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Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



MIXAR
MAGAZINE 01



PRESENTATION

¡WELCOME TO MIXAR!

MIX.A.R. (Mixed Ability Rugby for All) aims to transfer, experiment and implement an innovative and proven approach to social inclusion through rugby in 5 European countries. The model promoted by IMAS provides for the interaction of disabled and non-disabled players on an equal basis in the game of rugby in full contact, promoting health, equity, equality of membership and social cohesion, challenging segregation and stereotypes about disability, as well as favouring processes of lifelong learning and personal development for all participants.

Rugby is a sport that is becoming more and more popular, whose founding values such as teamwork, integrity, respect, solidarity and passion are in line with the vision of a fully inclusive society. The project brings together seven partners with different and complementary skills, experiences and competencies, which already incorporate a strong commitment to social inclusion in their work: the FIR leader - Italian Rugby Federations (IT), IMAS - International Mixed Ability Sports (UK), INICO - University of Salamanca, Instituto Universitario de Inclusión en la Comunidad (ES), Sunday's Well Rebels Rugby Football Club (IRL), Per Formare Srl Social Enterprise (IT), RV - Rugby Vlaanderen (B), FER Federación Española Rugby (ES).

Partners will implement co-produced training and related programme resources to educate their stakeholders on the Mixed Ability Rugby model, promote and test it in different contexts, share knowledge and best practices, and identify ideas to maximize reach and sustainability of the project at individual and community level. The partnership aims to activate disabled and non-disabled players in every phase of the project, encouraging them to contribute directly to the creation of a toolkit to facilitate the transferability of the model in different contexts.

To achieve the objectives proposed, MIX.A.R. will organize two training sessions aimed at coaches belonging to the various partners who will then be able to experiment and implement what they have learned directly in their realities. To these will be added moments of dissemination on the territory to make known the project and to favour the processes of social cohesion. The

FIR will host in Rome at the end of the project a conference to showcase the results achieved the implemented methodology alongside the project experiences, as well as a methodology and the toolkit for local dissemination in the different realities.





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<< Mixed Ability teams are "just another team" in mainstream clubs, alongside the first, second, women's, junior and veteran sides. >>



MIXAR PARTNERS



VNIVERSIDAD
D SALAMANCA



ESPAÑA
RUGBY





WHAT IS IT?

MIXED ABILITY RUGBY FOR ALL

It has been the custom across Europe and the rest of the world that if disabled people want to become involved in sports they should be separated into alternative provision, competing or exercising with their disabled peers, they may even be categorised by their disability, only allowed to use special or adapted rules.

Rugby has been more accepting of diversity perhaps because players of all shapes and sizes come together to form a team of XV supporting each other on the pitch and socially following the game. Rugby also offered softer variants, for example touch or tag rugby, and for people with disabilities or facing challenging barriers to participation this was the usual pathway.

THE GROWTH OF MIXED ABILITY RUGBY

In the heartland of Wales, over twenty-five years ago, people with physical and learning disabilities were playing full contact rugby with their friends, family and staff from care organisations. This organic growth of Mixed Ability rugby accelerated rapidly when tutors and rugby coaches Mark Goodwin and Martino Corazza worked with disabled players to produce a guide, educational resources and promotional materials for grassroots rugby clubs. Building on their experiences with the Bumble Bees in England and Chivasso Rugby in Italy, International Mixed Ability Rugby (IMAS) was born, and the roll out of the model was promptly supported by England Rugby in the lead to 2015 RWC. It is becoming increasingly 'normal' for clubs to host a Mixed Ability team and recognise the right of disabled people to be included in the rugby family as equals, enjoying the same mainstream full contact rugby game.



Photography: gorugbyuk.com



Mixed Ability teams now play regular fixtures in the community against second teams, veterans and social sides, abiding by World Rugby Laws for the Game with only minor adjustments (e.g. uncontested scrums). MA teams are “just another team” within mainstream rugby clubs, equal in status to the Firsts, Seconds, Womens, Juniors and Veterans sides.

MIXAR AND MIXED ABILITY RUGBY GLOBALLY

As a result of extensive international interest, IMAS have organised 2 International Mixed Ability Rugby Tournaments and are currently planning for the 3rd one in Cork in 2020 with Sundays Well RFC. Each of these tournaments engaged 10+ countries and 400+ participants over a week of Mixed Ability competition and we hope to see this expand in 2020 with an expected 15+ countries, 750 participants and 24 teams. Mixed Ability Rugby teams are now rapidly developing in Argentina and other South American countries, and the first MA teams are evolving in Canada and New Zealand.



