



EFDS Legacy Questionnaire Report

October 2012

Measuring the impact of the Olympic and Paralympic Games on disabled and non-disabled people

Report findings based on a market research conducted in September 2012 by English Federation of Disability Sport

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Introduction

This report presents the findings from a short online questionnaire conducted by the English Federation of Disability Sport (EFDS) in October 2012

The survey was designed to capture the impact of the Olympic and Paralympic Games on opinions and perceptions of disabled people in sport. In addition, we measured the level of awareness and people's perceptions of a small scale promotional campaign conducted by EFDS during the Paralympic Games

While great efforts were made to ensure the survey was completed from a representative sample, the survey was primarily distributed through social media promotion. This may bias results due to a greater proportion of sports and disabled people in sport who completed the survey

Executive Summary

The results from our survey suggest the Paralympic Games had a positive impact on people's awareness, perceptions and attitudes of disabled people in sport. This was particularly evident among non-disabled people.

Although it was small scale, the EFDS 'Pass the Baton' campaign successfully built upon the mood created by the Paralympics to help raise awareness further.

Reaction to 'the Games'

From the 512 people who completed the survey, everybody watched either the Olympics or Paralympics. Out of the respondents, 95% watched both and 96% watched the Paralympics. After watching the Games four out of ten respondents chose '*Paralympians are inspirational role models too*' as the main message, selected at least twice as often as any of the other messages.

Of the 500 people who watched the Paralympics, nine out of ten disabled people said they had considered watching disabled people in sport prior to watching the Paralympics. But only seven out of ten non-disabled people had considered it. However, after watching the Paralympics this increased to eight out of ten.

The survey showed that non-disabled people were almost twice as likely as disabled people to have changed their opinions after watching the Paralympics.

- Nearly half of non-disabled people (43%) compared to a quarter of disabled people changed their opinions of disabled people in general.
- Just over half of non-disabled people (52%) compared to over a third of disabled people (36%) changed their opinions of any disabled person playing sport
- Over half of non-disabled people (59%) compared to over a third of disabled people (38%) changed their opinions of elite disabled athletes

It was felt the Paralympics were most effective at changing opinions by raising awareness of the capabilities of disabled people in sport. The Paralympics, it was identified, demonstrated the level and standard of elite disabled athletes and encouraged people to look beyond the impairment.

Watching the Paralympics inspired seven out of ten people to consider attending sports events for disabled people as a spectator and eight out of ten disabled people are considering taking part in more sport or exercise

Reaction to 'Pass the baton' campaign

Three out of ten respondents were aware of the 'Pass the Baton' campaign, increasing to four out of ten among disabled people. Almost nine out of ten respondents (88%) had a positive reaction to the campaign. People felt that the main limitation of the campaign was its limited exposure.

The survey clearly demonstrates there is interest in sport for disabled people, and people are keen to watch and be more involved in it. However, to fully realise the opportunity that the Paralympics have provided, it requires promotional investment to make disabled people in sport more inclusive within society.

Methodology and demographics

The questionnaire was a 15 minute online survey promoted through social media and email contacts. Data was analysed to look at the outcome overall as well as if there were any differences in opinion between disabled and non-disabled people. Where differences were found these are highlighted

The final sample was 521 people, 17% of whom were disabled with 99% residing in England*¹

While great efforts were made to ensure the survey was completed from a representative sample, the survey was primarily distributed through social media promotion. This may bias results due to a greater proportion of sports and disabled people in sport who completed the survey

