

Inclusion Workshops in Ireland

Target: Non Football Workshop

The target was to bring together a wide range of actors, including sports practitioners, policy makers/influencers, and community practitioners/advocates to raise awareness and discuss solutions around the issue of inclusion in and through sport in an Irish context. We focused on providing a space for people to reflect on the topic as well as their perceived roles in contributing towards inclusion/integration. For the non football workshop we teamed up with a national organisation that oversees the delivery of the Community Games in Ireland which includes a wide range of sports(The Community Games partner had attended the Train the Trainers Workshop in Bologna). In addition to the Community Games other sports were targeted, including Rugby and Gaelic Games.

The target group included, sports coordinators, youth workers(that use sport as part of their work), Irish Sports Council representatives, Local Sports Partnerships, Coaches, Child protection Officers, Club Officials as well as NGO's who have an interest/stake in sport and inclusion(including for example, the Equality Authority, the Integration Centre, New Communities Partnership and other Immigrant/integration focused NGO's as well as Show Racism the Red Card and Sport Against Racism in Ireland and others-see attendees list for full details on participants).

The conference workshop was also attended by key football stakeholders including, the Head of the FAI Grassroots Department, FAI Grassroots Department managers(Regional area Managers), Locally based FAI Football In the Community Development Officers as well as the chairperson of the Professional Players Union in Ireland.

Football Workshop

The second workshop was held with a football league in Cork City(second largest City in the Republic of Ireland with a diverse demographic), with the same overall target as the non football workshop. Attendees included, referees, league committee members, coaches, managers and club chairpersons/secretaries.

Activities

A one day conference format with side workshop sessions was employed for the non football workshop delivery. While the football workshop was modified and delivered over two hours as part of a regular League monthly meeting.

Workshops included: (a) Presentations by international experts in the field of sport and inclusion.

(b) Interactive workshops sessions focused on these specific topics: (1) barriers/solution,(2) understanding discrimination, (3) delineating what is inclusion (4) cultural competency (5) good practice examples (6) open forum/the next steps.

General comment on Effects/impact

The workshops raised peoples general awareness of the issue of inclusion/integration and the role that sport can play in this. Generally speaking, it was expressed that (1) more work needs to be done to bring out further good practice examples and to delineate what good practice is? (2)there was also a view that further workshops and training in this area would be beneficial along with a national forum/network for sport and inclusion(see also Sport Inc Net Conf-Workshop Sum Data[1] file attached).

The non football workshop was held in Dublin and required people based outside the capital to travel, there is a need to regionalise workshops delivery. The workshops have encouraged debate about maintaining and developing the Sport Inclusion Network within Ireland and this is ongoing at a discussion level between the FAI's Intercultural Football Programme, the Community Games and other key potential stakeholders.

Specific challenges/problems

One problem that arose during the planning stages and was more of an issue for the non-football workshop, focused on how best to strike the balance between attracting attendees involved in sport and development as paid professionals, and those involved on a voluntary basis. A secondary and related issue was about what time to put the workshops on at e.g. during the day, evening or weekend? During the day catered for those involved in sport and development as paid professionals, while limiting possible attendance of those involved in sport at the grassroots in a voluntary capacity, however the football workshop managed to fully plug this gap as it was grassroots based, though the football workshop did not allow room for community stakeholders(NGO's/community groups etc...) to discuss the issue together.

Links to videos of the first workshop.

http://www.fai.ie/files/Intercultural/LivingstoneThompson_256K.wmv

http://www.fai.ie/files/Intercultural/MarkLeckieandWouterScho_256K.wmv

www.fai.ie/files/Intercultural/MorningWorkshop.wmv

http://www.fai.ie/files/Intercultural/SportInclusionInanIrish_256K.wmv