

GREECE



Country Para sport Factsheet

February 2026

"Sport For All: Promoting Inclusion and Combating Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities"

This country factsheet was drafted by ACT LLC in collaboration with the Council of Europe, the European Union and other Sport For All joint project partners.

The data in this factsheet is from the "Sport For All: Promoting Inclusion and Combating Discrimination Against Persons with Disabilities", a European Union (EU) and Council of Europe joint project, to create a more inclusive sports culture by addressing the barriers to the participation of persons with disabilities in sport and fostering a safe and welcoming sports environments for all. One of the project goals was to generate a comparable, policy-relevant evidence base on disability inclusion in sport across eight countries and identify how Para sport systems are structured, where systemic constraints recur, and which strengthening priorities emerge.

►► To find more information about the project and other countries involved in the project, as well as a synthesis report and an educational toolkit created to promote the inclusion of people with disabilities in sport settings, have a look at the project website:

www.coe.int/sport/sportforall

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Country Context

Indicator	Data
Population (2021 Census)	10.48 Million
Estimated number of persons with disabilities	10.2% (population aged 16+, severely limited in daily activities; Eurostat EU-SILC)
Persons with disabilities in Para sport	Roughly 1,500 to 2,500 registered athletes with disabilities (Hellenic Sports Federation for Persons with Disabilities and affiliated federations; range reflects variation across sources and registration criteria)
Paralympic Games 2024 (Paris)	37 athletes (24 men; 13 women) Medals - 13
Paralympic Games 2020 (Tokyo)	44 athletes (33 men; 11 women) Medals – 11
Paralympic Games 2016 (Rio)	60 athletes (44 men; 16 women); Medals - 13

Population: Hellenic Statistical Authority (2021 Census). Disability prevalence: Eurostat EU-SILC. Para sport participation figures are indicative and reflect registered competitive athletes; the range reflects differences in registration criteria across federations. Recreational participants are not captured.

System Summary

The summary below highlights the main systemic strengths and constraints shaping Para sport development in Greece.

Key Strengths

- The e-Kouros centralised sport registry enables national tracking of federations, clubs, registered athletes, and licensed coaches including persons with disabilities, with evaluation scores directly linked to funding allocations.
- Paralympic medal achievements are recognised on an equal basis with Olympic achievements for state awards, distinctions, and athlete benefits.
- Under Law 4726/2020, the Hellenic Paralympic Committee holds a statutory monitoring mandate over the modernisation and accessibility of older sports venues.

Key Gaps

- Operational responsibilities are divided between the Hellenic Paralympic Committee - responsible for international representation and elite preparation, and the Hellenic Sports Federation for Persons with Disabilities - responsible for domestic competition and club development. The coordination interface between these two bodies is not clearly formalised. This creates a structural vulnerability in the pathway at the point of transition from national development to elite selection.

- No dedicated national Para sport policy or strategic action plan exists; strategic direction is currently embedded within general sport legislation and a broader disability strategy, limiting the ability to set and monitor Para sport-specific objectives.
- Greece’s Paralympic delegation has declined across three consecutive cycles indicating a narrowing participation pipeline that requires strategic attention.

Legal and Policy Framework

Greece is a State Party to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD). The right of persons with disabilities to participate in cultural life, recreation, leisure, and sport, as articulated in Article 30 of the Convention, is reflected in national legislation and policy frameworks governing sport and disability inclusion.

At constitutional level, the Greek Constitution places athletics under the protection and supervision of the State and recognises the right of persons with disabilities to participate in the social, economic, and political life of the country. This constitutional provision establishes a general normative foundation for inclusive sport participation.

The core legislative framework governing sport is established through Law 2725/1999, “Amateur and Professional Sport and Other Provisions.” The law regulates the organisation and administration of sport in Greece and defines the institutional roles of key sport bodies, including the Hellenic Paralympic Committee (HPC). While the law recognises Para sport structures within the national sport system, it does not provide a comprehensive regulatory framework specifically addressing the development of sport for persons with disabilities.

Within the broader disability rights framework, Law 4488/2017 establishes general principles on equality, accessibility, and social inclusion for persons with disabilities. However, the law addresses sport only indirectly and does not define specific policy measures or institutional responsibilities related to Para sport development.

At policy level, the National Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2024–2030 (“One Greece with Everyone, for Everyone”) provides the overarching strategic framework guiding disability policy in Greece. The strategy promotes accessibility, independent living, equal participation, and the removal of barriers across all areas of public and social life, including sport.

Overall, Greece possesses a general legal and policy foundation supporting inclusive sport participation, primarily embedded within broader sport legislation and disability policy frameworks. However, the absence of a dedicated national Para sport policy or strategic sport development framework addressing disability sport specifically limits the degree to which CRPD Article 30 commitments are translated into targeted operational measures within the sport system.

