?
  - a. Sports club for people with PIMD
  - b. Healthcare organization (providing care for people with PIMD)
  - c. Educational institution (with programs for people with PIMD)
  - d. Other: .....
4. Does your organization offer sports and/or physical activity for people with PIMD?
  - a. Yes, proceed to the next question.
  - b. No, skip the next question.
5. Provide a brief description (in a few sentences) of the current range of sports and physical activities for people with PIMD within your organization. Describe what you do in the activities, how they are organized, and how many athletes participate in these activities.

### Offering MATP

Using the SWOT model, we aim to map out the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of MATP in the Netherlands. This way, we can determine which aspects are going well and which points deserve more attention.

6. What do you consider to be the key positive (distinctive) aspects of the MATP program? Or what could these aspects be, in your opinion? (strengths)
7. What practical challenges do you encounter in organizing MATP (or sports and physical activity programs in general) for people with PIMD within your organization? (Weaknesses)
8. What interesting developments are there in the field of sports and physical activity for people with PIMD that MATP could capitalize on? (Opportunities)
9. What developments are there in the field of sports and physical activity for people with PIMD that pose a threat to being able to continue offering MATP? (Threats)

**Continuation**

10. Do you see opportunities to make the MATP program a structural component of your organization's offerings?
- a. Yes
  - b. No
  - c. Not structurally, but incidentally
  - d. That already is
  - e. I don't know
11. Do you know of any organizations where there is potential to offer and develop MATP for people with PIMD?
12. Are you willing to provide further explanation about your experience and the importance of sports and physical activity for people with PIMD in a brief interview (approximately half an hour)?

*Leave your email address and we will gladly get in touch with you.*

--- The end of the questionnaire ---

## Attachment II: Interview list

### Needs assessment MATCODE | Follow up Questionnaire (WP3)

#### *Motor Activity Training Program for individuals with PIMD*

For all organizations (sports clubs/care organizations/schools) interested in offering a sports and physical activity program for individuals with profound intellectual and multiple disabilities (PIMD).

#### **About MATP**

Enabling sports and physical activities for people with profound intellectual and multiple disabilities (PIMD) is the goal of the MATP program. This can occur within leisure activities, educational programs, or day care settings. The Motor Activity Training Program (MATP) is an **international sports and physical activity program** designed for individuals with profound intellectual and multiple disabilities (PIMD). The program provides insight into the sports and physical activity possibilities for individuals with PIMD and how these can be tailored to the **athletes** capabilities.

With the project MATCODE (three-year international Erasmus+ project) we conduct research into the needs, opportunities, and barriers to enable sports and/or physical activity for individuals with PIMD. With this list of interview questions, MATCODE investigates what implementing parties and/or organizations need in order to offer the MATP sports and physical activity program for people with PIMD. This can encompass practical matters, the content of training, as well as coaching skills necessary to deliver MATP. The interview takes 15 until 30 minutes.

#### **General information**

The interview is divided into 5 questions with the most important topics/ sub questions. These questions are elaborated through the answers on the SWOT-analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) in the questionnaire.

#### **Short analyse questionnaire**

Description (in a few sentences) of the current range of sport and physical activities for people with profound intellectual and multiple disabilities in your organization.

- Use the Motor Activity Skills
- (hand on hand) guidance
- Sport activities based on regular sports
- Weekly recurring of the MATP program
- Use of sports facilities

## Topics questionnaire

### *Strengths and weaknesses*

Strengths	Weaknesses
Approached as a sport	Insufficient knowledge and skills
Diversity and customization	No interest from family and/or sports organizations
Inclusivity	Lack of resources
Athlete development	Lack of guidance
Participation	Few sports opportunities

### *Opportunities and threats*

Opportunities	Threats
Sporting events (SO)	Event support
Network - cooperation with schools	Shortage of guidance/staff
Sports materials	Social acceptance
Innovation	Lack of awareness
Encouraging more activities	

### *Interview questions*

#### **Organizational preconditions**

- 1) What are the necessary preconditions and facilities needed to successfully implement the MATP program within the organization?
  - Experiences: what works and what doesn't.
  - Setting; why is it offered in this particular way?
  - One-on-one guidance: how do you organize that and what support do you receive?

#### **SWOT-analyse**

Strengths (question 2)	
MATP distinguishes itself by focusing on exercise for people with PIMD from sports exercise activities and using sport as a tool for the inclusion of this target group in society.	- What does sport mean within your organization?
	- When does something contribute to inclusivity?
1. How do you think this approach could be beneficial to the development of attention/resources for sports and physical activity for people with PIMD within your organization? And do you think this approach can lead to increased participation of the target group in the field of exercise? And in society as a whole?	- How can the MATP program better focus on conveying the underlying goals of these sports activities to those unfamiliar with them?