¹ Please see appendix for detailed breakdown of demographic data

Overall impact if the Olympic and Paralympic Games

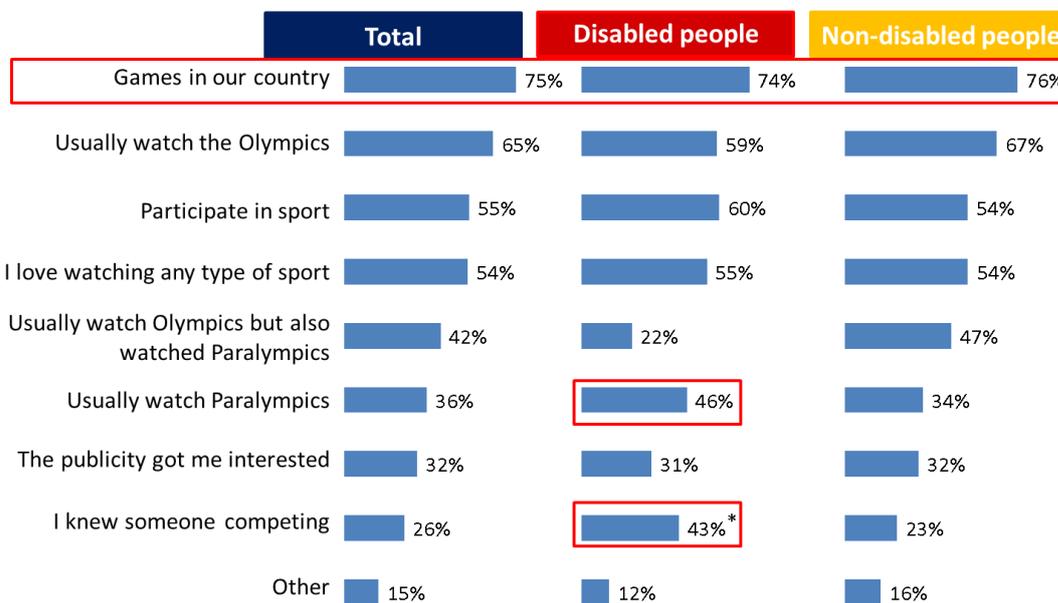
Respondents were asked four questions about ‘the Games’ in general, taking into consideration the Olympics and the Paralympics

1. Did you watch the Games?
2. For what reasons did you watch the Olympic and Paralympic Games?
3. What were the biggest messages out of the Games?
4. What does the Games legacy mean to you?

Everybody included in the survey watched either the Olympics or Paralympics, with 95% watching both.

The main reason for watching the Games, selected by three quarters of respondents, was because they were held in our country.

Figure 1: For what reasons did you watch the Games

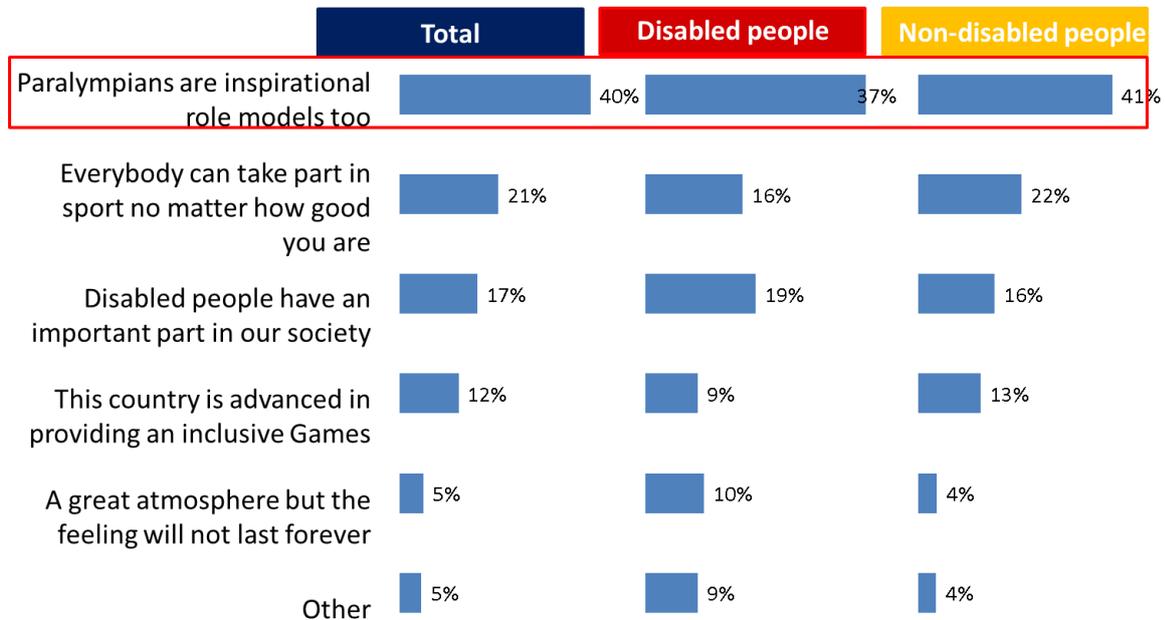


The high level of exposure to and interest in the Games is not unexpected given that London 2012 received an unprecedented amount of media coverage. In addition, a home Games (with no international time difference) meant that coverage was live as athletes competed. Plus, the huge increase in social media, online streaming and digital ‘choose what you watch’ television allowed individuals to adapt their viewing to their own needs, watching replays if required.