Para sport System Overview

Governance Structure

Ministry of Education, Religious Affairs and Sport General Secretariat of Sports (GSS)

▼ *Regulatory authority + funding allocation*

Hellenic Paralympic Committee (HPC)
(International representation; Paralympic team preparation)

Hellenic Sports Federation for Persons with Disabilities
(Domestic competitions; club supervision; athlete development)

▼ *Coordination for national team selection*

Other Federations: Deaf Sports, Wheelchair Basketball, Kidney Patients & Transplants

▼

Sport Clubs (mainstream, discipline-based; Para sport integrated within structures)

Para sport governance in Greece operates through a hybrid institutional model combining the roles of the Hellenic Paralympic Committee (HPC) and the Hellenic Sports Federation for Persons with Disabilities, under the regulatory authority of the General Secretariat of Sports (GSS) within the Ministry of Education, Religious Affairs and Sport.

At government level, the General Secretariat of Sports functions as the central administrative authority responsible for sport policy, regulatory oversight, and the allocation of public funding to recognised sport organisations. The Secretariat supervises the registration and recognition of sport federations and clubs and establishes the regulatory conditions under which sport organisations operate.

Within the Para sport movement, two core national bodies operate with complementary functions. The Hellenic Paralympic Committee (HPC) is responsible for the promotion of the Paralympic movement in Greece and coordinates the preparation, selection, and participation of Greek teams in international qualification tournaments and the Paralympic Games. The Hellenic Sports Federation for Persons with Disabilities is responsible for the organisation of domestic Para sport activities, including the supervision of affiliated sport clubs, the organisation of national competitions, and the development of athlete pathways across multiple sport disciplines.

While the Federation manages domestic competition structures and athlete development, the HPC consolidates these structures at national level for international representation within the Paralympic system. In practice, this creates a division of functions whereby the Federation oversees national-level sport development and competition, while the HPC leads international representation and Paralympic participation. Coordination between the two bodies occurs primarily through athlete selection processes and national team preparation.

In addition to these two central institutions, several specialised federations operate within the broader disability sport landscape, including the Hellenic Athletic Federation of the Deaf, the Hellenic

Wheelchair Basketball Federation, and the Sports Federation of Kidney Patients and Transplants of Greece. These organisations manage specific disciplines or athlete groups and contribute to the broader development of disability sport in the country.

At operational level, sport clubs constitute the primary delivery structure for Para sport activities. Clubs are typically mainstream, discipline-based organisations within which Para sport activities are integrated. To operate legally, clubs must be registered with the Ministry and affiliated with a recognised sport federation. Only athletes registered through such clubs are eligible to participate in official competitions organised within the national sport system.

Athletes must hold a valid Athlete Health Card in order to register with federations and sport clubs and to participate in training and competitions. Local authorities have a limited role in Para sport governance, with their involvement generally restricted to the provision and maintenance of sport infrastructure rather than participation in governance or programme coordination.

Funding Mechanisms and Distribution

Ministry of Education, Religious Affairs and Sport through General Secretariat of Sports (General State Budget + Betting Tax)

▼ *Direct funding*

HPC + Hellenic Sports Federation for Persons with Disabilities (State budget + betting tax)

Other Federations (Deaf, Wheelchair Basketball, Transplants) (State budget + betting tax)

▼ *Ad hoc supplementary support (not guaranteed)*

Sport Clubs (Direct limited funding from betting tax; criteria include registered athletes, coaches, activity)

Para sport financing in Greece operates through a centralised public funding model, with the General Secretariat of Sports (GSS) within the Ministry of Education, Religious Affairs and Sport serving as the primary funding authority.

Public funding for Para sport is provided mainly through state budget allocations supplemented by earmarked revenues derived from betting tax mechanisms. These resources are distributed by the GSS to recognised national sport organisations, including the Hellenic Paralympic Committee, the Hellenic Sports Federation for Persons with Disabilities, and other recognised disability sport federations such as the Hellenic Athletic Federation of the Deaf, the Hellenic Wheelchair Basketball Federation, and the Sports Federation of Kidney Patients and Transplants of Greece.

These organisations receive direct public funding to support operational activities, athlete preparation, competition participation, and the organisation of national sport events. The regular grant for the four disability federations is distributed via the CHILON system, which benchmarks organizations on size, activity, distinctions, and governance. Additionally, sport clubs receive funding through the betting tax distribution mechanism, which allocates resources to approximately 6,400 clubs nationally on the basis of a rating system. Within this system, clubs for persons with disabilities receive a 50% increase in their calculated rating, resulting in correspondingly higher funding

allocations. Additional criteria influencing allocations include the number of registered athletes, the range of sport disciplines practised, the presence of licensed coaches and the level of club activity..