<b>Weaknesses (question 3)</b>	
2. What steps can be taken to improve the knowledge and interest in MATP among staff, volunteers, and parents so that they are better able to organize sports activities for people with PIMD?	- What problems do you encounter due to the lack of interest? Where does it stem from and what impact can you have as a provider?
	- How can the MATP Coach Course be made as 'attractive' as possible in your opinion, so that others become enthusiastic about the program and are more willing to commit to it?
	- Lack of awareness seems to be a barrier for people who are open to working with the target group. How can you design a 'step-by-step' plan or approach (based on experience) to remove this feeling and guide people in offering MATP in an accessible way?
<b>Opportunities (question 4)</b>	
4. What opportunities do you see for collaboration with schools, sports clubs, care providers, and other networks to organize sports events and innovative activities that can increase the participation of athletes with PIMD?	- Experiences: what have you tried in the past and what are your future plans? What was successful and what required a lot of effort?
	a. Sports materials; flexibility in use. What does this mean for you as a trainer/coach/physical activity professional?
	b. Flexibility and creativity in collaborations; what challenges do you face and how do you think other organizations can address them?
	c. The SO sports event: what is the significance of working towards a major sports event? How can you convey the impact of such an event to parents/caregivers (MATP providers)? And what role can various organizations play in this?
	i. Monitoring; making the impact visible. Have there been any studies on this? If so/not, what ideas do you have about it?

Threats (question 5)	
5. How can your organization address the shortage of guidance/staff/resources to ensure that sports activities for people with PIMD continue and are broadly supported by the organization that is commitment to people with PIMD?	- Experience: what works and what doesn't.

## Attachment III: Respondents digital questionnaire

<b>Respondent</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Type of organization</b>
1	Slovakia	Special primary school
2	Slovakia	- Sports club for children with disabilities - Educational institution - Other: / yes CA Platform for families
3	Slovakia	- Sports club for children with disabilities - Educational institution
4	Slovakia	Other: Civic Association and Day Centre helping people with disabilities
5	Slovakia	Educational institution
6	Slovakia	Sports club
7	Slovakia	Sports club
8	Slovakia	Sports club and activity center
9	Slovakia	Other: civic association
10	Slovakia	Sports club
11	Slovakia	Sports club
12	Slovakia	Educational institution (with programs for people with disabilities)
13	Slovakia	Other: civic association
14	Slovakia	Educational institution (with programs for people with disabilities)
15	Slovakia	Educational institution (with programmes for people with disabilities)
16	Netherlands	Health/social organization (providing care for people with intellectual disabilities)
17	Netherlands	- Health/social organization (providing care for people with intellectual disabilities) - Sports club
18	Netherlands	Health/social organization (providing care for people with intellectual disabilities)
19	Netherlands	Sports club
20	Netherlands	Educational institution (with programs for people with disabilities)
21	Netherlands	Health/social organization (providing care for people with intellectual disabilities)
22	Netherlands	Sports club
23	Netherlands	Health/social organization (providing care for people with intellectual disabilities)
24	Netherlands	Health/social organization (providing care for people with intellectual disabilities)
25	Netherlands	Research institute
26	Netherlands	Health/social organization (providing care for people with intellectual disabilities)
27	Netherlands	Health/social organization (providing care for people with intellectual disabilities)
28	Netherlands	Municipality

29	Netherlands	Health/social organization (providing care for people with intellectual disabilities)
30	Netherlands	Sports club/ organization
31	Netherlands	Volunteer organization
32	Netherlands	Health/social organization (providing care for people with intellectual disabilities)
33	Netherlands	Special Olympics Netherlands;
34	Netherlands	Sports club/ organization
35	Netherlands	Health/social organization (providing care for people with intellectual disabilities)
36	Ireland	Health/social organization (providing care for people with intellectual disabilities)
37	Ireland	Health/social organization (providing care for people with intellectual disabilities)
38	Ireland	Health/social organization (providing care for people with intellectual disabilities)
39	Ireland	Health/social organization (providing care for people with intellectual disabilities)
40	Ireland	Health/social organization (providing care for people with intellectual disabilities)
41	Ireland	Health/social organization (providing care for people with intellectual disabilities)
42	Ireland	Health/social organization (providing care for people with intellectual disabilities)
43	Ireland	Health/social organization (providing care for people with intellectual disabilities)
44	Ireland	Health/social organization (providing care for people with intellectual disabilities)
45	Ireland	Healthcare organization (providing care for people with PIMD;
46	Ireland	Healthcare organization (providing care for people with PIMD;
47	Ireland	Sports club for people with PIMD;
48	Ireland	Special Olympics Ireland;
49	Ireland	Sports organisation for people with learning disabilities;
50	Ireland	Healthcare organization (providing care for people with PIMD;
51	Ireland	Educational institution (with programs for people with PIMD;
52	Ireland	Teacher involved in Special Olympics;

*For more information on all answers, you can contact the authors.*

*Attachment IV: Respondents interviews*

<b>Respondent</b>	<b>Type of organization</b>
1	Sports club and educational institution (with programs for people with disabilities)
2	Sports club and activity center
3	Educational institution (with programs for people with disabilities)
4	Special primary school
5	Special Olympics Slovakia
6	Special Olympics Slovakia
7	Sports club (general and specific for MATP activities)
8	Health/social organization (providing care for people with intellectual disabilities)
9	Sports club on wheels
10	Health/social organization (providing care for people with intellectual disabilities)
11	Special Olympics (People with ID);
12	Health/social organization (providing care for people with intellectual disabilities) and educational institution
13	Health/social organization (providing care for people with intellectual disabilities) and educational institution
14	Health/social organization (providing care for people with intellectual disabilities) and educational institution
15	Special Olympics Ireland
16	Special Olympics Ireland
17	Special Olympics Ireland

*For more information on all answers, you can contact the authors.*