Disabled people were more likely to say that they usually watch the Paralympics as well as being twice as likely than non-disabled people to state that they watched ‘the Games’ because they knew someone who was competing. *It is worth considering that this finding of knowing people who competed maybe slightly skewed by our sample.

Four out of ten people felt that the biggest message from the Games was that *'Paralympians are inspirational role models too'*. This was selected by double the number of people than any other option, clearly emphasising the impact that the Paralympics had on the nation's perceptions.

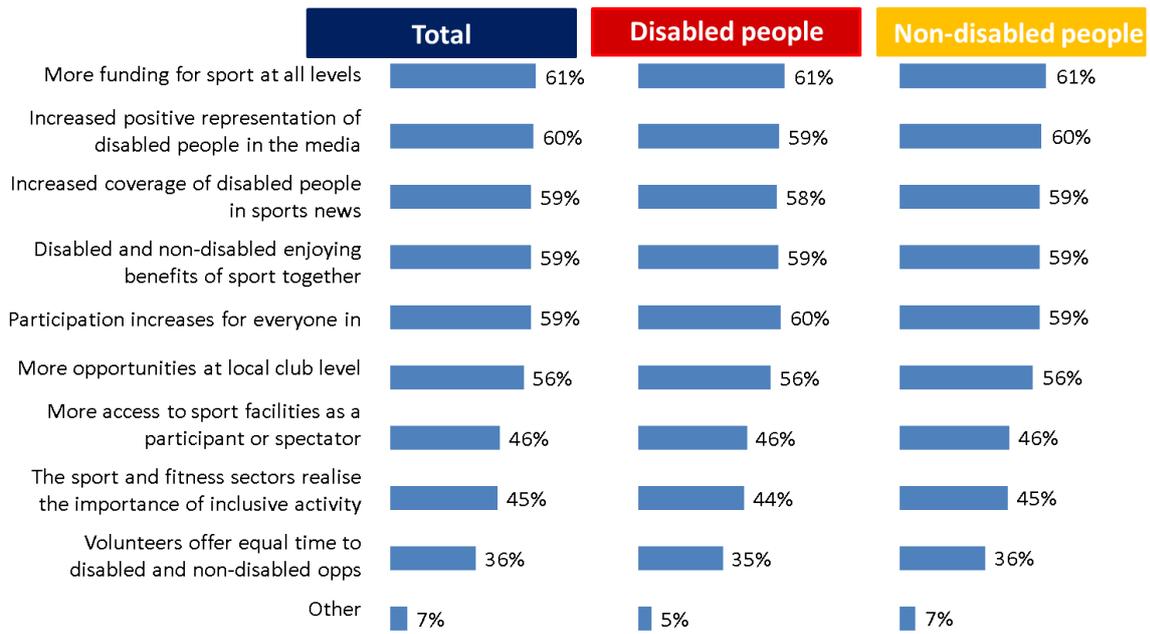
Figure 2: What was the biggest message out of the Games



The second biggest message was *'Everybody can take part in sport, no matter how good you are'*, which reflects the EFDS 'Pass the baton' campaign message of 'Sport is for all'.

As demonstrated in Figure 3, people do not see one clear focus for the legacy of the Games. They see it more as a continued positive impact on all aspects of sport for all people. The legacy should address: funding for sport at all levels; increased representation of disabled people in the media; increased coverage of disabled people in sport news; disabled and non disabled people enjoying the benefits of sports together; and increasing participation for everyone

Figure 3: What does the Games legacy mean to you?