In practice, the Hellenic Paralympic Committee may provide supplementary support to the Hellenic Sports Federation for Persons with Disabilities, which may subsequently extend support to affiliated sport clubs. This support is generally directed toward covering specific operational needs such as participation in competitions, equipment procurement, or training activities. However, these transfers are not legally mandated and remain discretionary, depending on institutional decisions and available resources.

Local authorities do not provide direct financial support for Para sport development. Their involvement is generally limited to the maintenance and provision of sport infrastructure, with occasional support for individual activities or events. As a result, the Para sport financing system remains highly centralised, with limited financial participation from regional or municipal authorities.

Coordination Mechanisms

Coordination of policies related to disability inclusion in Greece is supported through the National Coordinating Mechanism on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, established in accordance with Article 33(1) of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD).

The mechanism brings together representatives from multiple ministries and government institutions responsible for the implementation of disability policy, including the authority responsible for sport. Its primary function is to support the coordination of public policies related to the National Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2024-2030, ensuring that disability inclusion objectives are reflected across different sectors of government.

Within this framework, the sport administration participates primarily in discussions related to accessibility, infrastructure, and participation opportunities for persons with disabilities. However, the mechanism operates as a cross-sector disability coordination structure rather than a sport-specific governance body, and therefore does not function as a dedicated coordination platform for Para sport development.

As a result, coordination between the General Secretariat of Sports, the Hellenic Paralympic Committee, and the Hellenic Sports Federation for Persons with Disabilities occurs primarily through institutional collaboration within the sport system itself rather than through a formal national Para sport coordination mechanism.

Data Collection

Greece operates a centralised sport registry system known as “e-Kouros”, managed by the General Secretariat of Sports (GSS) within the Ministry of Education, Religious Affairs and Sport. The system records registered sport federations and clubs, athletes, and licensed coaches, and constitutes the primary administrative database used for monitoring participation within the national sport system.

The registry includes information on athletes with disabilities participating in Para sport through recognised sport federations and clubs. Through this mechanism, authorities are able to monitor the

number of registered athletes, organisational participation structures, and the activity levels of clubs and federations operating within the sport system.

The existence of the e-Kouros registry provides a relatively developed administrative data infrastructure. However, the extent to which the system systematically captures disaggregated information on disability type, gender, age, and geographic participation patterns within Para sport requires further assessment. The registry was primarily designed as an administrative registration tool rather than a monitoring system, and Para sport-specific participation indicators are not systematically standardised across federations. As a result, the system currently provides limited analytical insight into participation patterns and trends within disability sport.

Participation Pathway



⚠ Transition Gap: Geographic concentration of clubs and coaches in major urban centres appears to constrain development opportunities for athletes in rural areas and islands.

Entry

Sport clubs constitute the primary entry point into organised Para sport in Greece. Individuals with disabilities typically begin participation through clubs affiliated with recognised sport federations. Recruitment pathways linking sport organisations with schools, hospitals, and rehabilitation centres exist but remain limited in scale and are not implemented through a structured national outreach mechanism.

Development

Athletes register with discipline-specific sport clubs and must obtain a valid Athlete Health Card in order to participate in training and official competitions. Registered athletes affiliate with the relevant sport federation, most commonly the Hellenic Sports Federation for Persons with Disabilities, which organises national competitions and oversees athlete development within the domestic sport system. The geographical concentration of sport clubs and qualified coaches in major urban centres affects the availability of development opportunities for athletes located in rural and island regions.

Elite Preparation

Athletes demonstrating strong performance in national competitions organised by recognised sport clubs and federations may be selected to represent Greece in international competitions, including the Paralympic Games. The Hellenic Paralympic Committee (HPC) coordinates the preparation, selection, and participation of national teams in international events in cooperation with the relevant

sport federations responsible for each discipline. Under Greek law, Paralympic achievements are recognised on an equal basis with Olympic achievements, and athletes obtaining major international distinctions may receive state benefits, including eligibility for public sector appointments under specific provisions.

Coaching in Para sport may be exercised only by individuals holding a valid coaching licence. Recognised qualification pathways include training provided through the National School of Coaches and coaching schools operating under the General Secretariat of Sports. Licensed disability sport coaches may work in both disability-specific and mainstream sport clubs within the same discipline.

Transition Gap

The concentration of sport clubs, training opportunities, and specialised coaching capacity in major urban centres constrains access to structured athlete development pathways for individuals with disabilities living in rural and island regions. This geographic imbalance affects participation levels and limits the continuity of athlete progression from entry-level participation toward competitive and elite sport structures.

Key Challenges

Several structural and operational factors currently affect the development and accessibility of Para sport participation in Greece.