Photography: IMART 20127

To harness the potential of this evolution and to make the opportunity available to as many people as possible, FIR and IMAS facilitated a partnership that has received Erasmus+ Sport funding to promote Mixed Ability Rugby across Europe, involving other national and regional rugby unions, universities, third sector organisations as well as grassroots clubs. The legacy of the project will practically support interested clubs and coaches in starting their Mixed Ability journey and represent an example for other sports to follow!

If you're interested in knowing more about how to start a Mixed Ability team please visit: www.mixedabilitiesports.org



DON'T MISS THE VIDEO

“Mixed Ability sees the person first”





BRADFORD

Bradford transnational meeting

The 2nd MIXAR transnational meeting was hosted by IMAS in Bradford, West Yorkshire between the 6th and 8th of April 2018.

It was a 2-day interactive workshop aimed at covering the theory and practice of Mixed Ability which has been developed by IMAS over the years and has supported the exponential growth of the Mixed Ability movement globally. The workshop used a collaborative approach as it was co-produced and co-delivered by experienced Mixed Ability trainers of all abilities, but it also was also an opportunity for partners to contribute experience, share good practice and already existing excellent projects.

The event was incredibly well attended, with almost 40 participants and qualified rugby coaches from 5 countries sharing stories, presentations and practical training tips, before a real Mixed Ability rugby game at Halifax RUFC with mud, tackles, torrential rain, bruises and even a broken finger. Nothing but real rugby!

Stuart Hill and the Halifax Magpies gave real meaning to rugby core values and the Mixed Ability ethos: Mixed Ability teams are "just another team" in mainstream clubs, alongside the first, second, women's, junior and veteran sides, with players being equal members of the clubs, and part of the wider rugby family.





Two days of sharing knowledge.

The 2nd MIXAR transnational meeting was hosted by IMAS in Bradford, West Yorkshire between the 6th and 8th of April 2018.



Theory and practice.

To see the theory and practice of Mixed Ability which has been developed by IMAS over the years.



40 participants.

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One real Mixed Ability rugby game .

With mud, tackles, torrential rain, bruises and even a broken finger. Nothing but real rugby!

« Mixed Ability teams are “just another team” mainstream clubs alongside the first second, women junior and veteran sides. »





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What emerged clearly once the mud was washed away, was a passion for rugby to be fully inclusive and open to everyone. That's the message that will be travelling back to Italy, Spain, Belgium and Ireland with our European partners. The enthusiasm and commitment to break down barriers which prevent people from joining clubs were tangible, and the coaches will now implement what they have experienced in their day-to-day club activities. The 3rd meeting in Cork, will be a great opportunity to reflect all together about the challenges as well as the opportunities Mixed Ability provides, making sure we can generate sustainable and long term positive change in our communities!



DON'T MISS THE VIDEO

**"The ErasmusPlus
Sport MIXAR project"**





Ian McKinley

ITALIAN RUGBY UNION PLAYER



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WHO IS IAN?

Ian McKinley is an Irish-born rugby union player for Italian side Benetton in the Pro14 and, since 2017, for the Italian national team. He plays at fly-half.

In 2011, after playing 6 times for Irish province Leinster, McKinley was forced to retire from rugby union after losing the sight in his left eye. After his retirement, he moved to Italy to work as a coach for junior sides. However, despite the blindness in one eye, McKinley made a return to rugby and five years later was signed by Treviso, and on November 2017 he played his first international game for Italy, in an Autumn Internationals test match against Fiji.

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On the 26th of May this year, Italian rugby international Ian McKinley showed his support for Mixed Ability rugby. He attended the first international Mixed Ability fixture in Italy, between Irish Mixed Ability side Sunday's Well Rebels and their hosts Chivasso Ruby Onlus.

The match took place in the grounds of VII Rugby Torino in Turin. The game itself was the highlight of a festival of rugby taking place over that weekend. For most spectators, including Ian McKinley, it was the first time they got the chance to see mixed ability rugby being played.

For those in attendance they were treated to a very exciting high tempo match played in the true spirit of rugby by both sides. Like the most recent meeting of these two sides at the semi-final of the 2017 International Mixed Ability Rugby Tournament in Spain, it was a very close game with the Irish side once again topping the score board.