Impact of the Paralympic Games

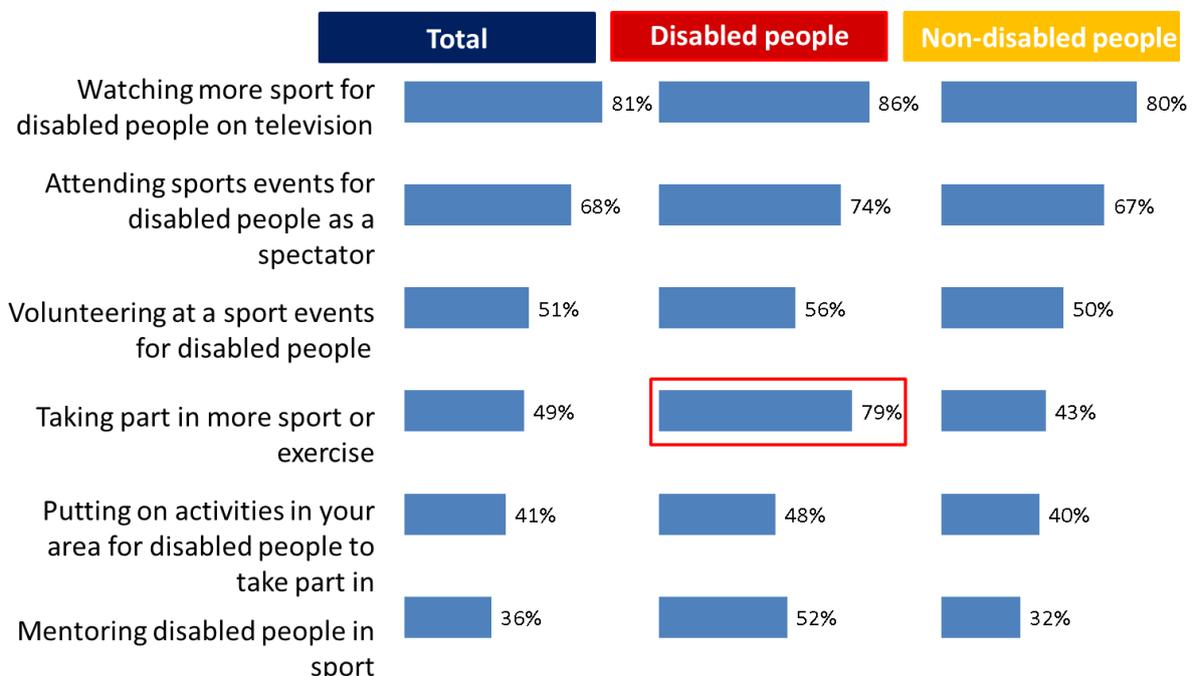
Respondents were asked three questions about the Paralympic Games and the impact that they had on their opinions of disabled people in sport

1. Before watching the Paralympics, would you have considered watching disabled people in sport?
2. Now having watched the Paralympics, would you consider...?
3. Have the Paralympics changed your perceptions about disabled people in general, any disabled personal playing sport at any level, elite disabled athletes? If so, how?

Most of the sample (96%), watched the Paralympics. Of those, disabled people (90%) were more likely to have considered watching disabled people in sport prior to watching the Paralympics compared to non-disabled people (73%)

After watching the Paralympics, eight out of ten respondents would consider watching more sport for disabled people on television, with seven out of ten considering attending more sports events for disabled people as a spectator. These results show that there is a potential demand for coverage of disabled people in sport, which is currently not widely available.

Figure 4: Now having watched the Paralympics, would you consider the following



A very positive message was that watching the Paralympics encouraged eight out of ten disabled people to consider taking part in more sport. This is almost twice that of non-disabled people. While this is a very positive message, it should be viewed alongside results from a recent Sports and Recreation Alliance survey conducted with clubs in October 2012.

This survey showed that nine out of ten (89%) clubs have noticed no change in the number of disabled people joining their club. This mismatch raises a number of questions as to the extent to which the increased interest in sport is being translated to actual participation

Non-disabled people were more likely to change their opinions of disabled people in sport after watching the Paralympics than disabled people

Figure 5: Have the Paralympics changed your perceptions about:

		Total	Disabled People	Non disabled people
Paralympics have changed opinion of...	Disabled people in general	40%	25%	43%
	Any disabled person playing sport at any level	49%	36%	52%
	Elite disabled athletes	55%	38%	59%

The Paralympic Games did an excellent job of promoting the ability of the athletes, which encouraged people to look beyond the impairment²

*“I learnt so much more about disability itself and how some people become disabled. I would admit that I may have known more about those who are disabled at birth so the Paralympics made me much more aware of the different types of disabilities. The C4 coverage was excellent at giving so much more context to an individual's challenges which made watching these amazing athletes excel so much more engaging”!*³

“Made me think about the ability that they actually have, rather than a disability holding them back”

Perceptions were changed by raising awareness of the opportunities for and capabilities of disabled people in sport. The Paralympic Games helped to highlight the sports opportunities that exist, emphasising that sport is for all.