- The absence of a dedicated national sport or Para sport policy framework limits the strategic direction guiding the development of disability sport in Greece. While Para sport operates within the broader national sport system, there is no dedicated policy instrument or national action plan specifically addressing Para sport development. This limits the capacity for coordinated planning and structured implementation across institutions responsible for sport and disability policy.
- Stakeholders have indicated that the current governance model for Para sport development may require further clarification and strengthening. In particular, the operational division of responsibilities between key institutions and the concentration of decision-making primarily at national level may affect coordination and responsiveness within the system.
- Regional sport clubs serving athletes with disabilities may not always be formally recognised by the Hellenic Sports Federation for Persons with Disabilities. Where such recognition is absent, athletes affiliated with these clubs may encounter barriers to participation in nationally organised competitions and progression within the official Para sport system.
- Financial resources available for Para sport development remain limited relative to the operational needs of sport federations and clubs. Funding constraints affect athlete preparation, participation in competitions, access to specialised equipment, and the implementation of broader development activities.
- Accessibility barriers persist in sports infrastructure, particularly in older facilities. In addition, transport-related barriers between home and training venues may restrict participation opportunities for athletes with disabilities, especially in geographically remote areas.

- The geographic concentration of sport clubs, competitions, and specialised coaching capacity in major urban centres limits access to organised Para sport activities for individuals living in rural areas and island regions. This geographic imbalance affects the continuity of athlete development pathways and contributes to lower participation levels.
- Promotion and outreach mechanisms aimed at encouraging participation in Para sport remain limited. Information pathways connecting hospitals, rehabilitation centres, schools, and sport organisations are not systematically developed, which may reduce awareness of available participation opportunities among persons with disabilities.
- Participation of women with disabilities in Para sport remains low. Participation data are not systematically disaggregated by gender within existing administrative systems, which limits the visibility of gender disparities. Targeted outreach or recruitment initiatives aimed specifically at women and girls with disabilities have not been systematically identified.
- The availability of specialised coaches trained to work with athletes with disabilities remains uneven across the country. In several regions, limited coaching capacity affects the sustainability of sport programmes and the ability of clubs to expand participation opportunities.

Opportunities

Several existing institutional and policy elements provide a foundation that could support further development of Para sport participation in Greece.

- The e-Kouros centralised sport registry, managed by the General Secretariat of Sports, provides an established administrative infrastructure for recording information on sport federations, clubs, athletes, and coaches. Further development of this system could support improved monitoring of participation patterns within disability sport.
- Greek legislation recognises Paralympic achievements on an equal basis with Olympic achievements, providing a strong normative foundation for athlete recognition and elite sport support within the national sport system.
- The National Strategy for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2024-2030 provides an overarching policy framework that promotes accessibility, equality, and participation across sectors, including sport.
- The potential establishment of a national working group on sport and Para sport, involving relevant institutions and organisations representing persons with disabilities, could strengthen coordination and support the development of a dedicated strategic framework for Para sport development.

Recommendations

Recommendation 1.

General Secretariat of Sports (GSS):

establish a national working group on sport and Para sport in consultation with organisations of persons with disabilities, sport federations, and relevant stakeholders. The working group should lead the development of a dedicated national sport or Para sport policy or action plan.

Recommendation 2.

General Secretariat of Sports (GSS), in cooperation with the Hellenic Paralympic Committee and the Hellenic Sports Federation for Persons with Disabilities:

introduce provisions requiring meaningful representation of persons with disabilities, including athletes, within the governance and decision-making bodies of national sport federations.

Recommendation 3.

General Secretariat of Sports (GSS):

review and, where necessary, amend regulations governing the recognition of sport clubs and athlete registration to remove barriers that may limit participation in nationally organised Para sport competitions.

Recommendation 4.

General Secretariat of Sports (GSS), in cooperation with national Para sport federations:

conduct a structured review of the current Para sport governance model in order to clarify institutional responsibilities and strengthen coordination mechanisms within the national sport system.

Recommendation 5.

General Secretariat of Sports (GSS):

develop a dedicated Para sport budget line within national sport financing programmes, including strengthening the participation of local authorities in supporting sport activities for persons with disabilities.

Recommendation 6.

Hellenic Paralympic Committee, in cooperation with the Hellenic Sports Federation for Persons with Disabilities:

develop and implement structured outreach initiatives promoting participation in Para sport through cooperation with schools, hospitals, and rehabilitation centres, including targeted measures encouraging the participation of women and girls with disabilities.

Recommendation 7.

General Secretariat of Sports (GSS):

incorporate dedicated measures addressing the training, retraining, and retention of coaches and referees working in Para sport within future national sport development planning, such as a dedicated Para sport coaching certification modules within the National School of Coaches.

Recommendation 8.

General Secretariat of Sports (GSS), in cooperation with the Ministry of Infrastructure and relevant local authorities:

assess the feasibility of transport support measures for athletes with disabilities travelling to training venues, particularly in island and rural regions.

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