Mixed Ability rugby did leave a very positive impression on Ian as he described in a post-match interview with Rebels Manager Liam Maher. As a player at the elite level of our sport, Ian has knocked down barriers and proven that rugby is a sport for all. Both teams were very honoured to have Ian and Cordelia McKinley take time out of their busy schedules to attend the game and more importantly the 3rd half. We wish Ian all the best for the upcoming season and hope to see him run out with the Azzuarri against his home country, Ireland in the USA this November.



[DON'T MISS THE VIDEO](#)

"Ian McKinley on the 1st Italian mixed ability fixture"





MIXAR OBJECTIVES

Form collaborations between project partners and representatives of partner organizations in Mixed Ability (MA), and promote and test MA Rugby in a variety of contexts.



1

Share the knowledge and experience of MA Rugby and local contexts.

Identify ways to maximize the reach and sustainability of the positive impacts of MA Rugby from the individual to the community level, particularly in terms of creating opportunities in personal development and employment for people with disabilities.

Evaluate experiences and redevelop and redefine the MA Model to incorporate new knowledge and experiences.

Develop a Transferability Toolkit to enable MA Rugby initiatives to be developed in any context with the support of a well-established and inclusive network of MA Rugby professionals.



2



3





SCIENTIFIC

THE SPORT AS A TOOL FOR LIVE BETTER LIVES

One of the main goals of the Erasmus+ Sport MIXAR project is to provide opportunities to play community rugby to people of all abilities and backgrounds, including people with different physical, learning and experiential abilities. We have a clear idea that rugby, and sport in general, should be available to everybody, in an inclusive and not discriminatory environment.

We are sure that, being this the case, this will have an enormous positive impact on players and communities' lives. But we also have a clear idea that if we want to implement a sustainable project, we need to collect data to support this evidence. We believe that, in order to do so, we need a well-established and scientifically validated model which allows us to assess the critical aspects.

INICO (Institute on Community Integration), from the University of Salamanca (Spain), will work, side by side with all the partner organisations, clubs and coaches, for the development of an instrument to assess the quality of life of rugby players within the Mixed Ability model as championed by IMAS.

The Quality of Life model developed by R. L. Schalock and M. A. Verdugo, is a holistic approach that includes eight domains (material, physical and emotional well-being, personal development, interpersonal relationships, social inclusion, self-determination and rights), gathers and reflects the complexity of factors that allow people to live a meaningful life, and will result in a practical tool which will allow us to combine all the factors on which sport has an impact upon.

We want to highlight the importance of an assessment tool which incorporates social, relational and psychological aspects. Our current experience suggests that the Mixed Ability model provides opportunities to practice sport in an inclusive and equal environment, offering many advantages compared to segregated, adapted or disability-specific sport, as we have a clear perception that people with disabilities do want to play as equals, and live, within our society, where opportunities to live a meaningful life are. And in this respect, and speaking in "sporty" words, "if we are to play the inclusion game, we want to do our best", and in that sense, it is not just our goal but our precise responsibility to maximise the benefits of and opportunities for truly inclusive sports.

INICO will make available their extensive expertise in assessing people's quality of life and in programme evaluation, so that MIXAR can evidence the benefits of a Mixed Ability approach to sport, as well as focusing its efforts in providing "normal" rugby opportunities for all. If sport is really a tool to help people live better lives, then it must be available for all.



A CASE OF

ANTHONY

Founder of the England's first

<< My hope is to see all people with disability playing sports and making new friends all over the world. >>



Anthony's vision was to create a team that would enable players of all abilities to play contact rugby.



The Bumble Bees are now almost 10 years old, with an impressive 40 registered players, half of whom have a disability.



The enormous impact of this initiative is clearly evident in the establishment of 15 new Mixed Ability clubs in England only.

F SUCCESS...

ANTHONY BROOKE

Mixed Ability rugby team

Being born with a disability far from deterred lifelong rugby fan Anthony Brooke from playing the game he loves. Rather, it inspired him to make a change, encourage others to take part and be instrumental in promoting Mixed Ability world-wide.

Despite his passion for rugby, Anthony often found himself relegated to the position of water boy or encouraged to play tag rugby with other players with disabilities rather than competing in the mainstream game.

Determined to play full-contact rugby within a community club, with the same rules and regulation which apply to teams he was watching every Saturday from the side-line, Anthony was supported by his WEA tutor to work on his assertiveness to help him gain the confidence and skills needed to establish a new rugby team, offering equal membership and greater opportunities for people with learning and physical disabilities.