“I have seen the wide possibilities for people with disabilities (sic) to be able to play sport”
“Seeing sport as being something open to everyone regardless”

²A breakdown of the open ended responses to how perceptions have been changed can be found in the appendix

³ Quotes shown are taken directly from the survey. These therefore may not use the correct terminology or language for disabled people but have been used to highlight public opinion.

The Paralympic Games also demonstrated the very high level of performance and standard of expertise that elite disabled athletes have, making a lot of people believe that they were as good as, if not better than Olympians.

“Their level of performance has surprised me and reaffirmed that they are elite athletes on merit”

“Much, much more elite than I thought they were, I knew they'd be good but they're only handicapped (sic) by the equipment”

“Incredible athletes, was enthused to the point of starting a Facebook campaign to get disability sport on to TV”

Reactions to the 'Pass the Baton' campaign

Before, during and after the Paralympic Games 2012, (from 20 August until 16 September), the English Federation of Disability Sport (EFDS) ran a small promotional campaign.

It was a poster based campaign with large scale posters visible in a number of London underground stations and Metro stations in Newcastle. This initial campaign was supported with social media promotion

The poster, shown below, depicted a young disabled athlete participating in sport. The image was used alongside the heading 'Sport is for all but four out of five disabled people are not active.'



The aim of the campaign was to use the Games' momentum to inspire:

- More disabled people to become active
- Wider promotion of EFDS and our programmes
- Greater awareness for the sport/fitness sectors to understand the importance of inclusion at every level, not just elite performance
- Fundraisers to choose the EFDS charity for their support

The campaign was accompanied with the hashtag 'Pass the Baton' which had different meanings for different audiences. The baton is the momentum, the message, the drive, the opportunity, the support for success beyond the Games. It applied to all of EFDS programmes and functions and was linked into web based information regarding:

- Pass the baton for inclusive fitness
- Pass the baton for more opportunities
- Pass the baton for future generations
- Pass the baton for more funds to support us

The campaign had very positive reactions from different sources including: a local council used the poster as their background on their intranet and staff desktops. The school of the poster athlete put posters up. Plus, Director of Sport in a school was so encouraged to improve his own school and other's inclusive sport. Followers on Twitter increased by 400 and many of them either tweeted photographs of the posters in the stations, or used the hashtag throughout the Games.

Three out of ten people who completed the survey were aware of the 'Pass the Baton' campaign. This increased to four out of ten disabled people who completed the survey.

Of those people that were aware of the campaign, only 2% had negative comments which focused on a dislike of catchphrases, sport only appealing to a minority and being unclear of the message.

"It missed the point; sport is of interest only to a minority, disabled or otherwise".

The majority of comments (88%) were positive, believing it was a good campaign with a clear and effective message, which raised awareness and used good imagery.

"Great to see a charity promote the importance of sport to non-elite disabled people in sport"

"Engaging, striking imagery plus a powerful message to us all. I think children and young people understand it - something we can all remember and if we can encourage others to act. The Paralympics showed that anything is possible, whoever you are! Simple and clear!"

One out of five people thought there were limitations to the campaign. The main limitation was that it was too small and needed more exposure.

"Very good and effective but would have liked to have seen more of it"

"It was good however I would have liked to have seen more run up advertising"

EFDS had a very small budget for the campaign which restricted its scale. For maximum impact, greater funding is needed to support large scale continued promotion to maintain awareness of the cause.

Conclusions

The results from our survey suggest the Paralympic Games produced a very positive impact on people's awareness, perceptions and attitudes of disabled people in sport.

Generally, the Games played a pivotal role in increasing awareness of the different sporting opportunities available for disabled people. In addition, it highlighted the level and extent of talent that elite Paralympians have. They encouraged people to look beyond the impairment and understand what disabled people can and are able to achieve. It also indicates that people are keen to see increased representation of disabled people in the media in general as well as in sports news.

EFDS saw the potential of the Paralympics as a platform to engage the public and promote sport for disabled people. However, while the 'Pass the Baton campaign' was unquestionably successful, its small scale promotion resulted in a limited level of exposure and impact result.

The survey demonstrates there is interest in sport for disabled people, and people are keen to watch and be more involved in it. However, other surveys (Sports and Recreation Alliance, Olympic Legacy 2012) are indicating the uptake of sport among disabled people is not being realised at local club level.

Further research is needed to understand the mismatch between interest and uptake within clubs. Is this a result of how participation of disabled people is measured in a club environment? Or perhaps a reflection of the perceptions among disabled people that mainstream clubs cannot provide relevant opportunities for them and they therefore seek opportunities outside of the club environment?

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the questionnaire, EFDS has outlined below some recommendations, which organisations should consider when planning their future programmes.

- While the Paralympics have played a significant role in increasing awareness and positive perceptions of disabled people in sport, using big sporting events as a platform for such promotion has a limited short term impact. Continual promotion and other opportunities are needed outside of the events to maintain interest and uptake.
- In addition sports providers need to be more effective at promoting their club based opportunities for disabled people to ensure that the increased interest in taking part is actually realised. The momentum affects different participation levels in sport, so grassroots development is just as important as elite pathways and performance.
- Large scale national or regional promotional campaigns are a great way to capitalise and maintain the positive impact. The nation needs to be consistently reminded of the opportunities and capabilities of disabled people in sport and how exciting they are to partake in and to watch.
- Any campaign that is created needs to take into account the increase in media exposure through channels such as social media, which can be a very cost effective promotional platform, but requires a greater level of planning and timely interaction.

For more information on this survey or report, please contact Emma Spring at EFDS. Email espring@efds.co.uk or telephone 0161 2005442

The report is available to download on www.efds.co.uk

Appendix 1

Demographic data

Total sample : 521

Gender

Male	39%
Female	61%

Age

Under 14	1%
14-25	11%
26-35	29%
36-45	26%
46-55	22%
56-65	11%
Over 65	2%

Region

North East	5%
Yorkshire and Humberside	4%
East Midlands	11%
East	7%
South East	22%
London	8%
South West	5%
West Midlands	8%
North West	29%
Outside England	1%

Breakdown of comments regarding 'Pass the Baton' campaign

Good campaign 88%		Limitations to campaign 20%		Issues with campaign 2%
Clear effective message	12%	Needed more exposure	11%	
Raising awareness	9%	Limited impact	6%	
Good imagery	6%	Unsure of message	5%	
Encourages people to act	6%	What is being asked of people is unclear	3%	
Eye catching	5%	Needed more exposure	11%	
Timely, in line with the Paralympics	5%			
A good idea	4%			

How have perceptions changed of disabled people in general?

Paralympians are more impressive than the Olympians	7%
Raised awareness...	32%
Of the (cap)abilities of disabled people in sport	22%
Of different impairments	9%
Of opportunities available	1%
Made people look beyond disability	20%
Emphasised what can be achieved	12%
Disabled people should be treated equally	10%
How hard disabled people work to achieve things	9%
Sport if for all	6%
Inspirational	4%

How have perceptions change about any disabled person playing sport

Raised awareness...	30%
Of the (cap)abilities of disabled people in sport	16%
Of opportunities available	13%
Of different impairments	3%
Sport if for all	19%
How hard disabled people work to achieve things	9%
The level / standard that disabled people can achieve in sport	9%
Greater effort needed to include disabled people in sport	9%
Emphasised what can be achieved	7%
The athletes have been inspirational	7%
The admiration they have for disabled people in sport	7%
The positive impact sport can have	7%

How have perceptions changed of Paralympians?

The level / standard that disabled people can achieve in sport	28%
Raised awareness...	17%
Of the (cap)abilities of disabled people in sport	17%
Of different impairments	3%
Of opportunities available	2%
Disabled athletes are as good as non disabled athletes	15%
Paralympians have a great deal of passion and determination	11%
The people have been inspirational	10%
The admiration they have for disabled people in sport	8%
Emphasised what can be achieved	7%
Paralympians are more impressive than the Olympians	7%