Anthony's vision was to create a team that would enable players of all abilities to play contact rugby alongside able bodied players. No identification systems, no adaptations, no classifications in place: just teammates. This vision became true in 2009, when, with the support from the RFU, the Workers Educational Association and Bradford and Bingley Rugby club, the Bumble Bees Barbarians were born.

The Bumble Bees are now almost 10 years old, with an impressive 40 registered players, half of whom have a disability. The club is recognised by the RFU and plays regularly in the community against first, second, veteran or social sides.

Anthony's efforts didn't just stop there. As an IMAS Ambassador he has become instrumental in promoting Mixed Ability rugby at a national and international level, taking his learning and insight to rugby clubs, sports events, schools and community groups with the help of a co-produced presentation.



The enormous impact of this initiative is clearly evident in the establishment of 15 new Mixed Ability clubs in England only, and even more across the world thanks to the International Mixed Ability Rugby Tournament – the World Cup for Mixed Ability teams – and powerful programme such as the MIXAR project.

Anthony said "I am really happy. It's all coming together now. My hope is to see all people with disability playing sports and making new friends all over the world."

For people previously facing barriers to participations, being part of a Mixed Ability team has truly transformed their lives. The rugby ethos provides an environment in which they are genuinely treated as equals, while the matches give them an opportunity to compete and interact with





players they wouldn't have interacted with before. This builds confidence, raise aspirations and improve health and wellbeing for the whole community. Competing teams have the experience of playing alongside disabled people, or people from different backgrounds, challenging their preconceptions and giving them a fresh perspective on equality and diversity. Anthony's relentless desire to play rugby not only gave him the determination to create his own team, it has created opportunities for hundreds of players facing barriers, building understanding between people and transforming the lives of all involved.







NEWS

MIXED ABILITY RUGBY FOR ALL



MIXAR on the Limerick Uni

Dissemination activities planned in Ireland

Irish partners Sundays Well Rebels will travel to the rugby proud city of Limerick on the 29th of September to show case Mixed Ability rugby in Limerick University. This open training session comes in conjunction with Limerick City Council Sports Partnership initiative, to develop inclusion in sport for people with a disability. Hopefully teams from around the rugby fraternity can get a MA rugby match in the famous Thomond Park on their touring bucket list in the not too distant future.

New Mixed Ability rugby team

Watch out there's a Tornado coming!!

Introducing Ireland's second Mixed Ability rugby team who are forming for the 2018/19 season... the Malone Tornado's. Playing out of top Ulster club, Malone RFC, the Tornado's are gearing up for their maiden season. We look forward to this Belfast sides development and to welcoming them to Cork in the near future.





Jazz and Rugby

Cork will replay the 2015 world final

For the past 40 years, the Southern Irish city of Cork turns in to one big Jazz club on the last weekend of October. This year, Jazz will be coming to the home of Munster Rugby in Cork... The long awaited replay of the 2015 world final between Sundays Well Rebels and Bradford & Bingley Bumble Bee takes places in Irish Independent Park. Whatever the outcome on the field there will be plenty of pints of Guinness over cool Jazz in the clubhouse after.



Rugby and fun in Spain

First Mixed Ability rugby tournament for kids

This summer Valencia hosted the CESA (Autonomical Spanish tournament) for kids on schollar age. For the first time on this competition, two Mixed Ability rugby teams compited to be the best on Spain, Castilla La Macha and Valencia played two amazing games, in wich the first ones were better and won 30-20 and 30-25.

Rugby is the first colective sport in Spain who runs this initiative,

The 'Leones' Jaime Nava and Brad Linklater sponsored the competition and didn't miss a single game. Throught out them, they talked and played with all the kids from both teams.





A training like no other

'Las Leonas' train with 'El Quijote' Mixed Ability rugby tem.

Before their participation on the Women's World Cup 7s in San Francisco, 'las Leonas' -spanish women's seven national team'- enjoyed a very especial training on the rugby national stadium, 'El Central,' with 'El Quijote' mixed ability rugby team, one of the biggest and oldest rugby teams in Spain.

All the team members enjoyed playing with 'las Leonas', but especially Carla, who was really happy to met her sport heroins, Patricia García and Marina Bravo.





VIDEO

READ THE QR CODE AND ENJOY



Looking back on MARWT 2015



Mixed Ability rugby: an overview



Changing the world through mixed ability



Training with 'Las Leonas'





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COORDINATOR



VNIVERSIDAD
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ESPAÑA
RUGBY



Rugby
Vlaanderen



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